

15 March 2018

Mr Jon Sykes  
Headteacher  
Hipswell Church of England Primary School  
Hipswell  
Catterick Garrison  
North Yorkshire  
DL9 4BB

Dear Mr Sykes

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

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 December 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 have provided determined, dedicated and perceptive leadership, which has driven the continuous development of the school. Along with your deputy headteacher and governors, you have accurately identified the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. The school's detailed self-evaluation accurately 'tells the story' of your school and evaluates the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. The well-structured improvement plan is sharply focused on addressing these priorities. Leaders, staff and governors are ambitious to achieve the best outcomes for pupils.

Leaders and staff have worked hard to improve the areas identified at the previous inspection report. You are focused on developing the quality of teaching across the school. Staff attend relevant training to address school priorities, and leaders check regularly that this has a positive effect on the quality of teaching. Since the last inspection, your school has joined the Swaledale Alliance. This is affording opportunities for sharing leadership and teaching practice, which are beneficial to your school and to other schools within this network.

During our visits to lessons, staff were clear about what pupils were learning and how pupils could reinforce their prior learning. As a result, your pupils could explain to me how they were improving their work and how they were tackling the task in hand. Generally, where additional adults were deployed in lessons they were having a positive effect on engaging pupils with their learning. Expectations of staff are high and, as a result, pupils work hard in lessons and engage well with learning.

Improving the rate of pupils' progress in reading and writing remains an area on which you and your staff are continuing to work. You have introduced a range of strategies to address aspects of these subjects. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has reinvigorated the drive for improvement. Staff are responding well to training, new resources and the increased focus to increase pupils' progress further. Work in pupils' books supports your recent pupil progress information, indicating that pupils' writing skills are developing well. Similarly, work in books and observed in lessons shows that your efforts to develop pupils' reading stamina and improve their reading comprehension skills are starting to bear fruit.

The provision for pupils' personal development and welfare is a key strength of the school. You and your staff go the 'extra mile' to support the emotional welfare of pupils. The community served by your school means that there are high levels of pupil and family mobility. You have well-thought-through approaches to support all your pupils with some of the challenges these transitions may bring. Pupils were keen to tell me about the work of 'Hipswell Heroes' and helpful approaches, such as 'worry boxes', where they could seek support if they had any anxieties. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in lessons, around school and at breaktimes. Parents' and carers' written responses to the Ofsted's free-text survey, Parent View, were highly positive. Many commented on how you and your staff are welcoming, caring and approachable. They appreciate that staff nurture their children's personal needs and that they strive to help pupils enjoy learning and make good progress.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders carry out appropriate checks for all staff, governors and volunteers. Staff and governors receive regular and appropriate training so they know how to keep pupils safe, including training about how to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism. Consequently, staff and governors understand the safeguarding procedures and their own responsibilities. You and your staff work effectively with parents and other agencies. During the inspection, some administrative aspects in the school's safeguarding documentation required addressing. Leaders completed these promptly before the end of the inspection.

Your pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. Pupils know the different forms that bullying can take and know that staff will help them if they ever have concerns. Pupils believe that behaviour at your school is very good and that incidents of bullying are rare. Parents agree that their children feel safe in your school and that staff ensure that their children are well looked after.

### **Inspection findings**

- You have completed detailed analysis of pupils' assessment outcomes at the end of Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6. This has taken account of some of the challenges presented by above-average levels of pupil mobility, which were particularly high in 2017. This analysis shows that pupils in the main make good progress during

their time in your school. However, you agree that there is work to do to improve pupils' progress and attainment further, particularly in phonics, reading and key stage 2 mathematics.

- The recently appointed deputy headteacher, who is also the subject leader for English, has promptly taken action to address the school's priorities for improving pupils' outcomes in phonics, reading and writing. For example, she has introduced a wide range of strategies to improve the teaching of reading. The introduction of good-quality reading texts is inspiring pupils' interest in reading and writing. During our visits to classrooms and our review of pupils' English books, we noted effective use of these approaches by teachers. Your most recent records are showing that, overall, pupils are making good progress in reading. However, you recognise that there is more work to be done to ensure that leaders and staff embed these new approaches and that pupils' reading progress and attainment continue to improve.
- The 'reading challenge' is motivating pupils to read at home. Pupils talked to me enthusiastically about this initiative. Their home reading records demonstrate that pupils read very regularly at home. This work is growing pupils' love of literature, and the pupils I met could readily tell me about their favourite books and authors.
- Pupils' results in the Year 1 phonics screening check have lagged behind national averages for the last two years. You are keen to ensure that all pupils make good progress in phonics. Key stage 1 staff have received relevant training, and you have revised your approach to developing pupils' skills in this aspect of reading. Overall, this is having a positive effect on the teaching of phonics. However, there is still more to do to ensure consistency of approach from early years through to Year 2. Furthermore, on occasions, pupils' home reading books do not match pupils' phonetic development sufficiently.
- Your staff's efforts to develop the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation are having a positive effect. The high quality of these aspects of writing are clearly evident in pupils' work and displays of their work across a range of subjects around the school. Regular development of key writing skills, vocabulary and spelling is starting to improve the quality of pupils' writing.
- The mathematics subject leader has clear understanding of the school's priorities, including improving pupils' progress in mathematics by the end of key stage 2. She has taken action to improve the quality of the teaching of reasoning and problem solving in mathematics. The impact of staff training, combined with the introduction of new resources, is starting to become evident in pupils' mathematics books. The school's pupil progress information indicates that, generally, current pupils make good progress in mathematics. However, opportunities for this leader's involvement in school self-evaluation, including comparisons of the school's pupil progress information with national data, are not fully developed.
- The early years leader has a good understanding of the priorities for improvement. The introduction of more adult-led teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is improving children's outcomes in these areas of learning. At the same time, staff have maintained opportunities for children to choose activities to

extend and reinforce their learning. From their starting points, children make good progress in early years. By the end of Reception, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been above the averages found nationally for the last three years. Consequently, children are well prepared for starting Year 1.

- Governors have a good understanding of the school's priorities and the community the school serves. Their visits into school, for example, to see the teaching of reading, along with detailed information from the headteacher, keep them well informed about school developments.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- recently introduced strategies to improve pupils' progress in phonics and reading are embedded so that pupils make at least good progress during their time in school, and that this results in improved pupil outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screen and reading assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6
- reasoning and problem solving in mathematics continue to be developed and that pupils' progress in mathematics, particularly in key stage 2, improves to match the national average
- leadership capacity continues to grow by sustaining the professional development for the recently appointed deputy headteacher and engaging the mathematics subject leader more with school self-evaluation.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Reeves  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this one-day inspection, I discussed the work of the school with you, your deputy headteacher and two governors, including the chair of the governing body. I also held a meeting with the leaders for mathematics and early years. I observed and spoke with pupils during playtime and at other times during the day. I met with a representative from the local authority and reviewed their most recent report about the school. I took into account school documentation, assessment information, together with policies and information posted on the school website. I

considered the 56 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. I also reviewed the 15 responses to the staff survey. Along with you, I visited five classes to observe teaching and learning. I listened to pupils read both in lessons and individually. I looked at pupils' English and mathematics work to help evaluate the quality of teaching and learning over time. I considered information relating to safeguarding and attendance.