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6 July 2017

Mr David Boreham  
Headteacher  
St Margaret's CofE Primary School  
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Dear Mr Boreham

### **Short inspection of St Margaret's CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 7 June 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in September 2012.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You provide effective leadership and have given long and devoted service to the school. You and your leaders are driven by a very strong sense of moral purpose and the spiritual ethos of the school is evident to all. Notably you have been committed to developing community and international links. Leaders are determined to ensure that the school continues to improve and develop. There is staffing capacity to continue to raise standards in the school because of the way you have developed senior staff, trusting them to introduce new approaches.

Parents appreciate your leadership and the nurturing ethos you have encouraged throughout the school. Staff are proud to work at the school. Pupils and parents enjoy the positive learning experiences offered by your broad curriculum and the space and facilities for outdoor learning offered by the large, attractive school site. Pupils enjoy school and treat each other with respect. They concentrate well in lessons and are well mannered both in and out of class. Pupils are proud of their work, value their successes and understand the importance of developing qualities such as perseverance.

You recognised the decline in key stage 1 outcomes for writing and mathematics and addressed the issues during this year. Pupils' current progress is now towards

age-related expectations. However, you appreciate the need for pupils' spelling, punctuation and presentation to improve further. The majority of pupils in key stage 2 achieved at least age-related expectations in 2016. You have successfully addressed the need to challenge the most able mathematicians in Year 6. However, some variability in the level of challenge in mathematics is evident in lower key stage 2. You recognised that the small number of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities needed to make more progress. You have addressed this and evidence in the pupils' books shows they are making good progress. However, detailed analysis of their progress is hampered by your present assessment and tracking system which does not provide sufficient information to help you set the next steps for their learning.

You have addressed the areas for development from your previous inspection. Leaders effectively monitor the progress of pupils during lessons. Governors check leaders' evaluations through visits to the school and well-chosen questions in meetings. The quality of writing has improved across the school since pupils began evaluating their own work and the work of others. Mathematics leaders have provided appropriate training for staff alongside a new approach to teaching mathematics, which is introducing more challenge for all pupils.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders ensure that systems for safeguarding are thorough and records are detailed and of high quality. An experienced and knowledgeable safeguarding governor regularly checks the systems and records. Staff receive training when they join the school and receive regular updates, including online training. Adults, including volunteers, know how to report any concerns. Staff contact other agencies such as social services quickly when needed. You monitor communications with them and are swift to chase up slow responses.

Although very large, the site is secure and pupils feel safe. Pupils trust the adults in the school and are confident that they can speak to them about any worries. You know every pupil, so you understand the context of their needs and provide a safe and caring school environment. Parents are confident that their children are safe at school and any issues are dealt with effectively. Pupils have a mature attitude to bullying and recognise that there is a difference between pupils who are not being nice and those who are bullies. Pupils say that there are very few incidents of bullying. Behaviour records are well kept. Actions are documented clearly and show an appropriate response to every incident. Pupils understand that they need to keep themselves safe online. They can explain what they have to do and how they keep their passwords safe. However, leaders are aware that the pupils' understanding of e-safety can be strengthened still further and have plans to deepen pupils' awareness.

### **Inspection findings**

- The attendance levels of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged are improving. You have used an

effective individualised approach to improving pupils' attendance. Class teachers are vigilant, office staff keep records and you contact parents of pupils who are persistently absent or have irregular patterns of absence. Pupils are encouraged to attend, with termly certificates for 100% attendance.

- Clear and well-maintained provision plans for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have ensured that more pupils than previously are making good progress. Regular review of the provision plans at pupil progress meetings ensures that interventions and support are targeted to meet pupils' needs. Staff work conscientiously to track pupils' progress and set the next steps for improvement, but time is wasted and the process is slowed by inefficient assessment and tracking.
- Leaders have used the pupil premium grant effectively to provide additional staffing to support vulnerable pupils. This includes support for the most able disadvantaged who are working above age-related expectations. Teaching assistants make effective use of visual apparatus and high-quality questioning to support groups of pupils.
- Strong leadership has led to the assistant headteachers developing the teaching of mathematics and English this year. Continuing professional development training opportunities, in-house monitoring and individual coaching of staff have led to the rapid dissemination of new approaches in these subjects. Pupils' books show that standards have improved in both writing and mathematics since the start of the year. Staff make accurate assessments about pupils' learning because they have high levels of knowledge and expertise. Staff use locality meetings effectively to test out the accuracy of their judgements with other schools.
- Mathematics lessons are well structured, using an approach that moves pupils from the pictorial through the concrete to the abstract. Work is matched to the learning needs of the pupils and there is more emphasis than previously on investigations and reasoning. Practical equipment is used particularly well to explain new learning. However, there are some inconsistencies in the sequence of learning and the challenge provided in some classes, particularly in lower key stage 2.
- The most able Year 6 mathematicians are making accelerated progress due to the high level of skilled challenge provided.
- Leaders have introduced pupil self-editing in writing. This has enabled pupils to more readily identify their own mistakes and rectify them for themselves. This is having a positive effect on both the vocabulary and grammar that pupils are using in their writing. However, spelling, punctuation and presentation in unaided writing require further improvement.
- At the previous inspection, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision for pupils was a strength; this has been sustained and remains a feature of the school. The school is enriched by the strong international links you have fostered. Pupils are tolerant and understand that they live in a diverse culture. The curriculum supports this through topics such as 'refugees'. Your links with Africa are evident throughout the school and pupils are proud that they fundraise to help children in schools abroad.

- Pupils learn about their own culture and British values through a wide range of experiences including a mock election, an active school council, fundraising for charity locally, nationally and internationally, and British cultural events such as Father's Day. Pupils are interested in democracy and can talk knowledgeably about election procedure. They enjoy the wide range of clubs and activities on offer to them, which include sports, arts and social opportunities.
- You are strongly committed to leading the spiritual aspect of your school within and beyond its Christian ethos. Your commitment to the expressive arts is seen in the high-quality artwork pupils have produced, the encouragement you give to pupils taking part in musical activities and the pupils' success in singing. You have also used your extensive grounds well to ensure that all pupils from Reception to Year 6 can learn outside, grow plants and experience nature.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- spelling and handwriting skills are further developed so that all pupils spell at age-related standards and pupils take more pride in the presentation of their unaided writing
- the system used for assessing and tracking pupils' progress is effective in identifying where you need to further raise standards, for example in lower key stage 2 mathematics.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Chichester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for West Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Corbett  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, your deputy headteacher, your assistant headteachers, the school administrator, six governors and a group of pupils. I also telephoned a representative of West Sussex local authority. I visited classes across the school with you to view teaching and learning. I also considered 50 responses to the staff questionnaire and 80 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I took into account 34 responses to the parent free-text service. I analysed a range of school documentation including the school's self-evaluation, the improvement plan, minutes of the governing body meetings and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures.