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David Crunkhurn
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Crunkhurn

Short inspection of Westbury-on-Severn Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 June 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 June 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since that time, you have worked effectively with governors and the local authority to lead the school through some change in the small staff team. The school's vision of 'Shaping the spirit. Achieving together. Learning for life' permeates all aspects of the school community. Staff and governors share your passion to help pupils to be the very best they can be. They work well together to sustain the focus on pupils' needs. Strong teamwork and high staff morale have helped you to make sure that staff and governors who are new to their roles are well supported to develop their expertise. You have accurately identified areas where the school needs to improve and have developed the skills of middle leaders. They are determined to improve pupils' progress and achievement further.

Westbury-on-Severn is a very caring school. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent. Consequently, pupils behave well and are highly engaged in their learning. Those I spoke with were unanimous in their praise for the support they receive from adults and their enjoyment of the broad curriculum on offer. Pupils spoke of how the school's values, including 'respecting everyone and everything', help them to feel safe. Parents and carers appreciate the nurturing, community ethos of the school and the approachability of the staff team. They value the partnerships you have established with parents and the work of the school to support pupils' individual needs and interests. Parents typically commented that

'There is a genuine interest in each and every child.'

At the previous inspection, leaders were challenged to make sure that pupils receive tasks which match their needs and to make sure that all pupils know how to improve their progress. Teachers now provide good-quality feedback on how pupils' work can be improved. Pupils usually use this feedback well and are making better progress in their learning as a result. You have introduced new approaches to teaching so that pupils, including the most able, tackle more challenging work. This has been most effective in the teaching of mathematics, where teachers use their knowledge of what pupils can and cannot do to set tasks at the right level of challenge. These improvements are now bringing about an improvement to the proportion of pupils who work at the higher standards in mathematics.

You provide the governing body with regular and detailed information about pupils' achievement. As a result, they have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors challenge leaders robustly, including by carefully checking how well the school makes use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and for improving sports provision. In addition, governors make regular visits to check how effectively your team carries out actions for improvement identified in leaders' plans. We agreed, however, that these plans do not contain enough detail about improvements to pupils' progress to help governors to check whether their priorities are improving swiftly enough.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have established a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Pupils' well-being is a priority and staff are well trained and vigilant in reporting any concerns they have. Regular checks by you and by your governors ensure that records are maintained to a high standard, including those relating to staff vetting and recruitment. You work effectively with other professionals to support pupils' welfare. For example, your engagement of a family support worker provides additional help for pupils and families experiencing difficulties. Safeguarding leaders consult with outside agencies swiftly to report concerns and safeguarding records show leaders' thorough and conscientious pastoral care.

Pupils say that they feel safe because, at their school, 'Everyone is friendly, gets along and listens to each other.' They told me that the vast majority of pupils are very well behaved and that bullying is extremely rare. They are confident that they can talk to an adult if they have a concern and that adults 'are understanding' and 'listen to you'. Pupils recognise the diligence of school staff in keeping them safe, including by ensuring the safety of the school site and through teaching them how to stay safe on the computer and near roads. Pupils' high levels of attendance reflect their enjoyment of learning and engagement in school life. The small number of parents who responded to Parent View overwhelmingly agree that their children are safe at school.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, I met with you to agree the lines of enquiry we would follow. We began by looking at the action that leaders have taken to ensure that pupils of middle ability make good progress in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. We also explored whether more of these pupils are now achieving higher standards in mathematics than in recent years.
- You have provided high-quality professional development for staff and have worked closely with the mathematics subject leader to improve the teaching of mathematics. You have focused on ensuring that pupils understand mathematical concepts and vocabulary, and can recall number facts quickly. Consequently, pupils are able to solve problems with greater speed and accuracy. Staff are clear about what pupils in each year group need to know and they regularly expect pupils to apply their knowledge to more demanding tasks. As a result, pupils of middle ability now receive more regular opportunities to solve problems and to explain their thinking. Teachers make good use of the information they gain by questioning in lessons and from checking pupils' work to set tasks which help them to achieve higher standards.
- Together with the subject leader, you have made sure that pupils receive and use information from teachers about how to correct and improve their work. Pupils show confidence when explaining how they have reached an answer, and their books show that they can solve problems and justify their answers in writing. These significant improvements to the quality of teaching mean that more pupils of middle ability are working at the standards expected of them, and more are on track to achieve the higher standard.
- Next, we considered the effectiveness of the teaching of reading in key stage 1. This is because pupils' achievement in recent years has been below the national average. This is despite high proportions of them meeting the standard expected of them in the early years and in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Pupils apply their phonics knowledge well to tackle unfamiliar words when reading aloud. Those who are most able also enjoy discussing the characters, settings and plots. However, the progress pupils are making is still too slow. Teachers sometimes do not match books to pupils' reading ability and, as a result, pupils struggle to understand what they read. Adults do not routinely question pupils well enough to help them to comprehend their books. Furthermore, the most able do not have enough opportunity to read widely in school so that they can compare and contrast their reading books.
- You have purchased additional resources and have plans in place to improve the quality of teaching of reading in Years 1 and 2. However, these plans have not yet made enough difference to help more pupils achieve the standards expected.
- Finally, we looked at how well middle-ability pupils in Years 3 to 6 are helped to make good progress in writing. This is because, in recent years, this group has made less progress than similar pupils nationally and too few of them have met the higher standard.
- You have improved the range of opportunities for pupils to write at length across curriculum topics. These include engaging tasks, such as writing letters from a

Victorian workhouse. Pupils in Year 6 edit their work successfully and this is improving the accuracy of their spelling and the range of vocabulary used.

- However, we agreed that, in other year groups, these pupils' progress is hindered by weaknesses in punctuation, grammar, spelling and handwriting. There are inconsistencies in how teachers hold them to account when they do not punctuate sentences correctly or they repeatedly make grammatical errors when constructing sentences. On occasion, pupils' handwriting prevents them from writing with fluency and speed. In addition, some pupils misapply their phonics knowledge when spelling words. For example, they write 'enouf' instead of 'enough'. We agreed that, although improving, there is still more work to be done to improve the accuracy of this group's writing across key stage 2.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they improve the teaching of reading in key stage 1 by ensuring the right match of reading books for pupils and by supporting pupils to better understand what they read
- they strengthen the teaching of writing in key stage 2, with a focus on high expectations of pupils' handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation.

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

Yours sincerely

Claire Mirams
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and the leader responsible for mathematics. We reviewed your plans for improvement, information on current pupils' progress and your own evaluations of the school's performance. We conducted learning walks and listened to pupils read together. I also met with members of the governing body and scrutinised records of their meetings and visits. I met with a group of pupils and discussed their views on the curriculum, behaviour, bullying and keeping safe. I scrutinised various safeguarding records and current information about school attendance. I spoke with a representative of Gloucestershire local authority.

I also considered 28 responses to the pupil survey, seven responses to the staff survey and 22 parent responses to the online survey, Parent View.

