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Ms Katherine Marshall, Executive Headteacher, and Mr Lloyd Watkins, Head of School
Carisbrooke Church of England Controlled Primary School
Wellington Road
Carisbrooke
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 5QT

Dear Ms Marshall and Mr Watkins

Short inspection of Carisbrooke Church of England Controlled Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 November 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 April 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, your senior leadership team, staff and governors are very ambitious for the pupils in your care. You provide clear-sighted and purposeful leadership to drive forward improvements. Leaders at all levels have an accurate understanding of the standards achieved by pupils and what needs to be done to improve these further. The school's values of 'enjoy, endeavour, achieve, together' are borne out in all aspects of your work. You have high expectations of staff and pupils. Staff feel valued and respected and appreciate the opportunities they are given to develop their skills.

Many children starting Reception Year arrive with skills that are lower than those typical for children of their age, especially in the areas of learning associated with communication and language. Children make rapid progress during the year because you have focused the activities in these classes to rapidly develop these skills. As a result, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has risen and is now above the national average. Outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 are consistently strong. In 2016 the proportion of pupils attaining the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average. Provisional data for 2017 shows that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard was also above the national average. At key stage 2, according to provisional results for 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching the

expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average.

Pupils enjoy learning at Carisbrooke and their attendance is good. They are enthusiastic about lessons and participate fully in a wide range of sporting clubs and activities. Pupils are proud that they have been awarded the national 'school games' gold award for the second year running. They like being challenged in the classroom. They talked about the changes made in the teaching of mathematics and how they now enjoy the subject more because of the harder work they are being given. Pupils also enjoy the different topics they study and the trips that link to these. For example, a group of children spoke excitedly about a visit they are making to the Winchester Discovery Centre.

Governors know the school extremely well, and have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement across the school. They ensure that they are well informed, for example through their termly scrutiny panel days, in which subject and key-stage leaders present reports about their areas of responsibility. Governors use this opportunity to challenge leaders to explain underperformance, for example why progress slowed in key stage 2 in 2017. They then use this information to establish what support they can offer. In addition, they regularly visit the school to help in classes, for example by hearing pupils read.

You have worked hard to address the areas for improvement that inspectors identified at the last inspection. The work of middle leaders is now a strength of the school. They are regularly involved in lesson observations, pupil progress meetings and work sampling. They also lead training for other staff. They review and change their action plans as necessary. Middle leaders now hold staff accountable for any underperformance and, as a result, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is accelerating. In addition, you have increased the level of challenge, especially for the most able. Changes to the curriculum in both English and mathematics have enabled all pupils to be suitably challenged. The school's tracking information and work in pupils' books show that these actions have had a positive impact on pupils' progress.

Parents are highly supportive of the school. One parent, encapsulating the views of many, remarked: 'Experienced, caring staff lead the way at this school – I wouldn't want my children to be anywhere else!' The vast majority of parents who responded to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, feel that their children are taught well, and say that they would recommend the school to another parent.

You, your other leaders, and governors are ambitious for the school for further improvement. You have identified that at present progress made by all pupils in mathematics, and by some pupils in reading, at key stage 2 is not rapid enough. You have started to address this issue.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that

there is a culture of vigilance. Statutory checks are carried out on all staff to ensure their suitability to work with children. Due to the training and frequent updates they receive, all staff have up-to-date knowledge of current requirements and are aware about the risks posed to pupils, including those of radicalisation and online grooming. Governors are highly effective at monitoring the school's safeguarding work, for example by regularly interviewing pupils to ensure that policies have been put into practice and by completion of a monthly audit of the single central register.

Pupils feel safe and have a good understanding of how to keep safe in a variety of situations. This includes when working online. Pupils explained how they have lessons about internet safety at the start of each term and how their parents are invited to attend after-school sessions about the dangers of the internet. A group of pupils assured me that all staff would help them if they were having problems. A large majority of parents agree that their children are happy, safe and well looked after at school.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we looked closely at specific aspects of the school's provision, including the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements; the progress of all pupils in mathematics at key stage 2; and pupils' progress in reading at key stage 2, particularly those of key groups including middle-prior-attaining pupils, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Results at the end of key stage 2 in 2016, and provisional results for 2017, show that the progress made by all pupils in mathematics was below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in mathematics was slightly above that found nationally. Disadvantaged pupils' progress in mathematics was below the national average for all other pupils, while their attainment rose sharply. Consequently, the difference between disadvantaged pupils' attainment and that of other pupils nationally diminished between 2016 and 2017.
- The recent appointment of a new mathematics leader, the introduction of a new mathematics curriculum, and changes you have made to the teaching of mathematics have had a beneficial impact on the progress of pupils currently in the school. You have ensured that work now more closely matches the needs of individual pupils. This, together with the effective use of teaching assistants and the introduction of measures to ensure that no pupil gets left behind, has contributed to an improvement in current pupils' rates of progress. School information shows that pupils have made strong progress in mathematics since the start of the year. Workbooks scrutinised during the inspection provided additional evidence that the changes made have contributed to pupils' rapid progress in this subject. However, you are aware that more needs to be done to fully embed the positive changes that have been made since September.
- According to 2017 provisional results, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in reading was above the national average. However, progress made by middle-prior-attaining pupils was below average in both 2016 and 2017.

As a result, you rightly identified reading as an area for development. Following research by the subject leader and support from a local authority advisor, you have completely overhauled the way that reading comprehension is taught. Pupils now have access to high-quality texts, enabling all groups to be exposed to a diet of rich vocabulary and challenging storylines. Planning has also been adjusted to ensure that pupils in all prior attainment groups are challenged appropriately in the written tasks that link to their reading. The school's assessment information shows that pupils have made strong progress since the start of the year. Workbooks seen during the inspection supported the view that all pupils, including those with average prior attainment, are making good progress. However, leaders are aware that these improvements need to be sustained over the year if pupils are to attain the standards of which they are capable.

- In 2017, attainment scores in reading for disadvantaged pupils, both at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2, showed that they were performing better than other pupils nationally. However, rates of progress for disadvantaged pupils were below national averages in key stage 2 in 2017. Leaders have been quick to react to this. Rigorous tracking and targeted interventions are having a positive influence on the progress of current disadvantaged pupils in the school.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress in reading. Carefully tailored support, close tracking of the effectiveness of interventions, and 'keep-up catch-up' sessions delivered as the need arises, all contribute to this improvement.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is at least in line with national averages, so that standards are higher at the end of key stage 2
- the teaching of mathematical fluency and reasoning is further improved so that pupils make more rapid progress from their starting points.

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

Yours sincerely

Brian Macdonald
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you and your head of school to discuss the

school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. Together, we observed learning in every year group. I held discussions with subject leaders and members of the governing body. We talked to pupils about their learning and looked at their books. I talked to pupils at playtime about their school and met with the pupil parliament. I looked at the school's documentation relating to governance, pupils' progress and attainment, and safeguarding. I met with parents before school and considered 92 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 48 free-text comments. I considered 36 responses to the online staff survey and 232 responses to a recently commissioned pupil survey.