

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



17 May 2018

Miss Rhian Cockwell
Headteacher
Oliver Tomkins Church of England Infant and Nursery School
Beaumaris Road
Toothill
Swindon
Wiltshire
SN5 8LW

Dear Miss Cockwell

Short inspection of Oliver Tomkins Church of England Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 24 April 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 November 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 and your senior leadership team hold a strong and principled belief that every child deserves the very best start at school and the opportunity to achieve well, whatever their circumstances. You and your staff work relentlessly to plan and implement ways for pupils to be more successful. You have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas to improve. Governors are determined to promote high expectations for pupils and they challenge leaders very effectively to do just that. This ambitious and determined leadership has resulted in good outcomes for pupils across the school, whatever their starting points.

Standards and outcomes have improved in many areas since the last inspection. This success is partly down to your support for middle leaders. For example, you realised that pupils' weak phonics skills were holding back their ability to read. Middle leaders set about improving this. They identified the best approach to help pupils learn effectively. They supported teachers with training and monitored the impact, making changes and improvements where necessary. As a result, pupils' phonics skills improved and the proportions meeting the expected standards are now similar to the national average.

The school's caring and nurturing ethos runs deep at Oliver Tomkins and is demonstrated by the pupils' very positive relationships. They are kind and considerate towards each other and adults. They are polite and well mannered.

They say that behaviour is good in school. You work hard to ensure that all pupils are valued and welcomed. You know your families well and this helps you to plan effectively to meet your pupils' needs. Parents I spoke to during the inspection welcome your efforts to support their children in school. Parents typically commented on Parent View about the 'dedicated and patient staff' and the 'positive and nurturing' ethos in the school.

Pupils are keen to learn and show good attitudes to learning. A typical comment heard during the inspection is that 'all the learning is great!' In the Reception classes, children stuck at activities, making sure that they had fully completed tasks before moving on in their independent play.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your governors have created a strong culture for safeguarding within school. Records and systems for protecting pupils, including employment checks on the suitability of adults to work in school, are effective. You ensure that all staff receive regular, up-to-date training on safeguarding and that they know what to do if they have a concern about a child. Staff are vigilant and know how to log a concern if needed. You monitor pupils' behaviour well and use this information to provide additional support for vulnerable pupils. Clear systems enable you to make timely and appropriate referrals on behalf of pupils. You have shown resilience and determination to ensure that pupils' well-being is paramount.

Pupils say that they feel safe and know what to do if they have a worry. Pupils trust staff and are comfortable confiding in them. They understand how to keep themselves safe. They say that bullying is rare and that the school deals with it well if it does occur. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

Inspection findings

- At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the lines of enquiry to consider during the day. I checked the effectiveness of teaching in key stage 1 to secure good standards by the end of Year 2, especially for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and the most able. I explored how effective leaders have been at improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, especially for the most able disadvantaged. In addition, I looked at how effectively teaching in the early years supports children's progress, especially in reading and for the most able. Finally, I considered actions that leaders have taken to improve attendance, especially for different groups of pupils.
- Prior to last year, pupils' outcomes in key stage 1 varied over time. You and your leadership team ensure that teachers have the right skills and support to teach pupils well. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and match learning to pupils' needs. They provide effective strategies to support pupils to learn. As a result of this constant drive for improvements in teaching, pupils made good progress across key stage 1 in 2017. Pupils' writing is particularly strong. In writing, teachers set high expectations and give pupils clear feedback to enable them to write at length to a high standard. Pupils who

have SEN and/or disabilities are very effectively supported and achieve well. This results from a highly structured approach that focuses on supporting pupils' individual needs. Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils to extend their vocabulary. Standards across key stage 1 continue to be good, despite different year groups with different abilities moving through school.

- In key stage 1, the most able pupils do well in reading and writing as a result of work that really challenges them. However, in mathematics, teachers do not always plan work for the most able pupils to explore complex mathematical problems that fully challenge them.
- Over time, disadvantaged pupils have not achieved as well as other pupils nationally. You and your leadership team have been addressing this with a relentless determination since the previous inspection. Governors are equally resolute in supporting the most disadvantaged pupils in school. You have a very clear understanding of the barriers to learning of your disadvantaged pupils and your 'pupil premium champion' carefully plans interventions to address them. These interventions are evaluated well and adapted accordingly. You support parents to work closely with the school. Additional support to address gaps in pupils' learning ensures that most disadvantaged pupils make good progress across the school. The most able disadvantaged pupils are challenged in writing to work at a high level. However, in mathematics, work is not consistently challenging enough for the most able pupils to make good progress.
- Outcomes at the end of early years have been below the national average over time. However, children join the early years classes with skills and knowledge that are below or well below what is typical for their age. Teachers are quick to assess children's needs as they enter school. They use these accurate assessments to support children in their learning. Teachers focus on widening children's vocabulary and use a highly effective structured approach to develop children's speaking and listening skills. The classrooms are awash with colour and vocabulary, creating an environment that stimulates pupils' learning. Children have high levels of independence and enjoy exploring learning, both inside and outside the classrooms. Highly effective teaching ensures that children make good progress across early years. While the most able children are challenged to work at a high level in the nursery, they are not always identified early enough in the Reception classes to receive this right level of challenge.
- Pupils' absence has been above the national average for the past three years. You are unwavering in the view that children learn best when they regularly attend school. You are uncompromising in your drive to improve pupils' attendance. You use a wide range of strategies to encourage better attendance. Parents spoken to during the inspection understand that good attendance is important. You have had some success but recognise that there is still some way to go.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers extend and challenge the most able pupils in mathematics so that more achieve higher outcomes

- they continue to tackle attendance robustly so that it improves.

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

Yours sincerely

Richard Lucas
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection I met with you, your senior and middle leaders, governors, a local authority representative, staff and pupils. We visited lessons jointly with your senior leaders to observe learning. We looked at pupils' workbooks together alongside senior leaders. We considered documentary evidence relating to the impact of the school's work, including the school's development plan, self-evaluation document, safeguarding documents, attendance information, the work of the governing body, internal data and school reports. I spoke to pupils in lessons about their work and at lunchtime. I took into account 11 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and spoke to parents as they dropped off their children at the beginning of the school day. There were no responses to the surveys for pupils or staff.