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Andrea Bailey  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Bailey

### **Short inspection of St Andrew's CE School**

Following my visit to the school on 4 July 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.**

You and the leadership team have made sure that the good quality of education in the school has been maintained since the last inspection. You took up post at the start of this academic year. With the support of the deputy headteacher, you quickly got to grips with what needed to be done to make sure that the school's effectiveness continued to improve. Since your appointment, the pace of change has increased and the school is moving forwards strongly. Parents, staff and governors recognise and welcome the strengths in the school's current leadership. One parent wrote, 'under the leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the school is transforming'. The ambitious vision that leaders and governors have developed for the school is set out in a four-year strategic plan. Staff know what they are aiming for and that the common goal is to ensure the very best outcomes for pupils.

St Andrews is a happy and welcoming school. There is a strong 'family' feel and your core values underpin everything you do. Parents who spoke to me and many who submitted written comments said how much they value seeing you, the deputy headteacher and other staff at the gate and in the playground at the start of the day. Parents say that you are approachable and will sort things out if they have a problem. This inspection took place on 'transition' day, when all pupils moved classes to meet their teacher for next year. Staff also welcomed next year's intake of Reception pupils and their parents. Everything went very smoothly and pupils quickly settled into their new environment. All of the pupils that I met were polite

and friendly, and keen to talk about their work and to share their views. Pupils' enjoyment of school shows clearly in their good attendance.

Over the past year, you and the deputy headteacher have tightened up many of the school's procedures. For example, you have a clear timetable for monitoring and evaluating aspects of the school's work. To make sure your judgements about the school's effectiveness are correct, you call on external partners to give an objective assessment. This means that your self-evaluation is accurate and firmly rooted in evidence. Your plan for improvement addresses the important priorities that arise from this evidence. You have also strengthened arrangements for managing the performance of staff. You hold teachers firmly to account for the progress of their pupils and you have not held back from challenging underperformance. You have also made sure to promote the professional development of teachers and other staff. You give staff support and guidance should they need it, and you enable them to learn from best practice, including by visiting other schools.

You are leading the school through a period of rapid change. The number of classes is increasing as the school grows to two-form entry. In addition, the make-up of the school population is changing. You, other leaders and governors understand that challenges lie ahead as a result of the increasing number of pupils who join the school mid-year and the growth in the number of families who are not fluent speakers of English. You will also need to induct new members of staff. Your development plan addresses these issues, but more detail is needed about how the school will work to support pupils who are in the early stages of learning English.

At the last inspection, leaders were asked to make sure that boys did as well as girls in reading and writing. This was one of the key lines of enquiry for this inspection, because the outcomes of national assessments for Year 2 last year showed that there were some differences between the achievement of boys and girls. This was not the case in previous years and your current assessments show that you have tackled this successfully. Leaders were also asked to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and give pupils more scope to use their initiative and be independent. There has been some turnover of staff since the previous inspection, but the good quality of teaching has been maintained, as seen in the outcomes for pupils. You have concentrated this year on changing pupils' attitudes to their work and their response to challenges. You are focusing on establishing the learning behaviours that will help pupils to persevere and not give up, and to view mistakes as learning opportunities. Several parents in their written comments said that they could see the positive impact this is having on their children's behaviour at home, as well as at school.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You, other leaders and governors have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Pastoral care is strong. You and the staff pay close attention to pupils' well-being, including their mental health, and provide effective additional support for those who are potentially vulnerable or at risk of exclusion.

The records that you keep of individual cases are detailed and of high quality. You are planning to strengthen record-keeping still further, by introducing a new system for staff to record anything that gives them cause for concern about a child, however minor. This is because you understand the need to be vigilant and that small things, viewed over time, may highlight more serious concerns. You have a comprehensive programme of training for staff that covers all aspects of safeguarding, including the risks associated with extremist views and child sexual exploitation.

You work closely with social workers and other outside agencies to ensure that individuals' needs are met. You are aware of shortcomings that were highlighted in Ofsted's recent inspection of the local authority's safeguarding arrangements. You report that there have been recent improvements and that any referrals you make or questions you raise are now dealt with quickly.

Staff, parents and the pupils themselves raised no concerns about safety. Your records show that bullying is a rare occurrence, but should it occur it is appropriately dealt with. Pupils are taught to be aware of potential risks, including when using the internet, and to understand how to keep themselves safe through assemblies, circle time, lessons in personal, social and health education and in the wider curriculum.

### **Inspection findings**

- One of your key priorities has been to establish strong systems to make sure that every pupil makes the progress of which he or she is capable. You track pupils' progress carefully over the course of the year. The progress of individuals and groups is discussed regularly with teachers. At these meetings, you agree the next steps that are needed to make sure that no one falls behind and that those who need to catch up are helped to do so. The steps taken to reduce the differences in achievement between boys and girls in the current Year 3 have been effective. The differences that were evident in their achievements at the end of Year 2 in 2016 are much less marked.
- You have also put much effort into making sure that teachers' assessments of what pupils know and can do are accurate. You work closely with other schools to agree judgements. You also use standardised tests that help to show the impact of interventions, for example, in mathematics. Outcomes at the end of the early years were moderated this year by the local authority.
- The unvalidated results of assessments in 2017 show improvement from the previous year. The proportion of children attaining a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year is above last year's national figure. Boys in the year group have done particularly well. The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the phonics check in Year 1 is also above last year's national figure and the boys have done as well as the girls. At the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is above last year's national figures. Pupils have made good

progress over key stage 1.

- In reading and mathematics at the end of Year 2, the proportions of pupils who are assessed as working at greater depth exceed those seen nationally last year. The picture is not so strong in writing, however. There is also some variability in other year groups in writing and mathematics, but there is no particular pattern. You have rightly identified increasing the proportions of pupils working at greater depth as a priority in your development plan.
- Pupils leave St Andrews for their next school at the end of Year 5. Your assessments, confirmed by work in pupils' books, show that pupils build well on their prior learning across key stage 2. You take steps to make sure that the assessments you make at the end of Year 5 are accurate, including undertaking shared, externally validated tests along with the local middle school. This helps ensure a seamless transfer into Year 6. You also make sure, through events such as transition day, that pupils are well prepared and know what to expect when they change school. You give additional support to vulnerable pupils to help them manage the change with confidence.
- Your pupils achieve well in the wider curriculum. Their topic books illustrate the breadth of the curriculum, and also that topics are studied in depth. Pupils who spoke to me about their work were keen to tell me all about what they have learned over the course of the year. They were proud of the work they had done, and spoke knowledgeably about the topics they had studied. Their books were neat and well presented. Teachers assess pupils' achievements across the curriculum against a range of 'I can' statements that encompass the requirements of the national curriculum.
- There is a wide range of activities, clubs, events and visitors that enhance the curriculum well. You have used the physical education and sport premium funding effectively to increase the numbers of pupils who participate in sport and physical activity.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to strive to increase the proportions of pupils working at greater depth in writing and mathematics, especially in those year groups where the figures are lower than the school expects
- they plan effectively to meet the challenges of an expanding intake, pupils who arrive mid-year and the increasing numbers of pupils who are in the early stages of learning English.

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

Yours sincerely

Linda McGill  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

At the start of the inspection, I met the staff team and toured the school, accompanied by you and the deputy headteacher. I spoke to several parents in the playground as they brought their children to school. I met with you and the deputy headteacher to discuss briefly the school's self-evaluation and to agree the areas of focus for the inspection. I discussed the school's approach to safeguarding with you and scrutinised the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. I met two members of the governing body and spoke to the vice-chair by telephone. I also spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.

I visited classrooms to look at the work in pupils' books. I met four pupils from Year 4 who spoke to me about their topic work and showed me their books. Three pupils from Year 2 read to me. I observed pupils and spoke informally with them in the playground and in the dining hall. I looked at the displays in corridors and around the school. I examined documents, including the school's development plan, assessment information, minutes of meetings of the governing body and information on the school's website. I took account of the 68 responses made by parents on the Parent View website, including free-text comments. I also examined the views of 25 members of staff and 23 pupils who completed online questionnaires.