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Shirley Gruffydd
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Dear Mrs Gruffydd

Short inspection of Holy Trinity CofE Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 22 May 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 last inspection. You have created a caring and harmonious atmosphere, together with a culture of high expectations. You are ambitious for all pupils. Your well-informed governing body shares your aspirations and is highly committed to ensuring that all pupils do well. Governors provide robust challenge and support to leaders based on their extensive evidence of the school's performance.

Staff, at all levels, make a positive contribution to the school and are proud to be members of your team. There is strong support for leadership among staff and morale is high. The vast majority of parents responding to the online survey, Parent View, agree that pupils are taught effectively and well looked after. Parents typically told me that the school is supportive and inclusive.

You have effectively addressed the areas identified for improvement at the previous inspection. You have ensured that there is a greater consistency in the quality of teaching, planning and assessment. Teachers make sure that the next steps in learning are very clear to pupils, and they swiftly address any misconceptions that they identify. You have used assessment information well to evaluate pupils' progress and outcomes and to establish priorities in the school development plan. Senior leaders provide effective training and support for staff. You have developed strong senior and middle leaders, who monitor teaching and learning, implementing interventions as needed.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of a high quality. Safeguarding policies and procedures are effective. Staff have received statutory training and, together with governors, show a good understanding of the need to be vigilant to ensure that pupils are safe both inside and outside of school. Governors are highly committed to keeping children safe and free from harm. They make their own checks on safeguarding arrangements, including ensuring that recruitment procedures relating to safeguarding are fully met.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They understand how to protect themselves when online. Pupils show a good awareness of the different forms that bullying might take. They know what to do if they experience bullying and all feel confident to report it to a member of staff.

Inspection findings

- The first key line of enquiry that we agreed to focus on was the effectiveness of the school's use of pupil premium funding to accelerate rates of progress and improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This was because, over the last three years, outcomes for this group have been lower than other pupils nationally. They have also been lower than those of other pupils within the school.
- I found that you had rightly identified this as a key area for improvement, with leaders ensuring that the progress of this group of pupils has a very high profile across the school. You know the pupils and their families well and have worked hard to build trusting and supportive relationships. Leaders have put in place a wide range of support and interventions to secure good progress in English and mathematics. Leaders have correctly identified the learning needs and the barriers faced by individual pupils. For example, action has been taken to support those with identified social, emotional and academic needs. You have taken the decision to use funding to release class teachers to work in small groups with pupils. This has enabled teachers to spot and swiftly address any misconceptions, for example, and to set specific, challenging but attainable targets.
- This skilled and intensive teaching is closely monitored. Pupils' progress is tracked regularly and groups are adjusted swiftly. Outcomes are improving, as was clearly shown by the work in pupils' books. Although there is still work to be done, many disadvantaged pupils are now making improved progress.
- I then went on to consider how effectively leaders ensure that all pupils are challenged. I focused in particular on the most able pupils in reading and writing, as, in 2017, a lower proportion of these pupils in Year 6 attained the higher standard than found nationally. I also looked at the work of most able pupils in mathematics.
- Leaders show a clear understanding of what is required to attain the higher standard and share their expert subject knowledge with staff. The systematic monitoring of pupils' work gives them a clear overview of standards across the

school. Regular pupil progress meetings ensure that aspirational targets are set and reviewed.

- Staff are now providing greater challenge in reading for the most able pupils, with opportunities for them to work at greater depth. Teachers use questions effectively to make pupils think hard about texts, for example by finding evidence to support their answers rather than simply providing an opinion. Pupils are exposed to a range of challenging texts, which is developing their vocabulary and comprehension skills. Pupils were observed reading with fluency and expression.
- The school has focused on improving standards in writing and, as a result, pupils' work in English books is of a good quality. Skills are systematically taught. Pupils are routinely provided with opportunities to edit and improve their work. Pupils spoke with pride about their writing and could identify features that helped improve it, such as punctuation, similes, powerful adjectives and paragraphs. However, writing in all subjects is not of the same high standard as seen in English books, reflecting variation in teachers' expectations. Frequently, the amount of writing produced is limited, for example by the space provided for the answer on a worksheet.
- In 2017, the proportion of most able Year 6 pupils attaining the higher standard in mathematics was above that found nationally. The inspection showed that pupils have good skills in mental mathematics and that their reasoning skills are developing well. The strongest progress is evident where pupils get lots of opportunities to explain their mathematical thinking and ideas verbally when problem-solving. However, work in books shows that there are times when the most able pupils, particularly those lower down the school, spend too long working on things that they already know or can easily do.
- Finally, I considered how effective leaders' actions have been in providing a challenging, broad and balanced curriculum. This was because leaders have been working hard to develop the curriculum. There are strengths in its breadth, with pupils having the opportunity to study the full national curriculum, with creative links made between subjects and a range of trips and visitors to enrich learning. Art is a strong feature of the school and many pupils produce work of a high standard.
- However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to study subjects in depth. This means that the pupils, particularly the most able, are not challenged enough in subjects such as history and geography. They are not routinely required to extend their knowledge, think harder and work on more complex ideas and concepts.
- When writing in other subjects, expectations are lower than they are in English. While pupils are taught effectively how to interpret, record and present data, usually it is the teachers who decide how information will be presented. This frequently limits the length and quality of pupils' work and restricts opportunities for pupils to use their strong basic skills across the wider curriculum.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils so that their attainment and progress is in line with that of other pupils nationally
- pupils' writing in all subjects is as strong as it is in their English books, by raising teachers' expectation and providing more opportunities to write at length across the curriculum
- the wider curriculum is strengthened so that pupils have the opportunity to develop subject knowledge and skills in greater depth.

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

Yours sincerely

Lou Anderson
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, senior and subject leaders and governors. I scrutinised pupils' work in English, mathematics and a range of subject and topic books. I visited lessons to observe learning and listen to pupils read in class. I talked to pupils about their learning both at formal and informal times throughout the day. I met with parents at the start of the school day and analysed responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. I analysed responses to the staff questionnaire. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, school improvement plans, pupils' attendance information, documentation related to safeguarding, and the school's assessment and behaviour information.