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Mrs Dawn Thomas
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Thomas

Short inspection of Sapperton Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 30 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 February 2015.

This school continues to be good.

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

At the last inspection, you were asked to ensure that the standard of pupils' written work was equally high in all subjects. You were also asked to make timely checks to determine whether your actions are improving pupils' learning and achievement. You have taken effective action to address these recommendations. As a result of teachers' high expectations, the vast majority of pupils take pride in their work and consistently maintain high standards of presentation. You routinely check pupils' outcomes and share this information with governors. This helps them to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching. At the last inspection, governors were asked to check the accuracy of the information that they receive. Governors are committed to supporting school improvement and make focused visits, based on the school's priorities. These visits allow governors to review pupils' learning with subject leaders in order to check the accuracy of the information you provide.

Consistently good teaching in all key stages, including early years, ensures that the vast majority of pupils make effective progress in all subjects. As a result, pupils' attainment at the end of each key stage is high. Almost all current pupils are working at standards appropriate for their age. Approximately one third of pupils are working at higher standards. Your thorough evaluations of teaching enable you to take action when pupils need additional teaching support. For example, you have rightly identified that a minority of pupils need to make better progress, particularly in phonics. As a result, you have implemented focused teaching interventions for

pupils. This is helping pupils to catch up, but has not yet had a sustained impact. Consequently, a very small minority of pupils are working at standards lower than those typical for their age in all subjects.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary because they have a good understanding of what you expect of them. Pupils care about each other and play happily and sociably during break- and lunchtime. You provide a broad, rich curriculum that sparks pupils' interests and motivates them to learn. Consequently, they respond swiftly to instructions from adults and work purposefully and enthusiastically in lessons.

Parents and carers are extremely supportive of the work of the school. They typically praise the warm, stimulating atmosphere and the fact that pupils are challenged to fulfil their potential. One parent added, 'I could not be happier with the school.'

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and attend regularly. Adults care deeply about the well-being of pupils and consequently form supportive relationships with them. Pupils feel safe at school and say that adults look after them well.

All adults know that they are responsible for keeping pupils safe and can consistently explain how to refer concerns. You undertake the necessary checks to ensure that staff are safe to work with children. You accurately record these details on the school's single central record. You refer concerns to external agencies when the need arises and you keep records securely. You follow up your actions to assure yourself that these are having a positive impact.

During the inspection, we discussed the fact that, although this does not compromise the safety of pupils, your record keeping could be sharper. We also discussed the need to make sure that staff and governors are provided with the latest safeguarding guidance. You took immediate action during the inspection to improve the precision of your records. In addition, you planned a meeting for staff and governors to take place with immediate effect. This will allow you to share updated safeguarding guidance and enhance their understanding of their roles.

Inspection findings

- We agreed that my first line of enquiry would investigate how well leaders are sustaining improvements in mathematics at key stage 2. This is because, in the past, progress in mathematics was below the national average for two years. You have implemented additional teaching interventions and you provide an extra-curricular club. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the '99 club' and mathematics lessons that help them to practise their skills and develop fluency in mathematics. As a result of improved teaching, progress and attainment in mathematics have improved over the last two years. Consequently, pupils achieve well at the end of key stage 2 and attainment is above that of pupils nationally.
- Our reviews of your latest assessment information and pupils' learning confirm

that current pupils are provided with suitably challenging work. This enables them to build on their previous learning and make effective progress. As a result, almost all pupils are working at standards typical for their age in mathematics. Approximately one third of pupils are working at greater depth. A small minority of pupils, some of whom have complex needs, are making weaker progress and require further support to help them to catch up.

- My second line of enquiry involved checking whether effective teaching has been sustained in key stage 1. This is because, over time, the proportion of pupils who achieve standards typical for their age at the end of key stage 1 is well above average. Our reviews of pupils' work and your assessment information reveal that pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding appropriate for their age. For example, Year 1 pupils use their understanding of phonics to create words such as 'ship' and 'chick'. Year 2 pupils confidently demonstrate their understanding of verbs when writing their own sentences such as 'I cooked a lasagne.'
- You provide extra teaching for pupils who need help to catch up. Adults model learning effectively and give clear instructions, which helps pupils understand what to do. Consistently good teaching led to all pupils achieving standards appropriate to their age at the end of key stage 1 last year. Half of the cohort achieved greater depth in their learning. A very small number of key stage 1 pupils do not yet have secure skills in phonics. You have recently implemented additional teaching support to enable pupils to practise and consolidate their skills. However, it is too soon to determine whether this will have a sustained impact.
- Finally, I wanted to determine how effectively your curriculum enables pupils to secure their knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects. You make effective use of teachers' specialist knowledge to plan and implement an appropriate and engaging curriculum for pupils. You and subject leaders routinely evaluate pupils' progress in all subjects, which enables you to ensure that pupils are embedding their knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects.
- Parents typically comment on the 'fantastic opportunities' you provide and the 'excellent breadth of the curriculum'. For example, pupils are able to take part in interesting activities such as gardening, music, history trips and archery. Pupils' interest has been sparked by 'Darwin's thinking walks' around the village. These enable pupils to observe and photograph the world around them, reflect on what they see and record their observations in their diaries.
- Teachers plan exciting activities that enable pupils to develop and consolidate their reading and writing in other subjects. During the inspection, we saw pupils immersed in activities that sustained their interest and helped them to learn about life in Ancient Greece. For example, pupils in the mixed Year 5 and Year 6 class carried out research and wrote about an Ancient Greek ship, known as a trireme. Pupils enjoy developing their art and design skills when making Greek urns. They keenly participated in the recent Greek day, when they made tzatziki for lunch.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- well-planned teaching interventions for pupils who need to catch up, particularly in phonics, enable pupils to make strong progress.

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

Catherine Beeks
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held several meetings with you. I also met with class teachers, who are also subject leaders. I had a formal meeting with two governors, one of whom is the chair of governors. I also had informal meetings with four other governors. I had a telephone conversation with the local authority adviser. I checked the school's single central record and we discussed your safeguarding procedures. We reviewed the school's latest assessment information and discussed the school's self-evaluation and development priorities. Together we observed pupils' learning in all classes. Along with subject leaders, we reviewed the books of pupils who were in Year 1, Year 3 and Year 5 last year. I spoke with pupils in lessons and at break- and lunchtime. I spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day and considered 12 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, along with 10 additional free-text comments. I took account of three responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and 13 responses to the online pupil survey.