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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Janette Skinner
Headteacher
Horbury Bridge Church of England Junior and Infant Academy
Bridge Road
Horbury Bridge
Wakefield
West Yorkshire
WF4 5PS

Dear Mrs Skinner

Short inspection of Horbury Bridge Church of England Junior and Infant Academy

Following my visit to the school on 1 February 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 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.

You are dedicated to ensuring that pupils can be the best they can be. A Christian ethos pervades all aspects of school life. You place high importance on developing pupils' understanding of British values and on enhancing pupils' understanding of others with different faiths and cultures. You are passionate about ensuring that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are developed through the wider curriculum. This is a strength of the school's provision and contributes to pupils' good levels of engagement in their learning. Pupils talk very positively about the range of experiences available, such as cooking, design and technology, forest school and links with Tanzania.

Developing pupils academically and holistically is a central part of the school ethos. Pupils have opportunities to develop their leadership skills through, for example, the Fairtrade group, and the junior leadership team. Through experiences such as these, pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education and beyond. Pupils are confident, well-mannered and articulate. Pupils are happy in school. They attend well. Consequently, rates of absence are well below the national average.

Staff morale is high. You encourage all staff to take on additional responsibility and develop their leadership skills. Staff appreciate the opportunities you provide.

The school is a popular school of choice in the local community. Parents and carers appreciate the wraparound care you provide. The vast majority of parents hold positive views about the school. One parent said: 'This is a brilliant and inclusive school with excellent opportunities for all pupils.' However, some parents, in their response to the online Ofsted survey, Parent View, are less positive about the school.

Since the previous inspection, the progress made by pupils by the end of Year 6 has remained strong and above the national average. In 2017, the progress pupils made in reading, writing and mathematics was well above national averages for these subjects. For the last two years, the progress made by pupils in mathematics by the end of Year 6 has been in the top 10% of schools nationally. Provision in mathematics remains strong at key stage 2. Teachers provide regular opportunities to develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills. However, pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 remain more variable compared to those seen in key stage 2. This was an area for improvement at the time of the school's last inspection.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and the safeguarding link governor audit safeguarding practices to ensure that they are fit for purpose. Staff training is up to date. Safer recruitment procedures are followed reflecting the latest government guidance. Staff are aware of the important role they play in keeping pupils safe. They are vigilant and pass on any concerns to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. Teachers keep pupils regularly updated with how to keep themselves safe online. As a result, pupils are aware of, and can explain, how to keep themselves safe on the internet.

The vast majority of pupils say they feel safe and that they enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in the happy and calm environment around the school. Pupils are well supervised at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils told me that incidents of bullying and poor behaviour are rare. However, leaders acknowledge that record-keeping could be more effective so that any trends can be evaluated more effectively.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, I wanted to check the school's approach to writing, particularly for most-able pupils. You have placed high importance on the development of writing across the curriculum. Pupils talked with enthusiasm about writing opportunities such as the weekly big write. Pupils have access to a variety of activities allowing them to write for different audiences and purposes. In Years 5 and 6, pupils regularly edit and improve their work successfully. However, this practice is not as well established in other year groups. In some year groups, misconceptions are not always picked up by teachers and standards of presentation and handwriting are variable.
- Since the previous inspection, you have improved the quality of provision in the

early years. You have extended and updated the space available to children, particularly in the outside area. As a result, the early years area provides an engaging, stimulating and creative learning environment for children. You place high importance on developing children's early reading skills so that they can get off to a good start. In one early years session, we saw children fully engaged and excited when their teacher was reading 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. The children were able to retell parts of the story with confidence. Teachers use every opportunity to model speech and language to develop children's vocabulary effectively. Children are kind to each other in their interactions. Due to the school's improved provision, a higher proportion of children, compared to the national average, achieved a good level of development by the end of Reception last year. However, you acknowledge there is still work to do to ensure that more children are able to exceed a good level of development and develop skills above those typical for their age.

- Outcomes in key stage 1 improved in 2017. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average. This was an improvement from 2016, when outcomes were below the national average. However, you acknowledge there is still work to do to ensure that pupils in key stage 1, and lower key stage 2, reach the standards seen in Years 5 and 6.
- Most pupils and parents believe that the school deals well with any bullying incidents. Pupils told me that if any bullying occurs they are confident that adults will deal with it quickly and effectively. However, a very small number of pupils, and parents, do not feel that the school deals effectively with bullying. Recorded incidents of bullying are rare. However, record-keeping does not provide an overview for leaders and governors so they can evaluate trends over time, or the effectiveness of the school's procedures, as part of their quality assurance process.
- Governors are committed to ensuring that pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education. They are clear about the school's strengths and areas for further development. They regularly visit the school and talk to pupils, parents and staff to check the quality of pupils' experiences. Although governors hold leaders to account, they acknowledge that the records of their meetings do not fully reflect this. Governors have recently completed a skills audit to identify any gaps in their skills and recruit new governors with these in mind. Governors continue to develop themselves so they can further evaluate the work of the school and support school leaders effectively.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all pupils are challenged in their learning so that a greater proportion of children exceed a good level of development in the early years and pupils in key stage 1, and lower key stage 2, reach the higher standards seen in Years 5 and 6
- wider opportunities are provided for pupils to edit and improve their work in

Years 3 and 4, particularly in writing

- consistent standards of presentation and handwriting are applied across the curriculum
- they undertake regular analysis of the school's behaviour management and welfare records to enable a more effective evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's procedures.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the director of education for the Diocese of Leeds, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Wakefield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Michele Costello
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I made visits to all classes with you. I also looked at the work in pupils' books. I met with you, a number of staff and five governors.

I took account of 45 responses from parents to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, email correspondence from parents, 12 responses from the staff survey and 57 responses from the pupil survey. I met with a group of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6. I also talked to pupils at breaktime. I spoke to a number of parents as they dropped their children off at the start of the school day.

I examined a range of documents, including the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation, assessment information, governors' minutes, attendance data and safeguarding records.