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Mr Lascelles Haughton
Headteacher
Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School
Upper Tulse Hill
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Dear Mr Haughton

Short inspection of Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 January 2018, 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 November 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education since the last inspection. You have developed a strong leadership team that shares your high expectations of all staff and pupils. Your values underpin the school's vision of a community of 'Excellence in how we worship, learn and work together.'

Since the previous inspection, you have taken decisive action to strengthen the quality of teaching. There is a culture in which teachers work collaboratively to share good practice and learn from each other. Assessment information helps pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work and develop their skills.

Parents spoken to directly and who responded to the Ofsted online survey speak highly of the community spirit of the school. One parent told me that, 'Pastoral care is at the very top of the school's ethos.' Parents comment favourably about the opportunities you provide for them to come into school and learn how they can best support their children in their learning. Pupils all felt confident that the school is a safe and caring place where their concerns are always listened to. Parents appreciate the breadth of the curriculum on offer, especially the provision for music and after-school activities. The school website provides extensive information for parents about the curriculum and the life of the school.

Governors are well-informed and provide strategic support to you and the school. They are confident in your moral and educational leadership of the school. Leaders are very aware of areas for further improvement around mathematics and disadvantaged pupils, and monitor progress in these areas closely. Funding allocated for disadvantaged pupils is spent effectively. This has resulted in increased attendance and reduced persistent absence.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, and that records are of a high quality. There is a culture in the school that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. You and your safeguarding team ensure that thorough checks are made on all staff to ensure their suitability to work with children. The single central record is detailed, and is checked regularly by the chair of the governing body.

Training for staff is regular and kept up to date. Staff were able to tell me in detail about the specific safeguarding concerns in the local area. The safeguarding team knows individual pupils and families well. Your team works effectively with external agencies to ensure that, when needed, families have access to appropriate and timely support services.

Pupils of all ages told me they feel safe in the school. They know to whom they can report any worries or concerns, and are encouraged by staff to share any issues troubling them. Pupils say they greatly value this support. As a result, they also said that bullying rarely occurs in the school. One pupil said, 'Everyone just gets along and fits in. Bullying goes against our school values.' Online safety is covered through workshops and in the school's curriculum. Pupils were able to give specific examples of how to stay safe online. Parents spoken to agree that their children are safe and highlighted the pastoral care the school provides.

Inspection findings

- The leadership team and I agreed to look at three key areas to confirm that the school remains good. The first line of enquiry was in relation to how leaders are raising standards in the early years. While the school has generally seen a rising trend in outcomes in the previous four years, outcomes for the early years children are still below the expected standard by the end of the Reception Year.
- Children enter the Reception Year from a variety of providers. Attainment on entry to the school shows that children start with a wide range of abilities. Overall, children are below age-related expectations on entry. This is mainly because of difficulties with communication and language. Children make strong progress in literacy and number work and they meet age-related expectations in these areas by the time they leave Reception Year.
- The school has introduced a more systematic approach to the teaching of phonics in the Reception Year. Family learning workshops regularly take place, so parents can help their children's learning in areas such as writing and counting. The Reception Year environment is bright and attractive for children to develop early learning, both indoors and outdoors. All areas of early years provision are well resourced.
- We agreed as a second line of enquiry to look at what actions leaders are taking to increase rates of progress and attainment in key stage 2 in mathematics. Pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics were below average in 2017. This is an area that you have identified as being a key development priority for the school.

- Your own detailed analysis of previous results and outcomes shows that there are weaknesses in pupils' problem-solving and mathematical reasoning. You also identified the need for pupils to work at a faster pace during their mathematics lessons. Number and arithmetic skills are well developed, but other areas of pupils' mathematics learning are not of a comparable standard.
- A new online scheme was recently introduced to improve mental arithmetic skills. This has proved to be very popular with pupils and parents, and is now in daily use. We saw evidence of this in Year 6, where pupils were able to solve times tables questions and then apply these skills to problem-solving. The mathematics leader has developed pupils' skills on how best to solve problems and evaluate what they have learned. Detailed scrutiny of mathematics work in key stage 2 shows evidence of pupils' progress in problem-solving and mathematical reasoning. Pupils said they benefited from the additional support provided. Challenge tasks are also provided for the most able pupils. The school does, however, recognise that further work needs to be done to secure these improvements across key stage 2.
- Our third line of enquiry looked into the actions leaders are taking to address the differences between the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others, across the school. Leaders and governors recognise this as being a high priority for the school. This is reflected in the detailed school improvement plans and the strategies outlined on the school website.
- School leaders in previous years made their key priority to raise attendance and reduce persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils. Resources, personnel and funding were targeted on this crucial area. A balance of challenge and support to families in need was implemented. Breakfast club places are now subsidised to ensure a healthy and punctual start to the day for disadvantaged pupils. The impact has been successful, and analysis of attendance and persistent absence records show that they now match national averages.
- To support disadvantaged children, speech and language therapy has been used to support communication skills in the early years. Further up the school, one-to-one small-group tutoring is provided for mathematics lessons across the school. Support to engage families of disadvantaged pupils has also been provided by workshops and home-learning. Leaders carefully analyse the data and information management systems to ensure that funding is distributed where it is most effective. Leaders are aware, however, that there is more to do to diminish the differences between disadvantaged pupils and others.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching and learning provides more opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving and mathematical reasoning skills across key stage 2
- provision for disadvantaged pupils' results in this group making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups across the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Sean Flood
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I held discussions with you and other senior and middle leaders. I spoke with a representative from the local authority, and held a meeting with governors, including the chair of the governing body. I spoke with pupils in class, in structured settings and in informal meetings. I also spoke to parents. I observed pupils' behaviour in class, in the playgrounds and as they moved around the school. I scrutinised pupils' work in a wide range of subjects. I heard readers across the school, and spoke with pupils about the books they are reading. I also made visits to all classes alongside senior leaders. I examined the school's progress-tracking information and assessment records. A wide range of documentation concerning safeguarding, welfare and attendance was scrutinised. I also looked at behaviour and bullying incident logs. I considered the responses of 16 parents to Parent View, and the responses of pupils and staff to Ofsted's online surveys and the school's own internal surveys.