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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Miss Sarah Sampson
Headteacher
Walesby Church of England Primary School
New Hill
Walesby
Newark
Nottinghamshire
NG22 9PB

Dear Miss Sampson

Short inspection of Walesby Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 13 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 June 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are ably supported by your deputies and wider leadership team and have a detailed knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Governors have a clear understanding of the school's priorities and of how you lead improvements. Governors appreciate the support that you have given them to improve their understanding of school data thereby enabling them to challenge and support you more effectively.

Pupils I spoke with enjoy coming to school. In lessons, they work hard on the challenges they are set, whether they are working with or without direct adult support. Pupils have a good understanding of when they are doing well and how to improve their work.

The school's curriculum enables meaningful cross-curricular links to be established. For example, in an English lesson with a science focus, pupils confidently constructed a report about the water cycle using appropriate scientific language and English grammatical terms.

You and your leadership team are ambitious for the school and every pupil. Leaders' plans for school improvement are extensive and thoroughly detail the action needed. However, the plans are less clear in identifying what works well and what

doesn't. This is reducing leaders' and governors' ability to analyse and prioritise the next steps for improving the school.

The previous inspection report asked leaders to improve the attendance of pupils. Attendance showed some improvement following this, but has declined again. The actions you are taking to raise attendance are comprehensive and appropriate. These include celebrating good attendance in school and by published figures in the school's newsletter. Poor attendance is followed up rapidly by school staff. Nevertheless, establishing a culture of good attendance remains a challenge for leaders.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of high quality. You record all safeguarding concerns thoroughly. You ensure that pupils are safe, identifying risks accurately and minimising them effectively.

All staff are well trained, and you check their understanding of that training regularly. Governors are also well trained and knowledgeable, several having key safeguarding roles in their own area of employment.

At the time of the inspection, the results appearing on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, were not consistently positive about the school's approach to pupils' safety and welfare. During the inspection, the conduct of pupils was of a consistently high standard at different times of the school day. All of the pupils I spoke with told me they feel safe at school. Pupils know who to talk to about poor behaviour or bullying and are confident that staff will deal with it effectively.

Parents I spoke with at the end of the school day said that they felt their children were very safe in school and these parents were also very positive about the staff. One parent told me that the staff worked hard for the children and that her child had caught up substantially since joining the school.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of the pupils they teach. Pupils are well prepared and confident to attempt challenging tasks. Work in pupils' books shows that, typically, they attain at least the expected standard over time.
- Leaders have ensured that a wide range of support is in place to help disadvantaged pupils achieve well. The pupil premium is generally well directed to improve outcomes for this group of pupils. As a result, the majority of disadvantaged pupils attain at the expected standard by the time they leave key stage 2. However, the strategic plan does not support a clear evaluation of the success of the actions taken, nor make accountability clear. Leaders agreed that this would be an area for improvement.
- Leaders have successfully identified that, historically, girls have not achieved as

well as they might by the end of key stage 1. The gap between girls' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in school and nationally is now closing. These improvements are part of an overall improvement in standards in key stage 1.

- You have provided additional training for staff on phonics, reading and writing to address underperformance in these subjects at the end of key stage 1. School leaders regularly and thoroughly check the progress of all pupils, and particularly those in key stage 1. As a result, by the time they reach the end of key stage 1, the majority of pupils are now substantially better prepared for the challenges of reading they will face in key stage 2.
- Teachers in the early years ensure that there is a strong focus on the development of children's language and mathematical knowledge and skills. Teachers are quick to identify and support those children who need additional support with speech and language. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the time they leave the early years is broadly in line with that seen nationally.
- Leaders are not precise enough in their analysis of pupils' progress over time. Pupils who achieve greater depth by the end of key stage 1 typically achieve the higher standards by the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, few middle- and lower-attaining pupils make the accelerated progress necessary for them to achieve beyond the standards expected of them.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders are more precise in their plans for school improvement and the use of the pupil premium, with measurable milestones and clearly defined roles and responsibilities to allow them to assess the impact of their actions more effectively
- the proportion of low- and middle-attaining pupils is accelerated so that a greater proportion reach at least the standard expected for their age
- pupils' attendance improves so that it is at least in line with the national average.

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

Yours sincerely

Clive Worrall
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I visited all classes in the school with you to observe pupils' learning. I spoke with pupils about their work and school life in class, during breaktimes and after listening to them read. I listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read. I observed and spoke with pupils during both morning break and lunchtime. I also looked at work in pupils' books, wall displays and resources available to support learning.

I held meetings with you and your leadership team to discuss improvements in their areas of responsibility. I met with governors to discuss aspects of school leadership and management. I reviewed a range of documentation, which included your evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, the school development plan and the pupil premium strategy. I also reviewed documentation relating to safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.

I spoke with parents at the end of the school day and considered 22 responses to Parent View.