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Mrs S Clarkson
Headteacher
Rishton St Peter and St Paul's Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mrs Clarkson

Short inspection of Rishton St Peter and St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 30 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 May 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since you took up post as headteacher in 2017, you have correctly focused on the school's key areas of strength and those areas in need of further development. Your leadership team and staff are fully committed to the positive changes brought about since your appointment, which are leading to stronger outcomes for pupils.

Strong Christian values underpin everything you do. Pupils regularly engage in reflection on the world around them. For example, pupils and staff take part in an inter-faith day organised by a local charity with whom you are developing close links. You work closely with the local church, and the vicar is a frequent visitor to school. This close working helps to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social understanding. For example, pupils responded well to an assembly on Cornelia ten Boom and the Holocaust, which was powerfully linked to the school's value of forgiveness.

Governors have an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the quality of education through their effective system for monitoring the work of school staff. The local authority adviser knows the school well and provides support at an appropriate level.

Pupils enjoy school. They also feel well looked after and are proud of their responsibilities, for example as school councillors. The majority of parents and carers

who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, are very supportive of your work. One comment summed up the many positive responses, 'My children are thriving in this school. They have formed good relationships with other pupils, teachers and support staff. My children are engaged with their work and often take what they've learned and apply it in the wider world.'

At the last inspection, you were asked to ensure that teachers consistently use information on pupils' current progress to plan work that is sufficiently challenging. This has been addressed in a successful manner. Teaching has improved and teachers now plan work for pupils that provides the right level of challenge to match their abilities. You were also asked to ensure that there is more focus on evaluating whether actions are having a positive impact on pupils' progress. Leaders regularly check on the quality of teaching and learning across the school. You use strategies, such as lesson observations and analysis of pupils' workbooks, to good effect, providing feedback to teachers to help them improve. As a result, outcomes for pupils are strong. However, during the inspection, we agreed that pupils need to take more pride in their work, improving their presentation across a range of subjects.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are of a high quality. Systems to ensure that only suitable people are recruited to work with children in the school are secure. Staff receive regular updates from you and the safeguarding team. Training is focused on issues that may arise in the locality so that staff can recognise and report any safeguarding issues. You know families well and work effectively with outside agencies to ensure that the most vulnerable families and pupils are kept safe.

Governors are very knowledgeable about their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils. Parents are provided with safeguarding updates through the school website. The majority of parents responding to Parent View agreed that pupils are kept safe in school.

Safety is taught throughout the curriculum. You work with local services to teach pupils about issues such as road safety and online safety. Pupils say that they feel very safe and know that adults will respond effectively to any concerns they have.

Inspection findings

- We agreed some areas of focus for this inspection. The first of these was to look at the actions taken by leaders to improve outcomes in early years. New appointments to the leadership team in early years have led to a positive change in children's attitudes towards learning. Adults use questions effectively to encourage, develop and extend children's ideas. Staff take every chance to deepen children's learning by asking targeted questions. For example, a group of children who were working on place value had the opportunity to develop their understanding of number. This was a result of staff asking questions that allowed children to think about 'more than' and 'less than'. You have implemented accurate assessments as the children start school in order to identify any gaps in their understanding. Children make good progress from their starting points, developing skills including early reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, the number of children who reach a good level of

development by the end of Reception is above the number of children who reach a good level of development nationally.

- The next area we looked at was how you are improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Governors are effective in evaluating the impact of leaders' actions on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes. The school's statement on the use of the pupil premium is clear and sets precise criteria by which success can be measured. As a result, teaching is now more clearly matched to pupils' needs. Teachers identify the barriers to success and ensure that pupils are provided with timely interventions to support their progress. The school's most recent assessment data shows that the difference in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils is diminishing. Work in pupils' books also confirms this to be the case.
- We also looked at how you are improving outcomes in reading and writing. In reading, you have strengthened pupils' learning by improving teachers' subject knowledge and questioning skills. Pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 read well and show good comprehension and fluency that match their age and ability. Pupils use their phonic skills to help them read unfamiliar words. You have introduced more opportunities for the development of comprehension and inference skills so that more pupils reach the higher standards by the time they leave school. You provide appropriate reading material in other curriculum areas that develops and widens pupils' vocabulary. As a result, current pupils make good progress in reading from their starting points.
- In writing, where teaching is most effective, pupils understand what they are learning because of the clear instructions that they are given by their teachers. This is because the assessment of their progress informs teaching and learning. Work in pupils' books shows that opportunities to write at length across the curriculum motivate and engage pupils. As a consequence, all pupils have made pleasing progress. They are acquiring the appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding while having the opportunities to apply their writing skills. For example, pupils in Year 5 were enthusiastic about producing writing linked to their topic on China. As a result, pupils were able to produce high-quality explanation texts. The proportion of pupils who achieve the standards expected for their age in writing has increased across the school. This was clearly observed in your own assessment information and the progress I observed in pupils' books. However, we agreed that handwriting and presentation across the school should be developed to further improve outcomes.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils take pride in all aspects of their work, including handwriting, so that there is further improvement in the quality of work across all subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Simon Hunter
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Throughout the inspection, I spoke to pupils, both formally and informally, about their work and school life. I held meetings with you, your deputy headteacher and subject leaders to discuss their areas of responsibility. I also spoke to the local authority school improvement partner.

I looked at work in pupils' books and reviewed documentation, which included your evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the school's development plan. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day and considered 40 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.

I visited classes along with you to observe pupils' learning. I met with governors to discuss aspects of school leadership and management. I reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.