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Mr John Littlewood  
Headteacher  
Brockenhurst Church of England Primary School  
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Dear Mr Littlewood

### **Short inspection of Brockenhurst Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 6 March 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 January 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 your appointment, on the retirement of the previous headteacher in 2016, you have overseen the development of a new senior leadership team. Leaders are determined, capable and effective as a result of your leadership. Together, you guide the school with a determination that all pupils are entitled to receive consistently good-quality teaching, so that they achieve good outcomes and develop as happy, well-rounded young people. Staff are hugely supportive of this vision. Teachers and teaching assistants appreciate the training, monitoring and support that leaders provide, which helps them make sure that pupils achieve their potential. Staff say that this is a friendly school to work in and are very proud of it. Parents recognise the dedication of staff. As one parent wrote: 'Staff are committed to bringing out the best in our children.' Another wrote: 'My son is incredibly happy and is learning really well.'

Governors use their broad range of skills very well. They strongly hold leaders to account. They check the school's work well by gathering first-hand evidence and commission useful external reports to provide additional information about the effectiveness of the school. Similarly, support provided by the local authority is helping the school's continued improvement, for example through providing training for new leaders.

The behaviour of pupils is of a consistently high standard. In class, pupils are eager to learn. They listen attentively and work with purpose. They are proud of the work they produce, and proud of their school. Pupils get on well together and are very

supportive of each other, both in their learning and in the playground. They look out for one another to make sure that they are happy, and are quick to help anyone who may look sad. Pupils say that they rarely fall out with each other but, when they do, adults are always on hand to support them and are swift to intervene when necessary. This is especially the case on the rare occasions that any child is purposefully unkind to another.

Outside of the classroom, pupils play actively at break and lunchtimes. They attend a variety of extra-curricular activities. Particularly impressive is the increasing number of pupils who are participating in a broad range of social, cultural and inclusive sporting activities. Music is also popular and a large proportion of pupils learn musical instruments in school. Pupils' attendance is above average. Leaders have identified the individual barriers that hinder some pupils' regular attendance. They have put support in place which is helping these pupils to attend more regularly.

You have acted on the recommendations from the school's last inspection to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is good and improving, although this has taken some time to fully embed. Pupils consistently achieve levels of attainment above those of their peers nationally. However, pupils' rates of progress are more variable across the school, particularly for some groups of pupils. For example, last year fewer of the most able pupils achieved the highest levels of attainment than previously. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities also do not achieve as well as they should. You have been quick to recognise this. Your school improvement planning is rightly focused on ensuring that consistently good-quality teaching leads to strong progress for all groups of pupils. A recent review of the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities has provided useful advice, which is helping you to improve provision for these groups of pupils. As a result of your ongoing work, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good and improving, and most pupils are achieving good outcomes across the school.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff receive comprehensive training so that they understand their safeguarding responsibilities well. They monitor pupils' welfare carefully and report concerns promptly. Your records show that when concerns are raised you act robustly to help keep children safe, including utilising local authority support where needed. You carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of adults to work with children. Governors ensure that they monitor the effectiveness of your work and record-keeping, including through ensuring that regular reviews of safeguarding are carried out, and that any recommendations for refinement of practice are followed.

The curriculum provides several opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe and how to manage risk, for example when crossing roads and when using the internet. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue in their school. They appreciate the opportunity to 'talk it out' should they fall out with their friends or

need someone to listen to their worries. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that an adult will help if they need it. Parents agree, including praising the school's efforts to make sure that pupils arriving at school are safe. For example, the newsletter regularly reminds parents to ensure that they drive safely when dropping off their children. Leaders have made sure that road markings around the pedestrian crossing have recently been repainted. All pupils are provided with a high-visibility vest so that they can be seen clearly when walking to school.

## **Inspection findings**

- At the start of this inspection, we agreed to look at: the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements; the accuracy and effectiveness of school assessment systems; the effectiveness of leaders in ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently strong; the quality of support for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities; communication with parents; and quality of provision for the most able pupils.
- You have introduced a new assessment system to help teachers to judge pupils' rates of progress and levels of attainment more accurately. This has taken a while to embed. However, it is now being used effectively throughout the school. Teachers now use the information they have about pupils' current achievement to plan activities and adapt their teaching to best meet pupils' different needs. For example, they can quickly identify any pupil who is in danger of falling behind, and provide them with timely extra support.
- Leaders identified that there were some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the school. Since your appointment as headteacher you have utilised additional support, including from the local authority, to identify areas of teaching that need improvement. Additional training, monitoring and support for teachers is having a positive impact. For example, you recognised that approaches to teaching spelling were not as effective as they could be. You researched alternative approaches, choosing one that is now working well for your school. Similarly, you have provided additional training to help teachers ensure that pupils' writing improves. Pupils' work clearly shows that teachers' new approaches are working. Pupils' writing is more fluent and accurate, and they are choosing an increasingly broad range of vocabulary.
- Your new leadership team is effectively overseeing improvements in the quality of teaching. Teachers welcome your monitoring of their work and advice on how to refine their practice. Teachers also appreciate the 'open door policy' whereby they can observe each other teaching. Regular training opportunities, for example through staff meetings, encourage staff to share good practice. Staff say that they feel supported in their work. Consequently, there is now much more consistency in the quality of teaching across the school. Pupils' rates of progress throughout the school are also more consistently strong.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well cared for. However, these pupils do not make as much progress as they should. Leaders and teachers are in the process of implementing the recommendations from a recently commissioned review into provision for these pupils. Early indications are that the subsequent actions you have put in place are working

and that current pupils are making more rapid progress than they have in the past. For example, work in the early years to improve pupils' speech and language is proving successful, and disadvantaged pupils' writing shows rapid progress across the school. However, leaders and teachers know that there is still a legacy of underachievement for older pupils in these groups. You are rightly using additional funding to address this swiftly. Leaders recognise the need to adapt improvement planning to incorporate the new initiatives they are putting in place and to ensure that their impact is fully evaluated.

- The majority of parents are very positive about the school. Several commented favourably on the changes you have made to the school since your appointment and are particularly impressed that you are available to talk to at the school gate every morning. However, you recognise that a minority of parents are less happy with the school, some commenting that they feel communication between home and school could be improved. You and governors are working hard to make sure that communication between the school and parents is effective. Staff are available to talk to parents before and after school. Teachers keep parents informed about what the pupils are learning through their regular blogs on the school's website. You have streamlined the school newsletter so that it provides parents with the information they need to know about current issues and future events. Most notably, you welcome parents into the school regularly. For example, numerous parents volunteer in the library, hear pupils read and help with extra-curricular activities.
- Teachers now provide more effective challenge for the most able pupils. The new assessment system is helping teachers to identify any most-able pupil who is not yet securely demonstrating they have achieved the high standard in a particular subject. They provide extra support for these pupils to ensure that they achieve their potential. Additional training in the demands of the national curriculum is ensuring that teachers are providing extra challenge for pupils across the school. For example, pupils are encouraged to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics at a younger age than in the past. Work to ensure that most-able pupils are more consistently challenged across the whole curriculum is, necessarily, ongoing.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is targeted more effectively and fully evaluated, to ensure that pupils make more rapid progress
- approaches to ensuring that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently effective throughout the school continue to be refined, so that all pupils make strong progress from their starting points, particularly the most able pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Winchester, the regional schools commissioner and the director

of children's services for Hampshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Old  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, senior and middle leaders, and eight governors. I also spoke to a representative from the local authority on the telephone. Together we observed learning in six classes. With middle leaders I scrutinised a range of pupils' work. I analysed a range of the school's documentation, including information about pupils' achievement, school improvement planning, governance records, monitoring visits, safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. I considered the 102 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the 68 free-text responses, and spoke to parents at the beginning of the day. I considered the 54 survey responses submitted by pupils, spoke to pupils during lessons and at play time, and met with a group of six pupils. I took account of the views of staff through the 23 responses to the staff survey and during meetings with staff throughout the day.