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6 February 2018

Mrs Elaine Merriman
Headteacher
St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mrs Merriman

Short inspection of St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 24 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 March 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 have worked tirelessly during this time to improve every aspect of the school. You have recruited, trained and galvanised a strong team of leaders, teachers and support staff. The staff support you and appreciate your dedication to the role. As one member of staff noted: 'The leadership team take part in the day-to-day running of the school and continually support staff with their hands-on attitude.' Parents are extremely positive about the school and the great start you provide for their children. One parent summarised the thoughts of many, saying: 'My daughter loves her days at school and is welcomed with a smile every morning.'

Governors know the school well. They are highly ambitious and supportive of leaders' work in the school. They do not shy away from challenging the school's leaders, asking pertinent questions to hold leaders to account for the performance of pupils. Governors take their equalities duties seriously. For example, they meet with the parents of pupils who have disabilities to ensure that the school is accessible to all, making changes to the building and procedures to meet these pupils' needs when appropriate. Governors, rightly, note that some teachers require additional support from leaders in order to consistently plan and deliver lessons that are closely matched to pupils' starting points.

Pupils try hard and are polite and kind. In lessons, they work with purpose and enthusiasm, readily accepting the challenging and interesting work that teachers

give them. Pupils report that at break and play times poor behaviour is extremely rare, and that teachers offer them care and support when things go wrong. The ability of pupils to discuss their thoughts and ideas in a sensitive and appropriate manner is a strength of the school.

At the time of the last inspection, you were asked to improve the effectiveness of leaders in the school. You understand that the development of leaders is a critical aspect of your work and have put in place a strong, capable and ambitious team of senior and middle leaders. Leadership responsibilities are offered to all teachers, regardless of the stage they are at in their career. You, rightly, provide staff with bespoke support to help both new and experienced leaders to thrive. You utilise the strong support of the local authority to provide leaders with guidance and advice specific to their subject areas. Experienced leaders work with new leaders to mentor and coach them as they evaluate their subject areas and develop plans for improvement. The skills and understanding of leaders at all levels is a clear strength of the school. As a result, the school is well placed to improve further in the future.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding procedures and documents are well maintained and fit for purpose. Leaders ensure that checks on staff are completed before they start employment. All staff receive comprehensive training which they apply to monitor pupils and report concerns when they arise. Leaders take robust action as soon as they receive referrals from staff, and work in collaboration with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families are properly supported.

Governors visit the school often to ensure that systems to keep children safe are effective and are followed by staff. When they identify an area that can be improved, they work with leaders to ensure that their suggestions are enacted.

Pupils and parents receive useful support to help them stay safe. Recently, leaders organised an e-safety evening focusing on the use of mobile devices. Parents received useful information about how to talk to their children about e-safety. For example, they were shown how to alter the settings on their phones and computers to provide greater protection from unsolicited contact and prevent access to inappropriate content.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look at: the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements; the quality of support and challenge provided for the most able, and most-able disadvantaged pupils; the effectiveness of support for low-attaining pupils; standards in all subjects across the curriculum; and the effectiveness of processes used by leaders to evaluate the school.
- The most able, and most-able disadvantaged pupils, receive strong support from teachers in class. Teachers use their subject knowledge well to question and guide pupils to improve their work. As a result, these pupils make rapid progress,

and higher-than-average proportions attain at a high standard.

- Teaching assistants and teachers use assessment information to identify accurately pupils who fall behind. Systems to help pupils build strong foundations in mathematics are particularly effective, and pupils who fall behind quickly catch up with their peers. Leaders recognise that systems to support low-attaining pupils in reading and writing are not yet as effective as those in mathematics.
- Curriculum leaders are skilled and knowledgeable. They work as a cohesive group to plan and deliver a broad and interesting curriculum. Pupils' strong reading and writing skills underpin pupils' research, recording and thinking in subjects such as science, geography and history. High-quality artistic opportunities are woven into the curriculum. For example, pupils' recent visit to a local art gallery inspired them to produce a longstanding piece of artwork which is displayed proudly in the main corridor. Recent improvements to the computing curriculum have extended pupils' understanding of coding and emerging technology such as three-dimensional printing. Pupils make strong progress in all curriculum areas.
- Leaders and governors use a wide range of information to evaluate accurately the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They use this information to form meaningful and well-judged plans to improve the school further. Middle leaders receive high-quality mentoring and support from senior colleagues to help them complete their plans, changing course, appropriately, when required. As a result, the school continues to improve apace.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- accelerate the progress of low-attaining pupils in reading and writing
- ensure that all teachers consistently receive high-quality mentoring and clear guidance on how to improve.

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

Yours sincerely

Daniel Lambert
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, senior and middle leaders, and five governors, including the chair. I observed learning in seven classes, all jointly with senior leaders. Together, we looked at pupils' work. I analysed a range of the school's documentation, including information about pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. We discussed your evaluation of the

school's effectiveness. I considered the 47 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and a letter submitted by parents. I also spoke to parents at the beginning of the day. I scrutinised the results of the Ofsted pupil survey and gathered the views of other pupils throughout the day.