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Nigel Arnold  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Arnold

### **Short inspection of Broadwindsor Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 25 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 September 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 invite all staff to make a contribution, share ideas and lead on initiatives. Consequently, staff feel positive about working in the school because they know they are valued by you and trusted to do their jobs. All the staff who responded to the staff survey stated, many strongly so, that they were proud to be members of staff at the school. Nearly all staff agreed that leaders do all they can to ensure that staff are motivated, respected and effective in their roles.

You respond positively to the challenge provided by governors and the school evaluation partner. They provide additional impetus to ensure that actions to address shortcomings are implemented swiftly. Governors are clear about the school's areas for development. They have received training on how to use published achievement information to hold you to account. This enables them to ask the most pertinent questions about the achievement of different groups of pupils. Governors are committed to their work and take an active interest in the school. They bring different experiences and skills to bear on their work, from backgrounds such as education, industry and the church.

Over time, your close working with staff has fostered trust, shared commitment and stability. Consequently, staff have high expectations of themselves and pupils. Staff have been diligent in keeping pace with curriculum changes and teaching practice developments. More recently, the school has benefited from its association with

other schools in the West Dorset Collaboration. This partnership enables leaders and staff to share practice to improve what they do. As a result, the quality of teaching has been consistently good over time, which, in turn, has led to good achievement in most subjects.

Pupils feel at home in the school because staff have nurtured a caring, supportive and welcoming culture. This explains why many pupils who attend the school come from outside of the catchment area. Pupils want to do their best and this shows in their behaviour and the way they treat each other. Pupils are friendly, cheerful and loyal to their school. Nearly all of the pupils who responded to the pupil survey stated that they enjoyed school. 25 out of 26 pupils would recommend the school.

The large majority of parents who responded to the online survey Parent View are also satisfied with different aspects of the school's work. 95% of respondents would recommend the school.

Leaders have successfully addressed areas for improvement from the last inspection. Teachers set clear targets for pupils so that they know what they are expected to achieve in individual lessons and over time. Mathematics achievement is now comparable with pupils' achievement in reading. Opportunities are provided to pupils to develop mathematical skills in other curriculum subjects, such as science.

At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the key lines of enquiry to be considered during the day. These included establishing the effectiveness of leaders' actions to raise pupils' achievement in writing by the time they leave the school. The second line of enquiry considered the effectiveness of leaders' actions to raise pupils' attainment in reading at the end of key stage 1. Finally, we considered whether safeguarding is effective. These lines of enquiry are considered below where they have not already been referred to.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Pupils are well known in this small school. Staff are vigilant for signs of upset or distress and ensure that pupils are ready for learning. Pupils feel comfortable around school staff and feel able to approach them with any worries they might have. One pupil told me, 'The staff are really kind. They look after us well.' All staff have received child protection training and know who to speak to if they have concerns. The referral system enables staff to record their concerns, which are relatively few, in a clear and comprehensive way. These are then passed on to the designated safeguarding lead. However, the storing and collation of information about pupils is not as well organised as it might be. This, potentially, hinders staff from developing a full, rounded understanding of a child's circumstances.

Pupils report that they feel safe because behaviour is good and there is very little bullying. Pupils who spoke with me, and the overwhelming majority of those who responded to the survey, agreed that bullying was dealt with effectively when it did occur.

Checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children are comprehensive, up to date and accurate. You and relevant governors have had training to ensure that you recruit suitable staff who apply to join the school. Governors have an appropriate oversight of safeguarding; they support you effectively to discharge your responsibilities in this respect.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders have been swift to analyse 2017 achievement information in order to identify areas of weakness. As a result, they have put in place strategies tailored to meet the needs of groups of pupils, such as boys and middle-ability pupils. Improvement plans are also focused on individuals, so that staff are clear about the bespoke support required in each case.
- Teachers possess good subject knowledge, which they use to plan activities that suit pupils of different abilities. Teachers are clear about the skills and knowledge of the new curriculum that pupils need to acquire. This helps them to teach with confidence, which has a positive effect on pupils' engagement.
- Pupils enjoy and value their learning. The combination of teachers' confident practice, skilful classroom management and encouragement mean that pupils are not afraid to participate in lessons. Teachers question pupils effectively, sparking their interest. Pupils of different abilities, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, confidently answer questions and share their views.
- Pupils report that they feel suitably challenged in their different lessons. Lessons are neither too easy nor too difficult; the level of challenge is such that pupils feel able to persevere with their learning. Pupils also say they are helped by staff if they struggle. One pupil told me that staff 'don't give us the answer but nudge us in the right direction'.
- Pupils report that they feel they are making good progress in their different subjects. This is supported by the work in their books, which shows that pupils are provided with different opportunities to practise writing skills. Pupils learn to write letters, diary entries, recounts, poems and creative stories, not only in English, but in topic, science and religious education. There is also a frequent focus on the development of technical skills. Therefore, pupils' attention is drawn to spelling mistakes and they learn how to apply different aspects of grammar and punctuation.
- The work in pupils' mathematics books shows that they are keen to grapple with difficult concepts. Pupils repeatedly consolidate calculation work, improving their ability to add, subtract, multiply and divide successfully. Books also show their increasing understanding over time of other topics such as fractions, angles and shape. However, pupils are not provided with comparable opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills to the same extent.
- In 2017, pupils' achievement in writing by the time they left the school was variable. Overall progress was in line with the national average, but it was below average for middle-ability pupils. In terms of attainment, the proportion of pupils

achieving greater depth was higher than average. However, the proportion of pupils achieving at the expected level was below average. The school's own progress information indicates that current pupils in most year groups, with the exception of Year 5, are making at least expected progress in writing. Leaders acknowledge that teachers' assessment can sometimes be overly cautious and not fully reflect what pupils can do.

- In 2017, the proportion of pupils in Year 2 attaining the expected level was below average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was above average. Leaders and staff have prioritised this area of the school's work to increase the number of pupils attaining the expected level. It remains a work in progress but current progress information indicates that current Year 3 pupils, who underperformed last year, made at least expected progress last term.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- information about pupils, that may have a bearing on child protection, is suitably organised to enable staff to form a full, comprehensive picture of pupils' circumstances
- staff continue to make use of training and moderation activities to increase the accuracy of writing assessment
- pupils are given further opportunities to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics to deepen their conceptual understanding.

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

Yours sincerely

Steve Smith  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I spoke to you, representatives of the governing body, pupils and the school evaluation partner.

You and I visited lessons to observe pupils' attitudes to learning. I also scrutinised the work in pupils' books.

A range of documentary evidence was considered, which included the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan. I considered governing body minutes and information relating to pupils' progress. Additionally, I scrutinised various

safeguarding records, including those relating to the suitability of staff to work with children.

I took account of 21 responses to the Parent View online survey. In addition, I took account of 10 responses to the staff survey and 26 responses to the pupil survey issued during the inspection.