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Mrs Amanda Dicks
Headteacher
St Mary's Wavendon C of E Primary
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Dear Mrs Dicks

Short inspection of St Mary's Wavendon C of E Primary

Following my visit to the school on 23 October 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 lead the school with integrity and a determination that every pupil must and will do well. Your evaluation of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement is accurate. You take swift and effective action to remedy any inconsistencies you find in the school's work. Your collaborative approach to continually improving the school works well. You, with your staff, have created a positive atmosphere for learning. Staff who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire say they feel well supported in their work and are proud to be part of the school. Parents and carers are typically positive about the school. Those I spoke to during the inspection, praised the school's caring and supportive approach to ensuring that pupils flourish at St Mary's.

Pupils exemplify the Christian values which you promote, especially that of friendship. Pupils are well behaved and polite. Those who join the school part way through a year or key stage feel welcomed and make friends quickly. Pupils enjoy school, as shown by their high attendance. They like learning and work hard. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain, for example during the inspection some pupils went to the local food bank to donate the harvest festival produce. Pupils participate well in a range of extra-curricular activities, including the popular 'daily mile' and clubs such as bridge club and dancing. Pupils relish the chance to show leadership skills, for example in the school council. Older pupils speak proudly of being part of a group of 'restorative buddies', who help any younger pupils who feel sad at play times. Pupils have a good understanding of equalities. They told me that

everyone is different, and that we should 'love your neighbour as yourself'.

Teaching is generally well organised. Teachers plan learning which interests pupils in their work. Teachers ask probing questions which help pupils to think carefully about their learning and to deepen their understanding of subjects. Teaching assistants work hard and effectively to provide on-the-spot support for any pupil who needs extra help. Careful consideration of how to monitor pupils' progress accurately and to increase levels of challenge for pupils has led to a rise in pupils' attainment throughout the school.

The early years is a particular strength of the school. Children settle quickly because teachers' expectations for their learning and behaviour are clear. Children interact with each other and with adults confidently. Well-planned and interesting activities ensure that children are enthusiastic and excited to learn, and that they make good progress. The early years provision gives pupils a good foundation for learning as they move up the school.

Governors support the work of the school very well. They have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing and of its areas for further improvement. Helpful visits are conducted to check the impact of teachers' and leaders' work. You have put processes in place which help governors to ask questions to challenge your thinking, although this area of their work needs some further development. During the inspection, it emerged that governors are not keeping a close enough oversight of some policies and procedures, including some relating to safeguarding. Changes were quickly put in place to improve leaders and governors' monitoring and checking practices.

At the last inspection, inspectors asked you to improve pupils' progress in writing and strengthen the quality of guidance so that pupils know how to improve their work. You have achieved this and more. You have significantly raised pupils' achievement throughout the school through the changes you have made to monitoring pupils' progress. Rigorous progress discussions highlight any areas that pupils may be struggling with, so that expert help is provided quickly. As a result, pupils' progress has improved. Last year, the proportion of pupils who achieved age-related expectations at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was well above the national average. The proportion of pupils exceeding age-related expectations in reading and mathematics was also above the national average. Disadvantaged pupils achieved in line with other pupils nationally.

Despite the improvements you have achieved, you have accurately identified that some aspects of the school's work could be further refined. You are rightly re-examining the quality of teaching and the curriculum in mathematics to make sure that pupils develop secure reasoning and problem-solving skills. You are also starting to explore the wider curriculum you offer to ensure that pupils develop thorough subject-specific knowledge in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have made sure that staff have a thorough understanding of child protection and safeguarding procedures, including in the latest government requirements. Staff are confident that they will be listened to should they raise a concern. Several repeated the mantra that 'we are all responsible for safeguarding'. Your records show that you take seriously any concerns raised. You liaise well with external agencies to ensure that additional support for children and their families is timely and appropriate.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that an adult would help should anyone need support with a problem. The curriculum helps pupils to understand how to stay safe online and on social media. Parents agree that pupils are well cared for and safe.

You have a strong knowledge of safer recruitment procedures and use these effectively. Along with governors, you review safeguarding documentation and procedures regularly. During the inspection, you took prompt action to address minor administrative issues with the single central record.

Inspection findings

- By the end of key stage 2, pupils make strong progress in mathematics because teachers and leaders assess pupils' mathematical understanding promptly and accurately. Teachers and teaching assistants provide effective support to help pupils who find work too hard. However, you recognise that there is more to be done to improve the implementation of the mathematics curriculum. In particular, all teachers need to have a thorough understanding of how to develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills throughout the school.
- Since the last inspection, you have improved the quality of the teaching of writing at key stage 1. Teachers model their expectations well. They make sure that pupils learn how to edit and improve their work effectively. Teaching assistants offer timely support as and when pupils need it. Consequently, the quality of pupils' writing at key stage 1 has improved. Last year, pupils' achievement in writing was above the national average at key stage 1. This year, you are rightly focused on ensuring that more pupils exceed age-related expectations in writing than in the past.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and communication skills are developed well, for example through daily worship and the popular Year 6 residential trip to an activities centre. In particular, pupils acquire strong subject knowledge and understanding in science. There are opportunities for pupils to write at length and in detail in a range of subjects. However, you have rightly recognised that pupils' subject-specific knowledge in subjects other than mathematics, English and science is not as developed as it should be. Your current plans to address this are well thought through.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are routinely and effectively taught to reason and solve problems in mathematics
- pupils develop subject-specific knowledge across the whole curriculum.

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 Milton Keynes. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Old
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, governors and staff. I spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I observed learning in all classes. Along with teachers, I scrutinised a broad selection of pupils' work. I spoke to some parents at end of the school day, as well as considering the views of the 32 responses to, Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and those of two parents who telephoned Ofsted. I spoke to pupils informally throughout the day, as well as meeting with a group of pupils. I considered the survey responses from 17 staff and 21 pupils. I reviewed a wide range of documents, including self-evaluation and improvement planning, governors' minutes and safeguarding information.