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Mrs Joanna Jones  
Headteacher  
Church Drive Primary School  
Church Drive  
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Merseyside  
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Dear Mrs Jones

### **Short inspection of Church Drive Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 8 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 March 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 were appointed as acting headteacher in September 2017 and you have been quick to make your mark. You are supported well by senior leaders. You quickly established a new leadership structure in the school. You identified that the roles of the middle leaders needed to be developed in order to increase overall school leadership capacity. In doing so, leaders at all levels have a better understanding of how pupils are tracked as they move through school. School development planning is thorough and you have accurately identified areas in need of improvement.

At the last inspection, school's leaders and governors were asked to improve the quality of teaching, and in doing so increase pupils' achievement. Your own self-evaluation of the quality of teaching is accurate. School leaders have been and continue to be effective in tackling teaching that is not effective. Clear performance management and monitoring structures now ensure that all teaching is at least good. As a result of your actions, pupils' outcomes continue to improve.

The school is welcoming. Parents and carers are greeted each morning by highly visible members of staff. Pupils enter the site safely and calmly. Parents have the opportunity to speak to teachers at the classroom doors. Parents I spoke with described the school as a caring and nurturing environment. They appreciate the regular information they receive from the school.

The school benefits from having strong governance. Governors are supportive of the school. They acknowledge the improvements that are happening in school and they know what the school needs to do to improve further. They are kept well informed of key issues by the senior leaders and carry out their statutory responsibilities diligently. Governors visit the school regularly. They engage in and contribute to monitoring activities.

Pupils at this school are polite and friendly. Those I spoke with were keen to talk about their work. The older pupils enjoy the opportunities to be house captains, sports captains and prefects. Pupils behave well in lessons, as they move around the school and when they play together at breaktimes.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding arrangements in the school are effective. Checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are all in place. As the designated safeguarding leader, you have ensured that all staff members have received up-to-date safeguarding and Prevent training. Several members of the leadership team and governing body are trained in safer recruitment. Members of staff who I spoke with were well informed about safeguarding practices in the school and what to do if they had a concern.

The school works well with a range of outside agencies, including children's social care. Pupils I spoke with said that they felt safe in school and that they can talk to adults if they are worried or concerned. Safeguarding is promoted well around the school. Pupils are taught about aspects of safety in the curriculum. For example, pupils recently had input on safety in an assembly given by a children's charity. Safety is promoted well throughout school. For example, posters remind the pupils to be safe when cycling to school.

### **Inspection findings**

- During this inspection, I looked at the quality of pupils' outcomes in English and mathematics in key stage 1. Published data shows that, over five consecutive years, the percentage of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception has increased. However, pupils leaving key stage 1 have had mixed success, with outcomes being lower than the national average. Although leaders worked quickly to address poor teaching, high levels of staff absences in key stage 1 took its toll on pupils' learning and outcomes in 2016 and 2017. You have now ensured that a new team is in place. Pupils now benefit from stability. Most are making good progress and catching up on missed learning
- From looking at pupils' books and observing in lessons, we found that the quality of writing varied greatly between the classes in key stage 1. These observations matched your own recent monitoring of writing in key stage 1. You have identified from your own monitoring that the least able pupils benefit from extra practice to consolidate their basic writing skills. A good example of how this is being done was seen in one key stage 1 class, where the least able pupils were having opportunities to write out key words before attempting to write sentences. Although progress data for writing this year shows an improved

picture, standards, presentation and quality of content vary greatly between the different key stage 1 classes. You rightly recognise that inconsistencies in teacher expectations need to be addressed in order to strengthen teaching and improve writing outcomes across key stage 1.

- You have made changes to the way reading is taught across key stage 1 to redress a dip in standards in 2017. You have invested in staff professional development in the teaching of reading. Termly assessments and robust pupil progress meetings help you track the progress that individual pupils make. From hearing pupils read and talking to them about their books it was clear to see the positive impact of the work you are doing. The progress of pupils in key stage 1 is positive and pupils typically make good progress from their starting points. Reading is a high priority for you and it is promoted well throughout the school. Pupils have access to high-quality reading materials in the library and in the classrooms. You and I agreed that even more needs to be done to ensure that the most able pupils achieve the higher standards in reading by the end of Year 2.
- Since 2016, the school has adopted a new approach to the teaching of mathematics. You stated that you were disappointed with the results that pupils achieved at the end of key stage 1 in 2017. From looking in pupils' books, observing parts of lessons and speaking with pupils we noted that pupils have opportunities to explore and extend their learning. Pupils have regular opportunities to access challenge activities. A consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics across the school is now paying off. The progress for current pupils shows an improving picture with a high percentage of pupils making good progress from their starting points at both key stage 1 and 2. We did agree that you should build upon this work ensuring that more pupils achieve the higher standards in mathematics by the end of key stage 1.
- The final area that we looked at during the inspection was attendance. Absence figures and levels of persistent absences rose sharply in 2017; this was in part due to pupils' illness. Current school attendance figures show an improvement when compared to the same time last year. However, they remain marginally below the national average. The rate of persistent absence has significantly reduced and is now much lower than the national average. You are proactive in improving attendance. First response phone calls follow up every absence. You have appointed a pastoral liaison officer to work with families. Since this appointment, your records show that levels of parental engagement have risen and the number of pupils who are late for school has decreased significantly.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they improve writing outcomes for pupils in key stage 1 by ensuring that all teachers have high expectations, enabling all pupils to make good progress
- they build upon actions already taken to further challenge the most able pupils to achieve the higher standards in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 1.

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

Yours sincerely

John Donald  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

With you, I carried out visits to all year groups in key stage 1. We visited several classes in key stage 2. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation document and records of safeguarding. I looked at the school's records for staff recruitment and training. I held discussions with you and your leadership team. I met with several members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. I held a telephone call with a member of the local authority. I considered eight pupil and 22 staff survey results. I considered 48 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and 27 comments sent in via free text. I considered one letter from a parent.