

5 April 2018

Mr Ian Page  
Interim Executive Headteacher  
Charsfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School  
Church Road  
Charsfield  
Woodbridge  
Suffolk  
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Dear Mr Page

### **Short inspection of Charsfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 21 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 March 2014.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. In particular, you have been successful in implementing positive changes to the way in which the school is led and managed.

The previous inspection report identified a need for leaders at the school to identify more accurately areas which needed to be improved. You have made sure that this happens. Your evaluation of the school is accurate. You have identified specific areas which could be better, and you are working diligently and effectively to ensure that they are.

You have invested time in ensuring that teachers in the school work closely in partnership with teachers at another local school so that they can share ideas. You have developed a better understanding of the need to base what pupils do on their starting points. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and most teaching meets the needs of most pupils well.

Governors are rightly confident in your leadership. They appreciate the improvements you have made. They, too, have developed their practice. Governors receive better-quality information about pupils' progress than they did in the past and use this to challenge you and hold you to account. They use the expertise of an external adviser to ensure that what they are being told is accurate. While governors feel that the school has moved forwards, they are keen to ensure that

the school continues to get better. As a result, governors are in an ongoing process of reviewing and refining the way they work so that they are as effective as possible in supporting and challenging you.

Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, are positive about the school. In particular, they feel that pupils make good progress and are well taught. Similarly, most pupils who completed their survey enjoy school and feel that their teacher helps them to do their best. However, some parents and some pupils raised concerns about behaviour. You recognise their concerns. You agree that you could further develop the work you do with parents and pupils so that they understand how you are addressing the things which are worrying them.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have secure arrangements to keep pupils safe. You have a well-kept record of adults who might come into contact with children at the school, and maintain clear records of concerns about pupils. Your systems enable you to identify quickly any emerging patterns which might suggest that a child is at risk of harm.

Pupils are effectively taught how to keep safe. Staying safe online has a high profile, and children are taught about other risks they may face, such as 'stranger danger'. The vast majority of pupils who responded to Ofsted's pupil survey, and all the pupils I spoke with during the inspection, said that they feel safe in school.

### **Inspection findings**

- During the inspection, I wanted to establish if pupils are well taught across the school. This is because the previous inspection identified a need for teaching to improve, particularly with regard to strengthening pupils' skills in punctuation, grammar and handwriting.
- Teachers at the school now work collaboratively with teachers in a partner school to plan lessons. They have training sessions on how to improve their teaching. You have raised teachers' expectations of how well pupils should be able to write and provided them with opportunities to compare the quality of their pupils' writing to that of pupils in other schools. Teachers are therefore able to assess the quality of pupils' work accurately. Most teaching across the school is good, including for punctuation, grammar and handwriting.
- My next line of enquiry related to the progress that pupils make in key stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2016 and 2017, pupils typically made less progress than their peers nationally through key stage 2 in each of these subjects. While attainment at key stage 1 was broadly average in 2017, the proportion of pupils who passed the Year 1 phonics screening check has been below average for the last three years.
- When you arrived at the school in September 2017, you recognised that teachers' expectations of what pupils could achieve were not consistently based on pupils' starting points. As a consequence, teachers did not routinely set work which was challenging enough to ensure that most pupils made good progress.

- Teachers now regularly review the progress that pupils make against targets based on pupils' starting points. You discuss the progress of pupils with teachers and decide between you what needs to be done to help pupils if they are not achieving as well as they could. You have a clear understanding of which pupils need to do what in order to achieve the goals you have set for them.
- Most pupils in key stages 1 and 2 now make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. You agree that, in some areas, there is still scope to raise expectations further, particularly for the most able, and particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- My final line of enquiry related to how well children are supported to develop through the early years. Due to very small numbers in Reception, it was not possible to establish accurately from published data whether children in the past had made good progress. I wanted to see how strong early years provision at the school is.
- Children in Reception make good progress because they are well supported to develop from their starting points. Adults who work with children in the early years know them well. They have a clear understanding of what the children already understand and can do, as well as what they need to move onto next. Children learn in a vibrant environment, rich in numbers and words. The activities they undertake are determined by their interests and abilities and help them to develop and learn well.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they work with parents and pupils to improve the perception that some parents and pupils have of behaviour
- teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly the most able, and particularly in Years 5 and 6.

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

Yours sincerely

Andrew Hemmings  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I spoke with school leaders, four governors and teachers. I visited all classes, accompanied by you, and reviewed pupils' work in their books.

I looked at a range of documentation relating to the school's self-evaluation, development planning, safeguarding arrangements and governance and reviewed school performance and attendance information.

I considered the 17 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 14 written responses to the free-text option. I also reviewed the 23 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and the nine responses to the staff survey. I met with pupils from Years 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 and listened to pupils read.