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Miss Carol Phillips
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Dear Miss Phillips

Short inspection of Bampton 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in March 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, the governors and the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (ODST), lead a school in which pupils are happy, feel safe and enjoy learning. Together, leaders show a strong determination to bring about further improvement. Staff are dedicated and appreciative of the importance you place on their professional development. Many parents comment positively about the school's work, highlighting how approachable the teachers are and how effectively you manage the transition of pupils as they move up the school. Parents praise the opportunities you provide which include them in the school community, for example the phonics sessions you are running for them. The great majority of parents would recommend the school to others.

Since the last inspection, you have made some changes to the school. You have joined the ODST, the on-site pre-school has become part of the school itself and you have reorganised how classes are structured. There have also been some recent changes to the structure and personnel within your leadership team, since your former deputy headteacher achieved promotion to another school. Your new leaders are keen to develop their roles to improve the quality of teaching so that pupils make consistently strong progress throughout the school. These leaders are already showing signs of becoming an effective team. Governors and the ODST recognise the need to support you and other leaders as you help your new team develop in their roles.

You have largely maintained the strengths identified at the last inspection. For example, the achievement of pupils in the early years and in phonics is good and improving still further. Teachers plan interesting lessons which help pupils to learn well. Pupils enjoy coming to Bampton CofE Primary School, and the very large majority attend school regularly. Pupils are polite and respectful. They speak confidently to adults and display good standards of behaviour around the school and in lessons. When, from time to time, pupils lose concentration, teachers are adept at bringing them back on track quickly and calmly. Pupils interact well with their peers. They are sensitive to each other's needs, particularly those of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils like learning; when asked about their favourite subject, virtually all subjects across the whole curriculum got a mention. Pupils appreciate the variety of extra-curricular trips and activities that support their learning. They are especially proud of participating in sporting activities.

You have addressed the areas for improvement that inspectors identified previously. You have increased pupils' progress in mathematics across Years 3 and 4 by ensuring that their calculation skills are better developed. Subject leaders helped to raise the quality of teaching so that teachers support pupils to edit and improve their work more effectively. They have also ensured that teachers' questions encourage pupils to explain their thinking. However, due to changes to staffing and further developments in the national curriculum, much of this work is necessarily ongoing.

Pupils join the school with average or above-average starting points. By the time pupils leave Bampton, they are well prepared for secondary school, with most having achieved the standards expected for their age, and many achieving high standards. However, this year pupils did not make enough progress in writing. Unvalidated performance information for 2017 shows that pupils' achievement in writing, by the end of Year 6, was lower than in previous years. You have identified the reasons for this underachievement quickly, and put in place measures to tackle them, which are already helping pupils to make better rates of progress in writing. Nevertheless, you rightly recognise that further improvement to the teaching of writing and mathematics is now needed, so that pupils make better progress from their starting points, especially the most able pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

You are successfully committed to ensuring that safeguarding is your top priority. You and the governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, and that records are detailed and of high quality. You make thorough checks when recruiting new staff. You provide regular training for staff in child protection. Staff know and understand their responsibilities well. For example, staff know how to refer concerns as and when appropriate.

You and your staff work effectively to ensure that pupils receive the help they need if, and when, required. For example, you use a variety of professionals to support families with a variety of needs. This includes making sure that the small number of

pupils who are persistently absent attend more frequently and get the most out of school.

The curriculum supports pupils' safety well. The pupils I spoke to knew how to keep themselves safe online, including to only communicate with people who are also friends offline. They know to tell an adult should anything they experience on the internet worry or upset them. However, they are less certain about how to report concerns by using 'report' buttons when using the internet. Pupils told me that this is a friendly school where bullying is rare. They said that when pupils do fall out with each other, it is remedied quickly. They are happy that adults in school will always help them if they need it.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we looked closely at specific aspects of the school's provision, including the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements; the achievement of the most able pupils and of disadvantaged pupils; pupils' achievement in mathematics and in writing; and the effectiveness of leaders in supporting the teaching of writing and mathematics.
- You and your team provide effective support for pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. When necessary, you work closely with external agencies to make sure that those who need it get extra help, particularly in helping them to attend school regularly. In school, teachers and teaching assistants know who these pupils are. Staff make good use of a range of appropriate strategies which help these pupils to make good, and sometimes accelerated, progress. For example, support for pupils learning phonics is particularly strong.
- Teachers use effective strategies to challenge the most able pupils in their learning so that many make good progress. For example, pupils' books show that in mathematics most-able pupils attempt harder reasoning problems. However, because the school's tracking systems are not always used to track pupils' progress from their starting points, sometimes teachers are not certain who the most able pupils are. Consequently, work to ensure that all most-able pupils achieve as highly as they should is not consistently effective, particularly in writing.
- Rightly, you recognise that pupils need to make more progress in mathematics. You and other leaders have worked effectively to improve the quality of teaching, including by accessing high-quality training provided by the ODST. As a result, teachers and teaching assistants have strong subject knowledge, which they use to help pupils learn well. You have identified areas of mathematics which need more attention. For example, you have made sure that pupils in all years regularly solve mathematical problems. Pupils throughout the school also have access to new resources which aid their understanding of mathematics. For example, some pupils in Year 2 used bead strings to find the factors of 20. They learned how to be systematic, so that they did not miss any factors out. As a result of your work to improve mathematics, current pupils are making better progress than pupils in the past.
- Last year, pupils in Year 6 underachieved in writing because leaders did not

identify quickly enough that pupils had gaps in their spelling knowledge. You are now addressing this by making sure that more attention is paid to accurate spelling and improving pupils' use of vocabulary throughout the school. Pupils told me that there is more focus on spelling than there used to be. Their books show this to be the case. In the early years, teachers provide activities which encourage children, particularly boys, to write more frequently. Consequently, current children are making better progress in writing than previously. However, pupils, particularly the most able, do not write at length and for different purposes frequently enough. This means that some of the most able pupils are not catching up as rapidly as they should. The ODST's plans to provide further training and support for the teaching of writing are appropriate.

- You have experienced some turbulence in subject leadership since the last inspection. In part, this accounts for why, last year, pupils across the school did not make as much progress as they should, particularly in writing but also in mathematics. You recognise this and have, rightly, made improving the quality of subject leadership a high priority for this year. With your new and newly returned leaders of mathematics and writing, you have accurately identified what needs to be done to help pupils make accelerated progress in these subjects. Your plans, such as to increase your monitoring of the effectiveness of teaching, are well judged. So too are plans to provide additional training and support for leaders, including from the ODST. You, other leaders and governors understand the need to make sure that this monitoring, support and training happen urgently, so that pupils' progress in writing and mathematics improves quickly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils throughout the school make better progress from their starting points, particularly the most able pupils, and especially in writing
- leaders, especially new subject leaders, are supported well in their roles of monitoring and improving pupils' rates of progress, particularly in writing and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Catherine Old
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I observed learning with you across the school. I met with you to discuss your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I met with you, your leaders of English and mathematics and a class teacher to examine pupils' work. I scrutinised a range of documents, including safeguarding information, minutes of governance meetings, records of leaders' checks on teaching, and information about pupils' performance. I met with governors and representatives from the ODST. I spoke to pupils during lessons, considered 26 responses to the Ofsted pupil survey and met with a group of pupils to discuss their experiences in school. I spoke to parents informally and considered 25 free-text responses submitted by parents via Parent View. I considered 11 responses to the confidential staff survey.