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Mr Andrew Milner  
Headteacher  
Coberley Church of England Primary School  
Coberley  
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Dear Mr Milner

### **Short inspection of Coberley Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 7 December 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 July 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 have been considerable changes to leadership and teaching staff in recent years. You have successfully stabilised staffing and ensured that whole-school training and leadership support has resulted in continual improvement.

Since in post, ably supported by your current middle leaders, you have worked with a relentless drive to improve the school even further and you have had good impact. Pupils achieve very well at Coberley. The proportion of pupils who meet and exceeded the standards expected for their age, at the end of key stage 2, has been well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics for the last two years. Pupils at Coberley are prepared well for their next stage of education.

Leaders have an acute understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas that require further work. Plans are in place to address any shortfalls. For example, you have identified the difference between boys' and girls' attainment and are working productively to address this.

Parents are highly supportive of the school. Almost every parent who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school and agrees that their child is taught well and is making good progress. Parents are effusive in their praise of the care, guidance and support pupils receive within the Coberley primary school family.

At the previous inspection, you were asked to ensure that teachers, including those in Reception, addressed pupils' misconceptions about learning. Your work to overcome these is generally effective. Most recently, the leaders' strategy for the improvement of spelling has begun to take good effect. Misconceptions about spelling rules are routinely picked up and this is having a positive impact on pupils' ability to spell with increasing accuracy. You were also asked to provide additional opportunities for pupils to write at length. This aspect remains ongoing. Leaders are accurately tackling this aspect for further improvement. The recent amendments leaders have made to the school's curriculum allow pupils to apply their writing skills to other subjects and at greater depth with increasing effectiveness. You know there is still more to do.

Leaders expect pupils at Coberley to be consistently well behaved and take on key responsibilities in school. Pupils are invariably polite and well mannered. Pupils enjoy school and attend well.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders conduct regular checks on school safeguarding systems. For example, they have responded quickly to actions set for them, following the annual local authority safeguarding audit. Staff training is up to date and in line with current legislation. Staff spoken to on inspection apply their training confidently so that pupils' risk of harm is minimised. Staff have been trained in the 'Prevent' duty and child exploitation. Staff talk confidently about how to refer concerns should they consider a child to be at risk, including risk of female genital mutilation.

Staff vetting checks meet requirements and the single central record is meticulously kept. However, leaders and governors have been slow to respond to the school's health and safety audit. Leaders, including governors, need greater oversight of the health and safety risk assessment process so that they can assure themselves that appropriate measures are in place to minimise potential risks.

### **Inspection findings**

- To ascertain the school remained good we examined the progress that pupils make in writing across the school. Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 has been above average for the last two years. However, pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 has not been consistently strong. Moreover, key stage 1 outcomes in writing dipped in 2017 to below those seen nationally.
- The teaching of writing is good. A recent focus on developing pupils' spelling is paying off. The writing curriculum has been overhauled in recent months and so there are now greater opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills to specific purposes and audiences. Most teaching builds on what pupils know, can do, and understand proficiently, to ensure that teaching meets pupils' learning needs well. However, some pupils in upper key stage 2 do not yet apply their writing skills with the complexity and detail required to meet and exceed the

standards expected for their age. Current teaching is remedying this weakness quickly. However, you know that there is more to do to enable those pupils who have previously underachieved to catch up rapidly.

- As a result of leaders' actions, pupils are becoming more proficient in editing and improving their work in Years 1, 2 and 3. Pupils write with increasing stamina and accuracy. Most teaching insists that pupils use and apply their phonics knowledge to their spelling. However, on occasion, pupils do not experience learning that is precisely matched to their needs. As a result, a few low-attaining pupils' progress has slowed this term. Conversely, children in Reception get off to a great start in their early reading and writing. Expectations are consistently high in taught sessions and when children are applying their reading and writing skills independently. As a result, many of these pupils are making rapid progress this term.
- Another aspect I looked at was the attendance of pupils who are eligible for additional funding. This is because some disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities have not attended well enough in the past. Leaders' careful monitoring has resulted in an increase in pupils' attendance overall. It is now well above the national average. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEN and/or disabilities attend well. Any persistent absence is followed up precisely and appropriate action taken.
- My final line of enquiry focused on how well leaders, including governors, are driving improvement at the school so that pupils' levels of achievement continue to rise and governors' statutory duties are met. This is because in the recent past there have been considerable changes to staff and governance, and some variance in pupils' progress in the recent past.
- Leaders at all levels have taken decisive action to improve teaching and pupils' outcomes. As a result, the school has recovered well from a dip in its performance since its previous inspection. Subject leaders have strengthened their roles as a result of the training they have received. They conduct checks on teaching and in work books and have been instrumental in improving curriculum provision in their subjects. However, senior leaders' checks on teaching are not yet precisely focused on pupils' progress from their different starting points. In addition, analysis of work in books is not as defined as it needs to be. As a result, on occasion the progress of some low- and middle-attaining pupils is too slow, particularly in writing. There is strong capacity to address this aspect.
- Governors meet regularly with leaders to discuss the action that is being taken to improve the school even further. They receive detailed information from leaders about the actions leaders are taking and ask increasingly challenging questions. However, at times they are too accepting of the information they receive. For example, the school's safeguarding policy, which had been recently ratified by governors, did not include up-to-date legislative information. This was rectified during the inspection. Governors have not yet ensured that school risk assessments are site specific and updated in a timely manner.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- risk assessments are kept up to date and site safety procedures are robust and up-to-date with requirements
- teachers have uniformly high expectations of what pupils can achieve in their writing, so that a greater proportion of low-attaining and middle-attaining pupils make rapid progress in order to meet and exceed the standards expected for their age
- senior leaders' checks on teaching are precisely focused on measuring pupils' progress from their different starting points.

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

Yours sincerely

Julie Carrington  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I spoke with you, middle leaders and a group of governors. I also held a telephone conversation with your school improvement adviser from Gloucestershire local authority. We made visits to lessons to observe pupils' learning and to scrutinise their work. I looked at pupils' workbooks in detail with you. I also talked to pupils and listened to their views of the school.

I considered a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's self-evaluation, development plans, and school performance information. I also looked at monitoring records for teaching, learning and assessment, your analysis of pupils' attendance, and behaviour and safeguarding documentation.

In addition, I took account of 25 responses to the Parent View online survey, and the free-text messaging service. I gathered the views of staff through discussions during the inspection.