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Mrs Sara Willoughby  
Headteacher  
Hook-With-Warsash Church of England Academy  
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Dear Mrs Willoughby

### **Short inspection of Hook-With-Warsash Church of England Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 8 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 July 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 lead the school with positivity and care. Your effective leadership team supports you well and shares your determination to bring about further improvement. Many parents and carers were very complimentary about the school's work, highlighting the good progress pupils make over time and the strong community spirit that you have created. This was exemplified, during the inspection, as staff and pupils celebrated the joy of reading by dressing up as literary characters for World Book Day. There was a noticeable buzz of excitement throughout the school. An overwhelming majority of parents would recommend the school to others.

Staff are very enthusiastic about working at Hook-with-Warsash. Several who responded to the confidential staff survey said that the school has improved since it was last inspected. Staff appreciate the importance you place on their professional development, particularly the development through partnership work with other schools. Staff said that they feel hugely supported by leaders and they value the trust leaders have in them. Parents praised the strong relationship between pupils and staff. They appreciate that staff are always willing and available to discuss how well pupils are doing, both academically and socially.

Pupils embrace your whole-school and Christian values of 'love, independence, growth, happiness and trust' (LIGHT). This is evident in pupils' very good behaviour, their confident approach to learning and their highly positive interactions with each

other around the school. Pupils work hard in lessons and are productive. They said that teachers are kind and friendly and always willing to help them when they find work difficult. Several pupils said that mathematics is their favourite subject. They commented that they really like the challenge involved in understanding mathematics, as 'there's always something harder' to move on to once they have mastered a skill or concept. Pupils spoke positively, too, about a broad range of subjects. Opportunities to develop their creative skills through art and story writing were praised. One pupil excitedly explained to me how the human heart works, after studying it in science. In particular, pupils spoke very favourably about the daily opportunity for collective worship. They relish being able to celebrate each other's achievements. They are especially proud if chosen to light the 'collective worship candle' for demonstrating one of the school's values. As one pupil said, 'Our values mean a lot to us. They show us how to behave and act.'

You have made sure that the curriculum strongly supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils participate in a broad range of clubs, including computing, art and numerous sporting activities, as well as in competitions. They are looking forward to the school's annual production, when everyone works together to perform a musical for their families. Trips to local places of interest, for example the Winchester Science Centre, and visits further afield, such as the annual residential visit to France, allow pupils to develop team-building skills and resilience. Closer to home, pupils interact well with their local community. For example, groups of pupils regularly visit the local old people's home. Pupils appreciate opportunities to develop their leadership skills by running their own clubs, undertaking office duties and contributing to the school council. Pupils proudly told me that they had commissioned the 'friendship tree' in the playground so that anyone who feels sad or lonely can sit under it and know that someone will ask them to play.

Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. Pupils' attainment is consistently above national averages, including the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. Governors keep themselves well informed through regular visits and their scrutiny of leaders' work. At the last inspection, the school was asked to strengthen middle leadership and to improve the quality of teaching still further, particularly in some aspects of writing and mathematics. You and your assistant headteachers have set about achieving this systematically, including by utilising support and training provided by the local authority and local schools. As a result, writing and mathematics have improved and teaching is consistently strong. Middle leaders are developing their skills well. They are enthusiastic and knowledgeable.

Since the last inspection, you have adapted your curriculum to match the new national requirements. You have focused especially well on ensuring that pupils develop their depth of knowledge and understanding in writing and mathematics. Pupils' attainment by the time they leave the school is above average. However, published performance information shows that pupils' progress during key stage 2 is slower than the national average. You have carefully investigated this and concluded that assessments at key stage 1 were not accurate enough. You have,

rightly, refined your assessment system so that it is much more accurate. Information about current pupils, along with evidence gathered from lesson observations and pupils' books, show that current pupils in each year group are now making more rapid progress. However, you recognise where further refinements are needed and provide training, monitoring and support to ensure that staff are able to make the necessary improvements to their practice. For example, recent changes to the teaching of reading are being embedded, and teachers are raising levels of challenge so that a larger proportion of pupils achieve higher standards in each year.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are well trained and have a thorough understanding of how to spot any potential issues and pass on concerns. Leaders act appropriately to keep pupils safe, including through proactive work with parents and outside agencies. Governors keep a close eye on safeguarding procedure and practice, for example, by ensuring that safer recruitment procedures are followed appropriately.

Pupils said that they feel safe in school. They have an appropriate understanding of what bullying is. They said that bullying is rare, but that adults are swift to intervene should it happen. Pupils I spoke to could all identify a trusted adult they would go to, if they were concerned about anything. The curriculum strongly supports pupils' understanding of how to keep safe, for example, by teaching about road safety and e-safety.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the start of this inspection, we agreed to look at: the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements; the effectiveness of leaders in ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently strong; the effectiveness of the teaching of reading and writing at key stage 2; and the quality of provision for the most able pupils, especially at key stage 1.
- Leaders have created a positive culture in which the continuous development of staff is valued. Staff have been provided with expert training and advice, both from senior leaders and external trainers. They are keen to adapt their practice to make sure that they get the best out of pupils. Staff value the opportunities to reflect on their skills and share best practice with colleagues from their own school and other local schools. Middle leaders are developing their practice well. They appreciate the advice and support from experienced colleagues about how to manage their responsibility areas, and how to ensure that curriculum content and skills are mapped and taught appropriately. Governors oversee the school's work well. They have been keenly aware of the need to improve pupils' rates of progress at key stage 2 and have made sure that this is a key focus for leaders. Some governors join in leaders' monitoring activities so they can see for themselves the impact of leaders' actions. This is working. Teaching is consistently strong and, because of this, pupils' progress has improved over time.
- Leaders have researched the best practice in the teaching of reading and writing,

to devise a programme which works well for pupils at Hook-with-Warsash. Leaders ensure that pupils have experience of a broad range of genres for both reading and writing. You have revised the writing curriculum to provide memorable experiences that make pupils excited and motivated to write. Pupils develop the skills and the understanding of what needs to be included to write effectively for different purposes and audiences. Their work shows that they have increased stamina when writing. Pupils are proud of the work they produce. For example, a group of Year 5 boys eagerly showed me their writing, highlighting where they had received a headteacher's award for successfully persevering and editing their work. As a result, pupils' rates of progress in writing have significantly increased in the last two years, particularly those of boys.

- Pupils' attainment is consistently above average in reading. However, in the past, some pupils in key stage 2 have made slower progress than the national average. Last year, a below-average proportion of pupils achieved the higher standard at the end of key stage 2. This year, a change to the way that reading is taught is being implemented very well and is resulting in pupils making faster progress throughout the school. Teachers ask skilful questions, which help pupils to deepen their understanding and reading skills. Pupils enthuse about reading. They are keen to access the 'must reads' identified for each year group, and eager to show teachers their reading journals. These detail how much pupils have read across a broad range of genres.
- You noticed that in the last two years, some of the most able pupils were not challenged to achieve highly enough, particularly in writing and mathematics at key stage 1. You have made sure that teachers throughout the school now challenge pupils to achieve a greater depth in their understanding. For example, in mathematics, teachers develop pupils' mathematical reasoning skills by requiring them to explain their thinking to 'convince' an adult that they are accurate in their thinking. Similarly, in writing, key stage 1 pupils are encouraged to use a broader range of punctuation and vocabulary and take more responsibility for the editing of their own writing, than in the past. As a result of this ongoing focus, current pupils are making more rapid progress than previously.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- strategies to improve pupils' rate of progress in reading are securely embedded throughout the school
- a larger proportion of pupils achieve the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics in each year group.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Portsmouth, 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 observed learning in most classes with senior leaders. I met with you and your senior team throughout the inspection to discuss your self-evaluation of the school, performance information and safeguarding. With a group of leaders, I examined pupils' work. I also met with some teachers and with a group of governors. I scrutinised a number of records relating to safeguarding, pupils' performance, attendance, school improvement, safer recruitment and governance. I spoke with pupils in class, heard some pupils read and held more formal discussions with a group of pupils. I took account of the 82 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and 29 responses to the staff questionnaire. I considered parents' views by taking into account what I was told at the school gate at the start of the day, alongside the 99 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including free-text comments.