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Mrs Ursula Scott
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Scott

Short inspection of Oaksey Church of England 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 October 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 ensure that a wide range of developmental opportunities for staff support their teaching effectively. Governors fully endorse your work and efforts. Since the last inspection, you have become executive headteacher of this school and Sutton Benger CofE Primary School. You are using the closer links to develop practice in both schools, which was one of the areas for improvement in the last inspection. You also continue to pursue opportunities for collaboration within the Hobbes Alliance group of schools. These links are enabling teachers to meet for training sessions and also to compare the standards of pupils' work. As a result, teachers are more accurate in their use of assessment information and use their findings to plan activities that increasingly meet the needs of more pupils. This was an area for improvement in the last inspection. You have recognised that the other area for improvement from the last inspection, namely of presenting clear information about progress to governors, is one that you continue to address.

Your school lies at the heart of the village community. You and your associate headteacher have created a warm, welcoming school in which all pupils are known for their individual talents and personalities. Staff use this deep knowledge of pupils to support them in all aspects of their academic and personal development so that they are fully prepared for the next stage of their lives by the time they leave school. Pupils are articulate and thoughtful, valuing the ethos of the school and the support that they are given by all adults in the school community.

Your curriculum effectively promotes pupils' understanding of their place in the world and ensures that pupils understand the role they play as global citizens. Activities, such as the 'Waste Warriors' project, and 'How we can look after our world' develop pupils' understanding of effects of the loss of the rainforest well. Stimulating learning environments and many examples of pupils' high-quality work on display showcase the rich curriculum on offer. Photographic collages, linked to the work of Pablo Picasso and a range of work linked to other artists typify the broad range of pupils' experiences.

Governors have a good range of skills and ensure that their knowledge is updated regularly so that they can fully support the school's development. They visit the school regularly and use this information to report to other governors and inform their decisions about the direction of the school. However, information obtained has focused too much on the standards pupils reach, rather than the progress pupils make. This has prevented a more penetrating analysis of the school's performance over time.

Pupils are confident, well behaved and keen to learn. They value many aspects of the school, especially the way that the school helps them to develop characteristics such as perseverance or resilience. Pupils benefit from a range of exciting learning activities, sport and music lessons, after-school clubs and school trips organised by the teachers and leaders. The governing body is active and strongly committed to the future of the school. Parents support the school and would recommend it.

Safeguarding is effective

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff have strong relationships with pupils and their families. They work effectively to promote all aspects of pupils' well-being. Regular training and safeguarding updates ensure that staff are well briefed about any potential concerns. Leaders' effective systems mean that when they recruit new members of staff or volunteers, there are appropriate checks on their suitability to work with children. This information is recorded carefully and governors ensure that these checks are carried out. Leaders and governors carefully consider all aspects of pupils' safety, taking an appropriate approach to potential risks and putting in place actions to address these. Pupils receive regular education about how to keep themselves safe, including e-safety and road safety when walking to the village church. They are confident that they are safe in school and parental responses to Parent View and to school questionnaires show that they agree.

Inspection findings

- The first line of enquiry we agreed was to look at the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics in key stage 2. Improving the teaching of mathematics is a key priority in the school's development plan so that more children can reach the highest standards by the end of key stage 2.
- Training with partner schools to help teachers change the way they organise

learning is starting to have a positive impact. Pupils report that this new approach is helping them as they can see what they needed to learn at the beginning of a topic and the progress that they had made at the end. Some pupils are supported well in developing their understanding of mathematical concepts through your chosen approach of using practical resources and diagrams. School leaders have encouraged teachers to take this approach but it is not yet consistent or practice across all year groups.

- The mathematics curriculum includes regular mental arithmetic activities and a focus on fluency in calculations. Therefore, pupils become well-versed in their use and knowledge of numbers. However, planned activities do not routinely promote pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills, a key requirement of the national curriculum in mathematics. Recent training to improve teachers' subject knowledge in this area is starting to show a positive impact on pupils' learning but improvements are not yet fully established across the school.
- Leaders' and governors' clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school are used to maintain a good quality of education for pupils. Currently, leaders' lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work focus on checking if staff are following agreed policies and procedures. Leaders acknowledge that they need to focus more on pupils' progress so that the findings can be used to improve teaching, learning, assessment and the curriculum more precisely.
- I explored how well children make progress during the Reception Year. Children's abilities are carefully assessed in the first few weeks of their time in Reception and staff use this information to plan the curriculum that they follow. Staff consider children's additional needs so that all children are supported to make good progress during the year.
- Children benefit from a rich classroom environment and an effective balance of activities that meet their needs well. The school's focus on developing children's speech and language skills, as well as their vocabulary and phonic skills, is proving effective. The proportion of children reaching the expected standard at the end of Reception is as expected given their starting points. However, leaders are aware that greater stretch is required for some children who are capable of exceeding the expected standard, especially in mathematics.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the mathematics curriculum is developed further to strengthen pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills
- monitoring of teaching and learning and analysis of assessment information focuses sharply on pupils' progress to enable leaders to use the findings to intervene appropriately and for governors to challenge leaders more effectively
- teaching enables more pupils to achieve the highest standards, especially in mathematics, by the end of Reception and in key stage 2.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body the director of education

for the Diocese of Bristol, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Wiltshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Tom Morrison
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the joint chairs of the governing body and several other governors, senior and middle leaders, teachers and other staff. I had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority and met with a group of pupils. I made observations of learning across the school jointly with you and looked at examples of pupils' work. I scrutinised a variety of documents including leaders' evaluation of the performance of the school, development plans, assessment information, and records of leaders' assessment of teaching and I viewed the school's website. I also read some of the minutes of the governing body's meetings, as well as records of checks leaders make on the suitability of staff to work with children. I took account of the views of parents from the 28 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View.