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Mr Toby Long
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Long

Short inspection of St George's Church of England Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 21 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 May 2012.

This school continues to be good.

Your effective leadership has ensured that the good quality of education in the school has been maintained since the last inspection. Together with other leaders and governors, you have effectively managed the school through a period of growth. The school has grown from 148 pupils on roll at the time of the last inspection to nearly 180 pupils on roll. Your passion and enthusiasm is evident in the commitment and dedication that you give to the school. You place pupils' learning and well-being at the heart of everything you do.

You are determined to keep improving the school and have ambition for the school to be even more successful. Governors and staff share this ambition and work very effectively as a united, strong team. You accurately identify the school's strengths and where further improvements can be made. For example, following a drop in the early years outcomes in 2014, you acted decisively to secure improvements in teaching and learning. As a result of your prompt action, outcomes improved.

The school is a happy, purposeful environment for learning where pupils thrive. There is a strong sense of family and belonging across the whole school community. Staff know pupils very well and their relationships with them are warm and nurturing. Pupils value the kindness of their teachers and the good support that teachers give them to help them learn. The school's values, 'courage, commitment, community, compassion and love inspired by faith to serve', are evident in pupils' good behaviour and in their respectful, caring attitudes to each other. Pupils have a good understanding of the meaning of the school's values. For example, when asked about how pupils show these values in their behaviour one pupil explained, 'If

someone falls over, you help them and you show love.' Pupils play and learn happily together and try their hardest, even when they are finding learning challenging.

Pupils enjoy school and speak enthusiastically about many of the things that they like learning about. They particularly enjoy the daily, collective worship and singing. They are confident learners and keen to talk about their learning with visitors. For example, one pupil delighted in reading out his writing about the recent visit to Windsor Castle. Pupils enjoy being challenged and explaining how some of them like to have a go at the 'turbo challenges' set by their teachers. One pupil explained how he challenged himself to write at least two pages when writing a story. A pupil in the early years also proudly showed her Chinese dragon which she was challenged to make. Pupils talk excitedly about the visits they go on and the many out-of-school activities they attend such as French, choir, football and tennis. The school has very good relationships with parents and this is a strength of the school. Parents wholeheartedly support the school and greatly value the strong, positive 'family feel' of the school. As one parent commented, 'I could not be happier.'

Governors, staff and senior leaders work together very effectively to keep all aspects of the school under review. Senior leaders and governors use information about pupils' progress to enable them to target resources or additional support. The school makes effective use of outside support and guidance to help them keep improving the school. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning at the school has continued to improve and is consistently good.

You have maintained the many strengths identified at the last inspection. From their varied starting points, the vast majority of pupils make good progress and achieve well. Following a dip in 2014, outcomes at the end of the early years have improved and are now broadly in line with the national average. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standards at the end of key stage 1 was similar to the national average. However, the proportion of pupils who were working at greater depth exceeded the national average in all subjects. Pupils continue to achieve very well in their phonics screening check in Years 1 and 2. In addition, outcomes for pupils in key stage 1 are continuing to improve.

You have also addressed the areas that inspectors asked the school to improve. The most able pupils are now making good progress and achieving well. This is evident in the high proportion of pupils working at greater depth of learning in 2016 and the good progress that the most able pupils are now making. Teachers provide a good level of challenge for these pupils who, in turn, enjoy this challenge. You have strengthened middle leadership and have improved the leadership of subjects such as English, mathematics and science. These leaders make good use of assessment information to continue to improve teaching and outcomes for pupils. Other subject leaders work hard and regularly check coverage of the curriculum. However, in most subjects, they do not yet play a full role in monitoring the progress of pupils or leading improvement across the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of good quality. All checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are in place and records are maintained diligently. Staff with particular safeguarding responsibilities are knowledgeable. Leaders' understanding of specific safeguarding issues has been enhanced by additional training. Staff receive training at least once a year and you make sure that safeguarding is high on the agenda in staff briefings and meetings. This ensures that all staff are alert to pupils' well-being and are confident in referring any concerns promptly to one of the designated leads. Where appropriate, you refer concerns to the local authority and work effectively with other agencies to support pupils and their families. You keep safeguarding practice under review, calling upon outside advice to check the school's procedures. In addition, you check that all staff understand safeguarding procedures, providing further guidance if necessary. Governors fulfil their responsibilities extremely well through their regular focused visits and audits of safeguarding.

You have established a strong safeguarding culture at the school. Pupils feel safe and supported very well at school. Risks are managed well and pupils' welfare and safety are always a high priority. You have ensured that pupils learn about how to stay safe, for example when using the computer. Pupils know that if there are any 'pop-ups' when using the computer that they should not click on these and need to speak to an adult straight away. You have also helped parents to increase their knowledge of safeguarding by organising an internet safety workshop. Additional information on the school's website sets out helpful information for parents about other safeguarding issues. Pupils know that if they have any worries they can speak to a member of staff. Staff and parents are right in their belief that pupils are safe. As one parent commented, 'Pupils are completely safe at St George's.'

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we looked closely at particular aspects of the school's work including the effectiveness of safeguarding. We also looked at how well leaders use the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils; how well leaders ensure that the most able pupils, boys and those with low prior attainment are progressing; and how well teaching meets the needs of these groups of pupils.
- Leaders and governors have made the achievement of different groups of pupils, including those that are disadvantaged, a priority. Leaders acknowledge that last year disadvantaged pupils did much less well than other pupils, although pupils had made good progress from their starting points. Leaders have approached improving the achievement of this group of pupils with determination. They have ensured that additional funding is used well to provide good support for these pupils. This has included a breakfast club, an after-school teaching session each week, and additional support during the school day. Leaders have worked well with families to support their children. As a result of this effective support, these pupils are making good progress and some pupils are making rapid progress.

- Your school improvement plan rightly identifies pupils' writing as an area you would like to improve, especially for low-attaining pupils. You have also identified that many of these low-attaining pupils are boys. You have invested in additional teaching support and introduced a vocabulary enrichment programme to support pupils. As a result, most low-attaining pupils are making appropriate progress, especially with their phonics, early sentence formation and confidence to write. They are also making good progress in their mathematics, becoming more confident and fluent with number and calculation. In addition, these concerted efforts are also helping to raise the achievement of boys. However, you recognise that there is still more work to be done to enable low-attaining pupils to catch up with their peers, especially in writing.
- Good teaching in the early years enables children to get off to a happy, successful start to school. The very well resourced early years setting is stimulating and attractive. It enables children to learn well through play and exploration. Children's speaking and listening and early reading and writing are developed well through role play. Children enjoy trying to solve problems such as how to make their newly created boats float in the water trough. They develop confidence and independence well and adults enable children to learn effectively through well-phrased questions and prompts. While the majority of children make good progress, low-attaining pupils are beginning to make very good progress. However, the progress of some of the low-attaining children remains slow and you have rightly identified this in the school's self-evaluation.
- In our visits to classrooms across the school, there was a very positive environment for learning. Teachers praise pupils' achievements and encourage pupils to try with their learning, providing reassurance and making expectations clear. Teachers have good subject knowledge, enabling them to provide challenge for pupils, including the most able pupils. As a result, the vast majority of pupils are making good progress. Low-attaining pupils are appropriately supported in smaller groups to help them practise their phonics, word and sentence formation. However, in our visits to classrooms we also agreed that for some low-attaining pupils, the level of challenge was not well matched to their needs, and this held back the learning for these pupils.
- You have taken firm action to address and improve the attendance of a small number of pupils whose attendance was previously very low. You have worked effectively with parents and the local authority to support key pupils and their families. You have also taken a robust approach to any unauthorised absence, including any absence due to holidays taken in term time. Good attendance is celebrated. For example, pupils are given awards for having excellent attendance. Your concerted efforts are having a positive impact and, over time, attendance of individual pupils with low attendance is improving.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- subject leaders' roles are strengthened to enable these leaders to play a greater role in driving improvement in pupils' achievements across the wider curriculum
- leaders build on and strengthen their current work to accelerate the progress of low-attaining pupils and ensure that teaching more consistently meets these pupils' needs.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Cox
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, other senior leaders and middle leaders. We discussed the school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement and information about pupils' current learning. We visited all classes to look at learning, talk with pupils and see pupils' work in books. I met with the chair of the governing body and seven other members of the governing body. I also had telephone conversations with a representative from the local authority and the school's link adviser from the Diocese of Oxford. I reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation including the central record of recruitment checks, the safeguarding policy and safeguarding records. I met with 11 pupils from Reception, Years 1 and 2. I considered the views of parents via the 92 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the responses from the 13 members of staff who completed the Ofsted staff questionnaire. I also met some parents in the playground at the start of the school day.