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Mr Preston
Headteacher
Hob Hill CoE/Methodist (VC) Primary School
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Dear Mr Preston

Short inspection of Hob Hill CoE/Methodist (VC) Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 25 September 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.

Together with senior leaders and governors, you identify the main priorities for improvement and work systematically towards them. The school is a vibrant place where pupils enjoy learning, verified by this typical parental comment: 'The school provides a caring, safe environment for all the children and my children have both really enjoyed their time at Hob Hill.' The pupils said that they enjoy the sports and music activities. They also explained how they play their part in the school community and how they develop respect and tolerance towards others.

You have addressed the aspects for improvement well that were identified in the previous inspection. You have improved the quality of teaching, especially in mathematics, by making sure that teachers adopt and build on the very best practice in their own and other good and outstanding schools.

Subject leaders who are relatively new to their posts receive the appropriate level of support and training to do their jobs well. They are ambitious for pupils' learning and are keen to make continued improvements in their subjects. They analyse information about pupils' progress and work on ways to ensure that pupils, including the most able, receive the appropriate level of challenge.

Leaders are also working closely with teachers to make sure that support for

disadvantaged pupils is planned for. In lesson observations that we conducted jointly, we observed targeted interventions and looked at how well disadvantaged pupils are learning in lessons. In many cases, the planned support has been effective from both teachers and teaching assistants. In books, we saw that most pupils have made good progress so far this academic year. However, it is still too early to evaluate fully the effectiveness of leaders' actions on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and there is more to be done to raise the attainment of these pupils, ensuring that teacher planning offers every opportunity for them, including the most able, to reach their full potential.

The good behaviour of pupils is a strength of the school. Pupils behave well in lessons and their conduct around school is very good. Pupils that I spoke to and observed were polite and courteous. They told me that bullying and name-calling are rare events. Pupils said that their teachers are good at listening to their concerns.

Pupils and staff enjoy positive relationships in class. Pupils work hard and are productive in lessons. Their good-quality writing is well presented and representative of the pride they take in their learning. They enjoy the opportunities that the curriculum offers. For example, we observed pupils in Year 1 studying the 'Little Red Riding Hood' story. They compared their own descriptions of the Wolf and Little Red Riding Hood and challenged themselves to think of increasingly sophisticated adjectives. Pupils then had the opportunity to take turns and put on a short play to demonstrate their work.

Pupils are tolerant and caring towards each other. Pupils reflect carefully on their school's Christian values and are respectful of those with beliefs, heritages and abilities different from their own. The school focus on Koinonia (community and fellowship) and Agape (Christian love) to embed these values further brings a feeling of community and inclusivity to the school. One pupil told me: 'This school is really good because everyone cares and helps each other.' Pupils are provided with many opportunities to carry out additional responsibilities, for example being a member of the school council, and this makes a strong contribution to their personal development.

Members of the governing body are committed to supporting the school in all aspects of leadership and management. They are clear about the school's many strengths and are honest about what needs to improve further. They regularly visit the school to engage in a wide range of activities with staff and pupils. Governors carry out their statutory responsibilities well.

Safeguarding is effective.

As the designated lead for safeguarding you have ensured that all arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are effective. You make careful checks on the suitability of adults to work with pupils. Several members of staff and governors are trained in safer recruitment. All staff are up to date on safeguarding basic awareness training. Part of this training focuses on the 'Prevent' duty, which is the government training

to spot potential signs of radicalisation. As a result, staff understand their roles and responsibilities.

When appropriate, you work with partner agencies, including your local children's social care service, to ensure that the needs of vulnerable pupils and their families are met. Pupils are knowledgeable about different aspects of staying safe. They know not to share their personal information over the internet.

You are proactive in your determination to make the school even more secure. For example, the recent building programme allowed you to plan even greater security for pupils to enter and leave the school safely.

Inspection findings

- The first line of enquiry that I looked at was the progress that pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in key stage 1.
- In lesson observations conducted jointly with you, I saw pupils in all classrooms hard at work in mathematics, English and topic work. Their books showed that they take pride in their work, presenting it neatly and completing exercises. We also observed pupils relishing challenges presented to them and viewing mistakes as learning opportunities. Pupils worked very well with one another in the classrooms when tackling tricky problems. For example, during a personal, social and healthcare lesson, pupils in Year 6 were prepared to help each other, discussing sensibly the modern problem of coping with the vast amount of information technology and not allowing it to dominate your life.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard and greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 in 2017 was below that found nationally. Leaders at all levels have correctly identified this as a priority and teachers now have a greater focus on this group of pupils' learning. Improvements in teaching and learning are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. A higher proportion of pupils attained at greater depth in key stage 1 in 2018. However, there is still a great deal of work to be done. Teaching in some classes in key stage 1 is only recently enabling pupils to make stronger progress. Consequently, improvements in progress are not yet consistent.
- My second line of enquiry was to look at how well teaching enables pupils to make good progress in science in key stage 1 and particularly for disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2. Inspection evidence shows that pupils, including older disadvantaged pupils, are now making good progress in science. Their books demonstrated an understanding of scientific concepts and there was evidence of pupils recording the results of experiments they had carried out, for example Year 6 studying how the heart moves blood around the body.
- The last line of enquiry looked at leaders' actions to ensure that attendance remains above the national average. This was because pupils' absence has slowly risen over the past three years. Leaders have in place strategies to address this, including monitoring attendance information carefully, following up any causes

for concern and effectively deploying appropriate staff to support pupils, particularly if circumstances might make their families vulnerable. Current data shows that attendance remains above the national average and is continuing to improve.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- plans to support disadvantaged pupils are regularly checked and modified to ensure that these are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement
- the quality of teaching and learning in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 1 continues to develop so that all pupils make better progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Steven Cartlidge
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I spoke with you and other leaders. We visited classes together to observe pupils' learning and scrutinised their work. I talked to pupils in lessons and in a meeting, when I listened to their views of the school. I listened to some pupils read. A wide range of documentary evidence was scrutinised, including information about pupils' performance, the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan and safeguarding documentation. I met with the chair of the governing body and two other governors. I also spoke by telephone to a representative from the local authority. I took account of 25 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including seven free-text comments and a letter from a parent. I also considered the 16 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and 25 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.