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Mrs Sian Lane
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Lane

Short inspection of Pinhoe Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 18 January 2018 with Kathy Maddocks HMI, 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 February 2013.

The leadership has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils at the end of key stage 2 reaching the expected standards for their age in mathematics, reading, writing and science is above the national average. In addition, a higher proportion of children achieve the highest standards in reading and writing than the national average.

Your wholehearted commitment to equality of opportunity earns you the respect of the whole school and its wider community. You have developed a staff team that shares your drive to empower pupils to become resilient learners. Corridors and classrooms are characterised by beaming smiles from diligent pupils. This is because teachers and other staff make learning engaging. Your staff team has ensured that pupils are happy and that they respect themselves and others.

Pinhoe is a growing school. Since the previous inspection, governors have taken on the management of the pre-school. Children settle well and thrive in your pre-school and Reception classes because your staff are skilled and led well. Early support for children who have speech and learning difficulties is helping to overcome barriers quickly so that children are ready to learn. Children explore and learn in a stimulating, bright space, free from harm.

You have worked determinedly to review the many strengths of the school along with the aspects that require further work. You have taken decisive action to remedy some of the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. Pupils' achievement in key stage 1 is rising. A higher proportion of children meet the expected standards in the phonics screening check in Year 1 than the national

average. Furthermore, more pupils achieve at the highest standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2. You recognise that there is still more work to be done to ensure that more pupils achieve at the highest standard in mathematics.

Governors are ambitious for the school and have initiated an audit of their practice to ascertain how they can raise their effectiveness in holding leaders to account. They are knowledgeable about the strengths of the school. Their regular visits to school provide them with accurate first-hand information on the impact of their decisions to spend funds.

Parents and carers are rightly proud of their school. A small minority of parents expressed some concerns around the instability of staffing in some year groups. You and your governing body recognise that staff absence has been unsettling for some pupils. Inspection evidence suggests that you have worked hard to mitigate these circumstances so that pupils' academic achievement would not suffer. Parents commented typically on how happy their child is at school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The safeguarding culture in the school is strong. Staff and governors set pupils' well-being as a priority. Staff know pupils well and are quick to provide support to help them overcome personal difficulties. Leaders act swiftly and determinedly to follow up any concerns and work closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support that they need. Pupils say that they feel safe and know how to keep safe, especially in relation to social media. In addition, parents praise leaders for their approachability and typically express confidence in the school's work to keep children safe.

Leaders ensure that arrangements for checking on the suitability of staff are coherent and thorough. Good use is made of governor expertise to monitor how well staff understand the school's procedures. This is of a sufficiently high quality to ensure that the school's work to safeguard pupils is effective.

Inspection findings

- There is a rich culture of reading in the school. It is a central part of the life of the school. In particular, the middle-prior-attaining pupils make strong progress to achieve the highest standards. However, historically, a few of the low-prior-attaining pupils have not achieved the expected standard by the end of key stage 1. This is not the case for current pupils. A targeted reading programme has enabled pupils who had previously made slow progress in reading to catch up.
- Where it is identified that pupils have additional needs, the special educational needs leader ensures that an effective programme of support helps pupils to overcome any barriers to learning, so that they develop in confidence as well as ability.
- The literacy leader keeps a very close eye on pupils' progress and supports teachers in putting into place timely and well-thought-out programmes to assist pupils' phonic development. Consequently, pupils read fluently and spell

accurately. Furthermore, leaders have developed a love of reading in the school. Regular library times are cherished by pupils. Scrutiny of reading records show that pupils read often.

- Leaders have rightly identified the need to ensure that pupils' rates of progress are as good in mathematics as they are in reading and writing. They have implemented a new approach to the teaching of mathematics in recognition that more pupils need to achieve the higher standards. Training for staff and a new approach to developing pupils' mathematics skills are starting to pay off. Some pupils are starting to think more deeply and to explain their mathematical reasoning. However, leaders are not acting robustly to tackle weaknesses identified from their checks. In a few cases, teachers are not making effective use of their assessments of what pupils, know, can do and understand. Consequently, work set is too repetitive or lacks sufficient challenge for the most able pupils. Consequently, their progress falters.
- Pupils' overall attendance is in line with the national average. Your actions to improve lateness have been particularly effective, with initiatives such as breakfast club providing pupils with a positive start to the day. You act resolutely so that poor attendance will not be a barrier for any pupil. Your work with families to stress the importance of not missing valuable learning through taking holidays in term time is paying dividends.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders implement clear lines of accountability so that the impact of actions to improve pupils' outcomes are maximised
- teachers challenge the most able mathematicians, including those who are disadvantaged, so that they gain extra depth and proficiency in their thinking and reasoning in mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Tracy Hannon
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with you, the deputy headteacher, who is also the safeguarding lead, and with the family support worker. We also met with leaders for special educational needs, the early years, English and mathematics. Six members of the governing body, including the chair, met me to

discuss the actions taken since the previous inspection. The views of a number of parents were gathered through their responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. We also took account of the 18 responses to the online staff questionnaire. Inspectors carried out visits to classrooms jointly with you and your senior team. This was to evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning, to review the quality of pupils' work over time, to listen to pupils read and also to talk informally with them about their experiences of school. I evaluated a range of documentary evidence, including documents relating to safeguarding and governance. An inspector also met with a group of pupils to ascertain their views of the school, as well as considering the six responses to the online questionnaire.