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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Andrea Peacock
Headteacher
Kirkby Malzeard Church of England Primary School
Kirkby Malzeard
Ripon
North Yorkshire
HG4 3RT

Dear Mrs Peacock

Short inspection of Kirkby Malzeard Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 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, and the recently appointed assistant headteacher, provide determined, dedicated and astute leadership. Your detailed self-evaluation summary paints an accurate picture of the school and clearly identifies the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Areas in the school improvement plan are being tackled with rigour. A positive learning culture pervades the school and staff take collective responsibility for pupils' outcomes. Senior leaders are incredibly supportive of their colleagues and, because of this, staff morale is high. Governors are proud of the school and are keen to ensure that the local community continues to benefit from the good-quality education that it provides. You and your governors have worked closely together to guide the school through a period of significant staff change. Parents and pupils were all effusive in their praise for the school, both verbally and in the online survey. One parent, whose child had recently joined the school, described how her child had 'increased enormously in creativity and confidence', while another spoke of the 'excellent support' provided for his child. Pupils were keen to talk about the many good things that their school provides and emphasised the caring ethos where, as one pupil explained, 'everyone's opinion is valued'. They also explained the important role and work of the school council, the 'Dale Captains' and the school ambassadors, who work with groups of pupils from other local schools to plan external art and sport events.

Since the last inspection, there has been a significant reorganisation of staffing. Recent appointments of an assistant headteacher/English subject leader and a mathematics leader have had a very positive impact on provision. Both are being

instrumental in raising the quality of teaching and learning. Links with the Harrogate and Rural Teaching Schools Alliance and support from the local authority advisor have enabled teachers to work with colleagues and view outstanding practice in other local schools. Considerable work has been carried out to match tasks to the ability of individual pupils. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. However, progress and attainment in mathematics indicate the need for the middle-ability pupils to receive personalised support. The final area for improvement from your last report concerned the development of writing skills. You were able to describe a number of strategies that have been implemented, such as the opportunity for pupils to attend external writing workshop events and increased moderation and support from senior staff. In key stage 2, pupils write well and are able to apply their skills confidently across a range of curriculum areas. However, currently in key stage 1 progress is not as rapid and the standard of the written work of a number of pupils in the present Year 2 cohort is below that expected for their age.

Safeguarding is effective

The school has a strong safeguarding culture. You, senior leaders and governors have established policies and practice that are effective and fit for purpose. Safeguarding records are appropriately detailed and all checks for the recruitment of staff are in place. Regular child protection training is carried out. Pupils said that they felt very safe at school and were keen to describe the new security gates. All were able to talk knowledgeably about staying safe online. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils have excellent manners and show respect for their peers. Older pupils were eager to explain how they are role models and look after the younger pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Bullying is not an issue, but, if it were to occur, pupils explained how they would tell a teacher immediately. Pupils enjoy school and attendance figures are consistently higher than the national average. Parents with whom I spoke all agreed that the school is a very safe and caring environment for their children. These views were reinforced on Parent View, where 99% of respondents agreed that their child felt safe at school.

Inspection findings

- You and your senior leaders recognise that significant work needs to be carried out to improve attainment and progress in mathematics. In 2017, national test scores for pupils in Year 2 were significantly lower than national averages. In key stage 2, although attainment was in line with the national average, progress was very low. The recent appointment of a new mathematics subject leader is already having a positive impact. He was able to describe in detail the work he has already carried out. This includes the development of a whole-school marking and feedback policy, increased monitoring of teaching, close tracking of progress and training for all staff. Cross-school interventions have been introduced and pupils involved in these have made accelerated progress. Observations of teaching and a review of the work in mathematics books in key stage 2 show that pupils are developing strong mathematical skills and challenge has been increased. Precise tracking indicates that a greater percentage of pupils in both

key stages will meet the standard expected for their age in the national assessments later this year.

- Another key line of enquiry related to the teaching of phonics. Over the last three years, the percentage of pupils who have achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been lower than the national average. In 2017, it was significantly lower than the national average. There have been issues with small cohorts and movement of pupils to and from the school and this has undoubtedly had an impact. A clear action plan has been established and changes have been made to the way in which phonics is taught. There is now an emphasis on small-group teaching and teaching assistants have been trained to lead small groups. Plans to suit individual pupils' needs are in place and pupils move freely from one group to another. The assistant headteacher is closely monitoring teaching and progress.
- Provision for children in the early years is good. Teachers and teaching assistants provide a lively, stimulating environment for the children, both inside and outside. There are plenty of opportunities for the children to develop social and physical skills. The early years leader was able to explain clearly why the percentage of children achieving a good level of development in 2017 was significantly lower than the national figure. Teachers recognise that there has been a gender imbalance in terms of attainment and they have worked hard to tailor a programme of learning to engage, stimulate and inspire boys.
- Overall, reading is a strength and this is reflected in positive attainment at the end of key stages 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 were able to describe books by their favourite authors and were able to read with fluency and expression. The texts that they were reading were appropriate to their ability. However, the texts that the Year 1 children were reading were not appropriately matched to their skill level.
- Leadership and management are effective and, because of this, the school has a strong capacity to improve. Governors and the local authority demonstrate an excellent understanding of the school. All were able to articulate accurately the strengths and the areas for development.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching in key stage 1 is as effective as that in key stage 2, in order that all pupils are supported and challenged
- the quality of the teaching of phonics is improved in order that a greater percentage of pupils reach the required standard at the end of Year 1
- calculation, reasoning and problem-solving in mathematics continue to be developed and that pupils' attainment at key stage 1 and pupils' progress in key stage 2 improve to match the national average
- reading texts for key stage 1 pupils are appropriate and offer challenge.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education

for the Diocese of Leeds (CE), 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

Richard Knowles
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this one-day inspection, I looked specifically at safeguarding, attainment and progress in reading, mathematics and phonics and overall attainment at the end of early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2.

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, senior leaders, your school business manager, the early years and key stage 1 leader, the English and the mathematics subject leaders, the chair of the governing body and other governors. I also had a meeting with your school's local authority representative. I evaluated documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's development plan, assessment data, governing body minutes of meetings and the local authority review report. I spoke with a number of parents at the beginning of the day and considered 36 responses from Parent View. I met with two groups of pupils from a range of year groups. The first group discussed safeguarding and behaviour with me. The second group talked about reading and I listened to them all read. You and I visited all classrooms together and observed mathematics in key stage 2 and phonics and writing in key stage 1. During the afternoon, we revisited early years and I carried out a scrutiny of pupils' written work and mathematics work from all year groups.