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Ms Sharon Cale  
Amberley Parochial School  
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Dear Ms Cale

### **Short inspection of Amberley Parochial 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 February 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment in January 2015, you have made several important changes to the school which have ensured that the safety of the pupils is paramount and that teaching is effective. Your strong and inclusive leadership has provided a haven of learning within a tight community. Pupils, parents and staff, alike, feel valued and empowered to support the school. As a result, the school is improving constantly. The underlying Christian ethos and clear provision of British values help the pupils understand tolerance and respect. Pupils come willingly to school and participate fully in their learning. They value differences and diversity.

Since the last inspection, the teaching of mathematics has been revamped. Much of this is because of the expertise of the leader of mathematics. He is a leader for the local authority in this subject as well as in the school. He has trained staff, pupils and parents in the demands of the national curriculum, particularly with regard to the areas of reasoning and problem solving. The leader's passion for the subject has emanated through the school. Pupils who were previously insecure in learning are now keen to tackle challenging problems. Many of the parents, whom I met before school, commented on this. The success of the work can be measured by the 2017 results for Year 6 in mathematics in the end-of-year key stage tests: 100% of pupils gained the expected standard and nearly a half of the cohort gained the high standard.

You have made the library the central hub of the school. A volunteer works in the

library daily so pupils can come in to research throughout the day, as well as during break and lunch times. You have introduced pupil librarians, who apply for their position of responsibility as good leadership development. They take their role seriously by supporting other pupils in finding books and reading with them. Pupils are trained in a universal library classification system so that they are aware of how to find books at school and in public libraries. This level of skill is purposeful for their next stage of education. Pupils are fluent readers. Skilful teaching assistants lead the successful phonics programme which supports pupils' reading and spelling. Pupils understand the deeper meaning of the texts they are reading. They have been very successful in their end of key stage tests in Year 2 and Year 6 for the past two years.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

You have created a culture where assessing risk is the norm. For example, you have made the external areas of the school safer with new fencing, gates and electronic door sensors. The personal safety and well-being of pupils are secure. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and child protection records are detailed and of high quality. The safeguarding policy is up to date and very comprehensive. The most recent Department for Education guidelines are on the website, which has all the necessary information about safeguarding. Staff are trained in how to keep pupils safe from abuse, sexual exploitation, and from the influence of radical or extreme views. You work sensitively with parents and external agencies to monitor and support any vulnerable pupils.

### **Inspection findings**

- We investigated the improvements in mathematics as detailed above. Pupils are challenged in their thinking. They are provided with a suitable balance between learning the basics that underpin the problem-solving and extension tasks. Occasionally, pupils' work on the more challenging aspects is left incomplete and unchecked by teachers. This impedes progress for a few. There is a similar occurrence in the English written work. Though pupils are writing extensively and showing a good grasp of spelling and punctuation, stringent monitoring by school leaders has identified occasional instances when teachers' suggestions have not been acted upon so learning is not embedded for these few.
- You want to make sure that the wider curriculum for pupils is enhanced. Teachers share responsibility for the wide range of subjects and report to governors on their planning. You provide a rich curriculum. You discussed that pupils will write up work on different foundation subjects separately in the future. This will enable pupils to have clearer notes to show the development of a subject.
- The attendance and persistent absence of pupils in the school had not been in line with national averages. You have alerted parents to the importance of regular attendance in education and have been very clear that holidays in term time will not be authorised. In addition, you have made sure that the correct

codes are placed in registers when pupils are absent so that statistics are accurate. Now that both of these measures are in place and understood, overall attendance is above national averages. The attendance of groups such as boys, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages.

- Finally, we looked at the achievement of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities as they had not been performing well in their end of key stage tests. Since your appointment, you have taken on the role of special educational needs coordinator. You did an audit of provision with specialist support from the local authority. As a result, the needs of each pupil are understood better by staff. Pupil progress is monitored and evaluated constantly. Pupils are involved fully with the profile on their preferred methods of learning. You have been given a strategic steer in this area by the governor with responsibility for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils are making better progress from their starting points. Many are achieving as well as their peers or better.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- stringent monitoring is maintained in the core subjects of English and mathematics so that learning continues at its high rate of progress
- notes on science and foundation subjects are written separately to show the development of a subject.

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

Yours sincerely

Kathy Maddocks  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, leaders for mathematics, English, special educational needs and/or disabilities, the local authority school improvement adviser, governors, staff and pupils. I visited lessons for all classes in the school. I looked at the quality of work in pupils' exercise books. I considered documentary evidence relating to the impact of the school's work, including safeguarding. I took into account 56 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and 11 comments written by parents plus a comment made in a telephone call to Ofsted.