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Mrs Clare Jones
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Jones

Short inspection of Christ Church Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 3 October 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 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. There are significant improvements to the teaching and learning at the school, particularly in the areas identified at the previous inspection. You have overseen a large building project, which has transformed the school building. The school can now offer more places to pupils and the number on roll is steadily rising, with more pupils joining the school throughout the year.

The school is now a light, spacious learning space in which pupils proudly show their good-quality work. From displays of beautifully painted pottery to well-written, well-presented writing, the learning environment demonstrates the very high expectations that exist here. You lead the school with a real sense of drive and ambition to ensure that children leave the school very well equipped for their next steps and for the wider world.

Following a period last year with an acting deputy headteacher, you now have a new deputy who has started supporting staff with pupils' well-being and the management of pupils' behaviour. Through your determined and resilient approach, a strong leadership team is developing, including a core team of subject leaders. These leaders share your drive and high expectations. They appreciate the trust you place in them to continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school. You also work with a school improvement adviser who has supported you very effectively in ensuring that your priorities and evaluations focus on pupils' outcomes.

Staff across the school exude a passion and a confidence to make sure that every pupil can shine and succeed in something that they enjoy. Pupils thrive in this environment and are enthusiastic about their learning. They are also welcoming and kindly towards pupils that join the school throughout the year.

Older pupils proudly explain their responsibilities to be 'good buddies' to younger pupils and they take this responsibility seriously. There is a strong sense of belonging, of being included and of the 'golden rules' that are continually shared and referred to by pupils and staff alike. Values such as kindness, honesty and respect help guide pupils to becoming successful young people. Most parents are very happy with the school and speak very positively about their children's experiences here, describing the good progress and strong attitudes to learning that their children are developing.

Since the previous inspection, you have kept a sharp focus on ensuring that teachers are well equipped to provide high-quality learning experiences. Teachers use information about what pupils know, understand and can do to plan activities that matches pupils' learning needs. You have carefully prioritised professional development for teachers so that they are clear about how to teach reading, writing and mathematics at Christ Church. Subject leaders work closely with teachers to make sure that they have the subject knowledge they need to challenge pupils, including the most able pupils. Pupils often have to apply their learning to discover solutions to problems. As pupils told me, 'We have to think hard here.'

As a result, pupils achieve well and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently above national averages. You are not complacent, however. You analyse the achievement of pupils in all year groups and adjust teaching and learning when needed. Pupils enjoy their learning and want to be here. However, you are aware that overall attendance rates at the school are too low and that the attendance of a few pupils needs to improve.

Governors share your drive and determination to achieve the very best for pupils. They visit the school often, talking to staff and getting involved with events. Governors have specific areas of responsibility and come into school to meet with leaders and check on improvements. Governors have been proactive in ensuring that they are up to date with recent changes to assessment in schools and have received support from the school improvement adviser. Minutes show that while governors do check and question leaders about the progress pupils make, they do not consistently ask precise questions in order to be sure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. The designated leader for safeguarding is rigorous in making sure that the safeguarding culture is strong. Governors are aware of their responsibilities around safeguarding and receive

training to keep them up to date. Staff also receive full training and updates and can describe with ease how this training informs their awareness of how to ensure that pupils are safe and that any concerns are reported quickly. Recruitment checks are carried out to the full. Any concerns around a pupil's well-being brought to the attention of leaders are investigated appropriately. Outside agencies are contacted for advice as needed and actions put in place as necessary.

Inspection findings

- Together, we agreed some key lines of enquiry to explore during my visit. We looked at how leaders have worked to improve the progress pupils make, particularly girls in mathematics and the most able pupils in writing. Together with governors and your leadership team, you identified at the start of last year a priority to ensure that progress in mathematics generally across the school and particularly for girls rapidly improved. You wisely focused professional development for teachers and support from your improvement adviser to work on this. You checked pupils' progress through the year and made adjustments to secure extra teaching and targeted support.
- As a result, girls' progress rapidly accelerated. Nearly half of all pupils achieved the higher standard for mathematics. This is well above the national average. As many girls achieved this higher standard as boys.
- Pupils achieve very well in reading at this school and this in turn supports their achievements in writing. From a successful, solid start with phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) early on, you and your subject leaders have put in place a whole-school drive to ensure that pupils have good opportunities to read. Shelves around the school are full of a range of authors and attractive appealing books that pupils really enjoy. A focus on teaching spelling strategies throughout the school helps pupils to have the tools they need to be able to write well.
- As a result of this focus on reading and spelling, pupils are well equipped with the vocabulary and the spelling skills they need to write confidently and at length. Nearly a third of pupils reached a higher standard of writing last year. This work clearly demonstrates the impact of leaders' work to ensure that pupils achieve well.
- Another area that we agreed to focus on was how leaders handle concerns and complaints. A small number of parents express dissatisfaction with how their concerns, particularly around bullying and behaviour, are managed. The documents that relate to concerns and complaints show that issues, once brought to the attention of leaders, are carefully considered and that leaders, including governors, ensure that any complaints are investigated thoroughly in accordance with the complaints policy. They also ensure that lessons are learned when appropriate. Leaders agree, however, that more needs to be done to ensure that parents feel increasingly confident to approach the school with their concerns and that their concerns will be managed well.
- Pupils unanimously told me that they feel safe and secure at school and could name a trusted adult that they would talk to should they have any concerns. Bullying, pupils explained, 'does not often happen here and if it does, teachers

make sure that it stops'. The high expectations from staff ensure that pupils behave very well around the school. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults in school are strong. Pupils are respectful and polite.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to engage with the small number of parents who are currently not confident that concerns about their children's well-being will be listened to and that issues will be resolved quickly
- attendance improves, particularly for pupils who are frequently absent
- governors continue to receive training that equips them to use assessment information to challenge leaders about the progress that different groups of pupils make.

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

Yours sincerely

Tonwen Empson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I listened to views from parents at the start of the day and met with a group of parents. I also took into consideration the 144 responses on Parent View and the responses made to an online staff survey. I talked to a parent on the telephone. I met with the school improvement adviser who supports the school. I met three governors including the chair of the governing body and the lead for safeguarding. I scrutinised documents related to safeguarding, including recruitment information, records of safeguarding training and a safeguarding audit. I talked to several groups of pupils throughout the day. I observed during lunchtime and talked to staff. I also met with teachers who are new to the school. I met with subject leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator. You and I had several meetings throughout the day. We looked at a range of documentation including records of bullying, racist and behaviour incidents, complaints, attendance information and the school's own analysis of pupils' progress and attainment. We also observed learning together in classes during which time we looked at pupils' work both on display around the school and in their books.