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21 February 2018

Mr David Hurdman
Acting Headteacher
The St Peter and St Paul CofE Primary School
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Dear Mr Hurdman

Short inspection of The St Peter and St Paul CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 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 May 2013.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

Since your appointment as acting headteacher in September 2017, you have accurately identified areas of the school that require improvement. You have ensured that these areas form the basis of the school's development plan. The plan has relevant actions, timescales and monitoring opportunities. Consequently, the governing body is able to hold you and other leaders to account.

The experienced governors have a diverse range of professional skills. These help the governing body to discharge its duties in, for example, finance and health and safety. Governors have undertaken relevant training in, for example, safeguarding and safer recruitment. Consequently, governors now have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They have also undertaken a skills audit to show where further training and development is necessary. Governors are now asking relevant questions that challenge you and other leaders in areas of the school's underperformance.

The considerable number of parents, carers and staff who responded to Ofsted's questionnaires were unanimous in their view that the school is well led and managed. One parent commented, 'As a parent I could not think of a better school to send my children.' Pupils are equally positive about the school. They unanimously

told me they were happy and safe. They added that behaviour was good and that adults deal with any rare instances of poor behaviour or bullying swiftly and fairly.

The school is a busy and harmonious place where pupils enjoy learning. This is because teachers plan interesting lessons that motivate pupils to try their best. For example, pupils in Year 1 were fully engaged in developing their directional language by giving instructions to a wheeled robot, so it would arrive in 'Australia'. Similarly, pupils in Year 5 were extending their vocabulary and deepening their understanding of how to write formal letters. They were enthusiastically writing to a solicitor, defending the conduct of the wolf in the story of the three little pigs.

By the end of key stage 2, pupils in Year 6 in 2017 had made broadly average progress from their starting points in reading and writing. You correctly identified that the most able pupils in mathematics made the least progress. When examining pupils' mathematics books, we agreed that one reason for this is that teachers do not always move pupils on to challenging work quickly enough. We noted that teachers now ensure that pupils have more opportunities to develop their mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills.

Pupils leaving key stage 1 make good progress from their low starting points. Their 2016 attainment at the end of key stage 1 was above the national average for reading, writing and mathematics. However, attainment fell to below average in 2017. Over the last three years, pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been broadly in line with the national average.

Children in the Reception Year make good progress. Staff assess how well they are doing accurately and make good use of the information they provide about their children's development. The outdoor learning area lacks the resources it needs.

Inspection evidence and the school's assessment information indicate that the majority of pupils are on track to be working at the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of this school year. We recognised, however, that pupils are not all making the progress they should. Teachers are not using the new assessment system consistently and do not take pupils' starting points fully into account. Past allocations of extra funds for disadvantaged pupils have not led to the faster progress you would wish for. You have tackled these issues through new leadership arrangements, but leaders have not yet developed the skills they need to be fully effective.

Safeguarding is effective.

You give safeguarding a high priority and a strong safeguarding culture runs throughout the school. The school's arrangements are secure and documentation is up to date. You have ensured that staff have received relevant training in, for example, the 'Prevent' duty and recognising signs of abuse. You also attend regular safeguarding meetings from the local authority and feed this information back to update staff. Adults complete 'Gold' forms to inform you of when they have a concern regarding a pupil's welfare. I saw examples where you have referred pupils

and families to outside agencies so they can receive any extra support swiftly. You have ensured that checks on adults before they start to work or volunteer at the school meet statutory requirements.

Inspection findings

- The system teachers use to assess and track pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is new. Teachers are not yet using this consistently. They also do not take into account pupils' starting points. It is therefore difficult to evaluate whether pupils are making good progress. You meet with teachers informally to discuss the progress pupils are making. We agreed, however, that this process is not rigorous enough. Consequently, teachers are not held to account for the progress of their pupils.
- Frequent and accurate assessment of children's work in the Reception class supports the careful planning of the next steps in their learning. Consequently, children make good progress. Pupils' writing and number books also showed this good progress. For example, some children had progressed from mark making to accurately writing numbers up to 20 during their first term. Children in the early years made better progress in 2017 than they have in recent years.
- Transition arrangements for children starting in the Reception class are strong. There are opportunities for children and parents to visit the school in the summer term and for the teacher to visit local feeder nurseries. Consequently, adults have a secure understanding of a child's abilities and needs before they start. We agreed that the outdoor area does not provide the resources and facilities it needs to match closely the foundation stage curriculum.
- You have recently appointed a leader who is responsible for how the pupil premium funding is allocated, monitored and evaluated. It is too early to measure the impact of this work. I agreed with you and the pupil premium governor that this aspect of the school's work has not been managed effectively in the past. For example, information relating to the school's use of pupil premium funding was missing off its website.
- Other leaders are also new to their roles. They have made a good start, but they do not yet have the skills they need to be fully effective in their areas of responsibility.
- Support from the local authority has been effective in helping you in your role as acting headteacher. The local authority's adviser has also helped with the school's self-evaluation, the writing of the school's development plan and improving the quality of provision in the early years.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they allocate pupil premium funding effectively and evaluate the difference it makes so that disadvantaged pupils, including the most able of them, make faster progress

- teachers use the new assessment system consistently and take into account pupils' starting points when evaluating and discussing pupils' potential progress with leaders, including that of the most able pupils
- teachers move pupils on to challenging work quicker, especially in mathematics
- all leaders develop their leadership skills and expertise in their area of responsibility
- they improve the outdoor area for children in the Reception class to match the requirements of the foundation stage curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Stonier
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the English subject leader, two staff members from the early years, and the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. In the absence of the early years teacher, I spoke with two other members of the early years team. I also held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I visited all classrooms with you and examined a range of pupils' books. I spoke with pupils informally during lessons and during a group discussion. I observed pupils' behaviour around the school, during lunchtime and in lessons.

I took into account the 81 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and 78 responses to the Ofsted free-text service. I considered 15 responses to Ofsted's survey for staff and 47 responses to its survey for pupils. I examined a range of documents, including safeguarding records and policies, records of recruitment checks, the latest assessment information for the school, the school's self-evaluation summary and its improvement plan, records of meetings of the governing body, and information relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.