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Mrs Rachel Manley
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Manley

Short inspection of Yattendon Church of England 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 September 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since you took up your post as headteacher, you have engendered a strong sense of community and teamwork across the school. Your ambition for pupils and staff is high and the goals for the school are set out clearly in your plans for improvement. You have ensured that the school is a place where hard work and a positive attitude are encouraged and valued.

Parents are extremely positive and supportive of the school. They recognise and like the high expectations that you have for the pupils. Parents consider staff to be very helpful, caring and approachable. A parent, echoing the view of many others, said that this is 'a wonderful caring school...the teachers have got to know each of my children as individuals and encouraged their learning in every aspect. We are extremely happy.' All the parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and in conversation with me, said that their children are safe and happy and that they would recommend the school.

Pupils explained to me that they enjoy school because they feel well cared for and that 'learning is fun'. They appreciate the support from the staff team that they get with their learning. One pupil said, expressing the views of others, 'They are always helping us.'

You have an accurate and profound understanding of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. Your senior and subject leaders are effective because they ensure that staff improve their practice continually. Staff explained to me how they

feel very well supported in developing their expertise and subject knowledge. Consequently, pupils make strong progress, for example in phonics. You and the staff value pupils as individuals and know them and their families extremely well. Staff are committed to meeting the needs of every pupil. As a result, all pupils are supported effectively to achieve well academically and develop personally.

Governors know the school well and have a comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors ask appropriate questions to support and challenge leaders effectively. They meet regularly with subject leaders and keep the governing body well informed, providing detailed information about pupils' achievement.

The previous inspection report highlighted the school's strengths, including pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour. Pupils' approach to learning and their conduct continue to be exceptionally positive. At the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve disadvantaged pupils' achievement. Disadvantaged pupils now make good progress and their attainment is in line with or above pupils nationally. This is because their needs are met successfully. Leaders were also asked to develop the role of subject leaders and middle leaders. These leaders now track the progress that pupils make closely and evaluate the quality of teaching accurately.

Occasionally, teachers' and leaders' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low, especially for the most able. In these instances, pupils tackle activities which have limited challenge. Teachers' and teaching assistants' questioning does not require pupils to think deeply about their work. This slows progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Pupils' well-being is given the highest priority. Staff receive good-quality training and this is refreshed regularly through informative updates. You, other leaders and staff make appropriate referrals swiftly when concerns arise, and subsequent actions are followed up effectively. Leaders work well with families and external agencies to ensure that pupils receive well-targeted support.

Staff are vetted carefully prior to appointment and all of the necessary checks are made to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. Leaders, including governors, are diligent in ensuring that the school's record of checks on staff is maintained accurately. Governors and school leaders look continually at different ways to review and further strengthen the procedures to ensure pupils' safety and well-being.

Pupils who spoke with me said that they feel very safe. Comments such as 'Teachers take good care of us' were shared by many pupils. They told me that incidents of bullying are rare and that teachers deal with any issues effectively and quickly. Pupils outlined confidently the strategies that they use to stay safe online. They know the immediate actions to take if they view anything that causes them

concern.

Inspection findings

- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well because teachers monitor their achievement carefully. This enables them to have a precise knowledge of the pupils' progress and identify quickly any who fall behind. Teachers then provide pupils with additional help and support that are effective, enabling them to catch up swiftly. You use additional funding well to ensure that staff provide pupils with tailored packages of support. A wide range of extra help is enabling disadvantaged pupils to make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics and reach standards that are in line with the national average.
- I looked at how well teaching enables the most able pupils to reach higher standards. The most able pupils generally achieve well because you have put strategies in place to support their progress so that they achieve as well as they can. For example, teachers plan a wide range of opportunities for most-able pupils to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills in challenging contexts. Leaders' incisive analysis of the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding ensures that if any of the most able pupils' progress slows, they are identified early. However, you acknowledge that sometimes the level of challenge provided is not sufficient. When this is the case, pupils' progress is not as strong as it could be.
- Together, we looked at pupils' progress in English. Pupils are making good progress in reading and writing. You and your staff have acted decisively to improve pupils' early reading skills. Pupils' phonics skills are good because of the changes you have made to the organisation and teaching of phonics. Teachers choose texts that interest the older pupils and challenge their thinking. This means that pupils enjoy reading and are adept at making inferences about what they have read.
- Pupils have many opportunities to write at length in different subjects and present their work neatly. Pupils' books show that teachers provide pupils with a range of opportunities to practise and extend their skills. They expect them to write across a wide range of genres and show them how to improve their writing. Pupils use their spelling and grammar skills effectively. As a consequence, they spell words accurately and make ambitious word choices in their writing. Pupils' writing in key stage 2 is sophisticated and imaginative, indicating that pupils, from their starting points, are making good progress. However, some of the questions asked by staff do not challenge pupils to use their skills sufficiently. You have already started to address this.
- You work successfully to promote good attendance for every pupil. Your careful evaluation of the attendance of different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, means that your efforts are more precisely targeted. Pupils receive awards and praise for coming to school regularly. You alert parents and carers quickly when their children's attendance begins to fall. If it declines further, leaders work closely with other agencies to help parents to overcome any barriers to bringing their children to school on a regular basis. This has been

particularly successful in improving the attendance of boys. You have provided good support to families that are more vulnerable to enable them to send their child to school every day. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is in line with the national average, as is the attendance of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- learning opportunities, particularly for the most able pupils, develop pupils' skills and understanding
- teachers and teaching assistants use questioning more effectively to develop pupils' understanding.

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

Yours sincerely

Richard Blackmore
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your leadership team. I also met with five governors and the link inspector from the local authority. I had a telephone conversation with an adviser from the Diocese of Oxford. I met with a group of pupils and talked with other pupils informally. I spoke with a number of parents at the school gate. I looked at a range of pupils' work. You accompanied me on visits to classrooms, where we observed teaching and learning, and further looked at pupils' work. I examined a range of documentation relating to safeguarding, including the single central record of recruitment checks. I took into account 26 parent responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I looked at reports from the local authority and reviewed information about pupils' progress, attainment and attendance. I also considered the school's self-evaluation, its improvement priorities and assessment information for current pupils.