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Mrs Caroline Tilney  
Headteacher  
St Augustine's Church of England Primary School  
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West Sussex  
RH17 7PB

Dear Mrs Tilney

### **Short inspection of St Augustine's Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 23 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.**

You, senior leaders and governors have successfully communicated your determination to continue to improve the quality of education the school provides. You have the confidence of staff, pupils, and parents and carers, and have established an open, caring and inclusive school community.

Parents are very supportive and nearly all would recommend the school to others. In my discussion with a small group of parents, and in their Parent View replies, parents described the school as very warm and welcoming. One parent wrote, 'My children are very happy at this school, and the teachers are very supportive and helpful.' Parents feel that their children are effectively taught, are happy to come to school and are well looked after.

Pupils hold similarly positive views. 'This is a good little school,' was the view expressed by one pupil who summed up the comments made by many. Pupils enjoy being at school. Your emphasis on cultivating their personal and social skills, together with effective learning habits, ensures that they are well equipped and confident to deal with any challenges. Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong and built on an ambitious desire to succeed.

You have accurately evaluated the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Where areas for improvement have been identified, you have been quick to act and move the school forward. For example, you have analysed the school's data effectively to ensure that teaching is tightly focused and well planned. This has

helped to successfully address aspects of teaching and learning that were identified as areas for improvement at the last inspection.

Other areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection included pupils' progress and attainment in writing. Current pupils achieve well in writing. You have introduced new strategies to help children develop the skills they need to improve their writing. This has included an effective approach to improve spelling. Pupils use 'spelling zones' in classrooms to improve accuracy, particularly when using complex words. Pupils' work, including that of the most able pupils, shows that they confidently use and transfer writing skills learned in English lessons to other subjects. You were also asked at the last inspection to make sure that teaching assistants provide greater challenge for pupils. Teaching assistants support and guide pupils effectively and stretch them in their thinking. They also explain clearly and simply what is expected of pupils.

Pupils make good progress in mathematics, and attainment is rising quickly as a result. However, sometimes teachers' questioning does not require pupils to think deeply about how they work out mathematical problems. Occasionally, expectations of what pupils can achieve in mathematics are too low and pupils spend time on activities which have limited challenge. This slows progress. You rightly continue to prioritise this aspect to improve outcomes for pupils.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team and governors have ensured that all safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. Records are suitably detailed and of high quality. You have created a strong culture around keeping pupils safe. Pupils' safety is of paramount importance to all. You have ensured that all staff are appropriately trained. Consequently, they understand and implement safeguarding policies and procedures effectively. Clear procedures are in place and staff know how to report concerns. Leaders work very effectively with external agencies to help safeguard pupils. Swift action is taken where there are concerns relating to pupils' safety and well-being.

Pupils report that they feel safe at school and parents also support this view. The curriculum promotes personal safety well and all pupils are taught about e-safety. Pupils understand what to do if they or their friends are bullied or worried. They said that although there is very little bullying in school, they feel confident that they could report it. They also felt that adults would deal with bullying effectively if it was a problem.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the beginning of this inspection, we agreed on four key lines of enquiry. The first of these concerned pupils' attainment in mathematics. Evidence in pupils' books shows that the standards reached by pupils in mathematics are rising quickly. Pupils successfully acquire a range of age-appropriate skills because staff use a wide range of resources to support learning well and clear up misunderstandings quickly. Current school achievement information shows that

more pupils are already reaching the expected standard for their age than in previous years.

- Pupils demonstrate good skills in checking the accuracy of their calculations. They are confident in selecting the most effective and efficient method when faced with complex and 'multi-step' tasks. However, they need further challenge to consolidate and develop their skills further. This will enable them to experience greater levels of success in their mathematics.
- The second focus for the inspection looked at the progress pupils are making in mathematics. Training for teachers and teaching assistants has ensured that mathematics sessions are effective, because learning opportunities build systematically from previous work. Pupils make gains in their knowledge because explanations of mathematical ideas are clear. Pupils' progress is improving as a result. However, pupils do not make rapid progress consistently. This is because some of the questions asked by staff do not challenge their skills sufficiently. You have already started to change this so that the level of challenge in discussions and question and answer sessions is becoming stronger.
- I also focused on how well teachers are ensuring that more pupils reach the higher levels in reading and writing in key stage 1. Your assessment system has enabled you to have completed a very thorough analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills, particularly for the most able. As a result, staff have a deep understanding of the current skills of pupils and plan learning to make sure that these pupils reach the levels that they are capable of in reading and writing. This also extends into other subjects including history and art. As a consequence, increasing numbers of pupils are now achieving at greater depth in reading and writing.
- The final line of enquiry we agreed evaluated how well leaders are tackling the low attendance rates of disadvantaged pupils. The attendance of pupils, including that of disadvantaged pupils, is comprehensively monitored by leaders. Leaders have a clear grasp of the issues faced by pupils and their families. This helps the school to provide bespoke support to enable pupils to attend on time and frequently. The school makes pupils and parents aware of the importance of regularly coming to school and this is encouraging pupils to try hard to come to school more often. As a consequence, disadvantaged pupils' persistent absence has decreased and their attendance is improving.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- staff have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve in mathematics and provide them with tasks that extend their learning
- staff use questioning more effectively so that pupils' mathematical skills develop more rapidly.

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

Yours sincerely

Richard Blackmore  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I visited classrooms, observing pupils at work and talking to them about their learning. I held different meetings with you, four members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority. I looked at a range of school documents, including those relating to safeguarding. The school's improvement plan and self-evaluation information were also considered. Parents' views were gathered by speaking to them at the end of the school day, and through the 46 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the accompanying free-text comments. I spoke to pupils in lessons and at lunchtime. The 10 responses to the staff questionnaire were also taken into account. I also looked at information about pupils' progress and pupils' written and mathematics work.