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Tracy Blackwell  
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Dear Mrs Blackwell

### **Short inspection of Hartington CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 17 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 March 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 team have an acute awareness of the challenges of running a small school. You have identified the areas the school needs to develop further, such as redeveloping the early years outdoor space or reorganising the structure of classes to meet the needs of the pupils.

Staff are proud to be part of the school. You work well together, with each member of staff taking on a variety of roles. Staff support each other and work collaboratively to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered and that it meets the needs of your pupils. Staff feel that the school is at the heart of the community.

Pupils understand the school's values of respect, tolerance, equality, kindness, sharing and friendship. They enjoy using the 'Acts of Kindness' box to nominate other pupils, who have been a particularly good friend, to be celebrated in assembly. Pupils act as 'peer buddies' on the playground at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They try wherever possible to sort out any problems they may have with each other, but they also know that they can seek help from adults when necessary.

Pupils are proud of their sporting successes. They enjoy taking part in many extra-curricular activities such as tai chi, gymnastics and dancing, and appreciate the

coaching they receive from Derby County Football Club. They challenge themselves to achieve their best to raise money for the British Heart Foundation by taking part in their swimming challenge.

Parents are very positive about the school. Every parent who responded to the online survey, Parent View, or who spoke with me during the inspection believes the school is well led and that pupils are well taught and supported. Several parents commented that you and your staff support pupils well and that you work hard to fill any gaps in learning.

The school is a key part of the local community. Villagers are encouraged to join pupils at the community lunches that are held in the school hall. Throughout the year, the school puts on performances at the nearby church, including for the Harvest Festival and at Christmas. Pupils are proud to display their work in the church.

Following the last inspection, you were asked to provide pupils with more opportunities to work together and in small groups and ensure that they know their next steps in learning. You provide pupils with helpful guidance on how to make their work better, and pupils use this to improve. There are many opportunities for pupils to work together across the curriculum, such as carrying out science experiments and planning stories together.

You were also asked to provide teachers with regular feedback to improve their teaching. You carry out regular observations of teachers and provide them with guidance in order to improve their teaching. Performance management of staff is linked to the school's priorities for development and you are all dedicated to raising the standards of teaching to provide your pupils with the best opportunities.

The governing body is passionate about the school and its place in the community. Members are fully aware of the challenges of running a small school and are supportive of you in making improvements. Governors take time to consider the specific needs of pupils. They have a good understanding of the attainment and progress of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, children looked after, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and the school business manager ensure that all checks are in place before an adult starts working or volunteering at the school. Records are well organised and fit for purpose. You have made sure your staff are fully trained and aware of their duty to safeguard pupils. All staff I spoke with, including lunchtime staff, were clear how to pass on concerns. They were aware of the different types of abuse and the signs to look for.

Although there have been very few safeguarding referrals, you are not complacent and you have ensured that staff and volunteers are vigilant in identifying concerns. You have taken particular care to educate staff, parents and pupils to the dangers

of radicalisation. Staff and governors are aware of the 'Prevent' duty and you have met with the police to fully understand what the concerns are within your locality.

### **Inspection findings**

- You and your staff are passionate about providing your pupils with the best possible opportunities and strive for improvement. You respond quickly to changes in pupil numbers each year and adapt quickly to meet the needs of all your pupils.
- You have recognised that your pupils needed further opportunities to develop their reading comprehension. You have introduced a new system to encourage pupils to read more and a greater variety of books. Pupils have responded well to this new system, and they enjoy the challenge of finishing and understanding a book and then moving on to the next.
- In order to assess the learning of all your pupils, you have recently revised your system to track and monitor progress. Teachers use this information well to plan for pupils' next steps in learning. They make sure that pupils know what they have to do to improve their work further.
- Assessment information is used to finely target pupils' gaps in learning and, as a result, they make good progress. Teachers support pupils well to develop and learn new skills. Occasionally, teachers are too quick to intervene and provide support when it is not necessary. Pupils are not given time to work things out for themselves and to develop resilience.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and designed to interest all pupils. Science teaching is targeted to encourage pupils to use reasoning skills. Pupils use their experience and prior learning well to make predictions. Pupils are provided with plenty of opportunities to practise and develop their mathematics and English skills across the curriculum, for example writing the story of Noah or reports about the Tudor period and redesigning the early years outdoor area, including calculating the area and costings.
- In the early years, expectations of children are high and, as a result, they settle quickly and make rapid progress. Systematic teaching of phonics means that children quickly use their newly acquired skills to blend and read simple words. The teacher is skilled in meeting the needs of children and responds well to their interests. Children's understanding is developed through effective questioning. For example, when children were looking at insects in the leaves, they were encouraged to think about what would happen if the insects did not break down the leaf litter.
- You provide your pupils with many opportunities to learn about different cultures and religions. You have links with a school in Sheffield and pupils from both schools visit each other. You are proactive in teaching children about different religions and pupils can draw comparisons between them. Pupils learn about the impact of significant figures and events in world history, such as the actions of Nelson Mandela and Rosa Parks.
- Pupils' behaviour in class is good. They are keen to learn and work diligently and

with focus. One pupil told me, 'Sometimes the work is a bit hard but that's just because you haven't done it yet.' On occasion, behaviour around the school and at less structured times is not as good. Pupils are not always considerate of each other and of visitors, pushing past, calling out and talking over each other.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils have more opportunities to practise skills independently and to develop resilience when completing their work
- pupils demonstrate considerate behaviour around the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Williams  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you and the chair of the governing body. I spoke with teachers, the school business manager and the school cook. Six pupils gave me a tour of the school. I observed learning taking place during the morning.

I scrutinised a selection of pupils' workbooks. I examined a range of the school's documentation, including its self-evaluation document, its improvement plan and documents relating to safeguarding.

I considered the views of parents by speaking with some of them before school. I also analysed the 12 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.