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Mrs Helen Pratten  
Executive Headteacher  
St Chad's Church of England Primary School  
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LS16 5QR

Dear Mrs Pratten

### **Short inspection of St Chad's Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 10 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in June 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You and your head of school demonstrate drive and determination in all you do. Together, you lead by example, set high standards and use research findings to improve the work of your team. You strive to attain academic excellence without losing the positive ethos and strong church values that are evident across the school.

At the last inspection, you were asked to maximise rates of progress, especially for boys in reading and writing. Your determined efforts to raise standards and rates of progress for boys have been successful in most year groups. This is because you regularly monitor the progress pupils make and hold teachers to account through performance management. You quickly identify any teachers who need support to help them reach your high standards. Your system clearly identifies when individual pupils or groups need extra support to help them meet the targets you have set.

Your leadership structure provides clear lines of accountability across the trust. Governors and the trust board work collaboratively to hold you and the head of school responsible for the progress pupils make. Where leaders identify emerging needs, they employ specialist teachers to work alongside your teachers and improve outcomes. Governors employ a range of internal and external monitoring strategies

to ensure that they have an accurate picture of the work in school. For example, governors have worked with middle leaders to check curriculum coverage by sampling books against the school curriculum. Governors are rightly confident that pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum.

You were also asked to further improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that work was sufficiently challenging for all pupils. A middle leader is attending ongoing training on 'maths mastery' and has audited the quality of teaching and learning across the school. After her initial audit, leaders changed the school timetable to provide teachers with time to assess mathematics work halfway through the independent task. Teachers now have time to check on how well pupils are responding to their tasks and adapt their planning during the session. Pupils who are finding work too easy receive more challenge and any pupils who are struggling receive additional support. You have already identified that pupils are making better progress because work closely matches needs, and you are focusing on ensuring that more middle-attaining pupils reach greater depth. You are working with teachers to ensure that this is consistent across the school.

You asked me to look at how pupils are involved in decision-making across the school. You are particularly proud of how leaders listen to and value what pupils say. You offer a range of ways through which pupils can show leadership potential and take responsibility for their own school. Junior leaders undergo a formal application process and an interview, which they take very seriously. School councillors, elected by their peers, demonstrate enthusiasm and are keen to represent their class. Some of the changes they have helped to bring about include reflection areas, eco-ninjas, upgrading the library, music in the dining hall and the cessation of wearing indoor plimsolls. Pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of British values and the rule of democracy.

Pupil premium funding effectively supports disadvantaged pupils. Your plans show careful consideration of the needs of pupils and you intervene quickly to support individuals. Although the proportion of disadvantaged pupils is small, with a few pupils in each class, you track their progress diligently and, as a result, the majority of pupils across the school make similar rates of progress to their peers.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Governors are particularly diligent in carrying out their safeguarding duties. Leaders are confident that all staff checks and recruitment information comply with best practice because they arrange regular external validation. As a result, staff records and systems to keep pupils safe are robust.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school and are enthusiastic about the new behaviour system, which puts a higher emphasis on recognising the consistently high standards of behaviour shown by the vast majority of pupils. Appropriate support is in place for the small number of pupils who have difficulty in regulating their own behaviour. Meticulous behaviour records show that, when any behavioural incidents do occur, staff take effective action. Leaders routinely check the

information and respond appropriately to concerns. A minority of parents raised concerns about pupil behaviour through the online questionnaire. However, leaders have effective systems in place to support challenging behaviour and keep pupils safe.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the end of the early years, the proportion of children gaining a good level of development has continued to rise, and more pupils than seen nationally are now reaching the expected standard. Girls' attainment is above that of girls nationally, and the attainment of boys is in line with boys nationally.
- Phonics outcomes remain higher than those seen in other schools. Both boys and girls perform well.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 in 2016 was above the national average in all subjects at the expected standard. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in 2017 has fallen. However, you know why this happened and have taken steps to address this. Progress rates were stronger for the most able than for other groups of pupils from their starting points.
- Leaders were disappointed with the 2016 outcomes in reading at the end of key stage 2. After analysing the test results, leaders planned effective action to improve standards. A whole-school reading review resulted in changes to the teaching of reading skills and a greater emphasis being placed on answering different types of questions. As a result, standards and rates of progress improved in 2017. You and your leadership team continue to build on this success.
- Writing standards remain at around the provisional national average in key stage 2. However, pupils achieved particularly highly in the spelling, grammar and punctuation test. A much greater proportion of pupils reached greater depth than previously.
- Standards in mathematics have risen in 2017. Early indications show that the recent adaptations to the curriculum and strong middle leadership are having a positive impact on standards.
- Progress rates across the school show a mainly positive picture. However, leaders know further work is needed to ensure that more middle-attaining pupils reach the highest standards in order to ensure consistency across all year groups. Leaders have already identified groups of pupils who need to make better progress. Plans are in place to address key areas for improvement identified by rigorous school self-evaluation.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- Progress is consistently strong so that an increasing proportion of pupils meet and exceed expectations, particularly middle-attaining pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the executive board and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Leeds, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leeds. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janet Lunn  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, the head of school, middle leaders, the chief executive officer from the trust, the chair of governors and a range of other leaders. I evaluated a variety of documentation, including the school development plan, self-evaluation, pupil progress information, performance management information, minutes from a range of meetings, behaviour logs and safeguarding information. I met with the parents of one pupil and considered the 83 responses to Parent View and the 17 responses to the staff questionnaire. No pupils completed the pupil survey. Your head of school and I visited every classroom together to observe teaching and learning, with the exception of Year 1, who were out of school during the day.