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Mr D Brown
Headteacher
Walter Evans Church of England Aided Primary School
Darley Abbey Drive
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Dear Mr Brown

Short inspection of Walter Evans Church of England Aided Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 15 November 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in November 2011.

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 a happy and welcoming school. The school's values contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff work to educate and nurture pupils as well-rounded individuals. Many parents and carers who shared their views value this holistic approach.

You and the governors have successfully built an inclusive school community. Pupils feel a strong sense of belonging and appreciate the family feel in the school. This is supported by the school's motto, 'Together everyone achieves more.' Parents, too, recognise and appreciate the school's distinctive ethos. Overwhelmingly, the majority who spoke with the inspector and responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, spoke positively about the school's leadership, recognising the positive differences you have made to the school. They value your openness and willingness to listen and respond to any concerns they have. One parent commented, 'Fabulous little school with a very happy and positive atmosphere. We are thoroughly enjoying our children's time at primary school.'

Since your appointment as headteacher, you have focused on strategically improving the school. Your evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement is accurate. You have accurately identified priorities for improvement. Leaders have improved teaching and the curriculum and raised pupils' attainment. However, improving pupils' progress, especially in mathematics, remains a key priority. The most able pupils, including those in the early years, do not make the

progress of which they are capable.

Governors share your ambition for the school. They ensure that they are skilled to be able to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Governors visit regularly and know the school well. They provide a balance of support and challenge for you and the staff. Governors and leaders are supported through the work of the Derby Diocesan Academy Trust (DDAT). Trust officers regularly review the quality of educational provision and know the school very well. Officers and governors have correctly identified the positive impact of improvements.

Classrooms are typically calm. Pupils work cooperatively and independently and take pride in their learning and in the presentation of their work. They are courteous and friendly. Pupils who met with the inspector said that the rare instances of bullying are dealt with swiftly and well by adults. They value the varied opportunities offered to learn, both in school and on various visits. They conduct themselves well at breaktime and lunchtimes and during the inspection they sang joyfully in the collective worship.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong and effective culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Your staff are trained and are aware of their responsibilities. They make prompt referrals of any concerns using the school's established reporting system. Records are thorough and are well maintained. Pupils are kept safe. You work in partnership with outside agencies to provide support for pupils and families. As designated senior leader, you tenaciously follow up referrals to external agencies in a timely manner.

Leaders and governors ensure that pre-employment checks are completed for all adults who work with pupils and safer recruitment practices are implemented. The single central record is thorough and reflects a strong culture of ensuring that pupils are kept safe.

Pupils who spoke with the inspector say they feel cared for and safe. They say that they are listened to when they have worries or concerns. They are confident that an adult will deal with their concerns appropriately. The school's curriculum helps pupils to understand how to deal with risks and how to keep themselves safe online. Parents and pupils are supported through a range of online safety resources which are published on the school's website. Parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their children are kept safe in school. Their views can be summed up by one parent who explained that 'Walter Evans has offered my children a caring and nurturing school environment.'

Inspection findings

- In recent years, the proportion of early years children attaining a good level of development has increased and is well above the national average. However, the proportion of children attaining the higher standard in reading, writing and

number work has declined over the last two years.

- Changes in staffing and leadership in early years have developed the provision. Strong leadership of early years has raised expectations of what children can do and achieve. This has resulted in a consistently good standard of teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Teachers in the early years carefully plan the curriculum and are responsive to ongoing assessment and children's needs. Well-planned, adult-directed and child-initiated activities are mostly well matched to children's needs.
- Adults engage purposefully with children, asking questions to help extend children's knowledge and understanding. As a result, children settle very quickly into Nursery and Reception and enjoy their learning. Many parents commented that their children are very happy and enjoy their time in early years.
- Leaders and governors have carefully considered how to make the best use of the physical education and sports premium funding. Pupils who spoke with the inspector commented on the range of sporting activities. They appreciate the opportunity to try something different. Pupils' involvement and success in sporting events are a testament to the way additional funding is used. Pupils take part in a wide range of events and festivals, for example 'Kwick Cricket', orienteering, mini-tennis, rounders and athletics.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is high. The proportions attaining the expected standards are above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, attainment is higher in reading and writing than it is in mathematics. Too few pupils achieve the higher standard in mathematics.
- Pupils' overall progress measures by the end of Year 6 have improved over the last three years in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress in mathematics is not as strong as in reading and writing. Pupils are developing their key fluency skills, such as arithmetic and knowledge of the times tables. However, they do not make as much progress in applying their knowledge and developing their mathematical reasoning as they do in other areas of mathematics.
- Strong and effective leadership of mathematics has brought about improvements to the curriculum and the way it is taught. This has resulted in improved attainment over the last three years. However, these improvements are still at an early stage and not embedded across all key stage 2 classes. The most able pupils are not provided with sufficient challenge to extend and deepen their learning.
- Some parents comment positively about the changes in mathematics and the opportunities provided for them to understand how their children are taught. As a result, some parents comment that they are more confident in helping their children learn.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching enables more children in the early years to exceed a good level of development in reading, writing and number work
- the quality of teaching improves further so that pupils build on their reasoning and application skills and deepen their mathematical understanding, and that the most able pupils are challenged to even higher standards.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer (CEO) of DDAT, the director of education for the Diocese of Derby, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Derby. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Chris Davies
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, your deputy headteacher and leader of early years. I also met with three governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. I met the CEO of DDAT and reviewed reports of visits and audits conducted by the trust.

We visited classrooms, looked at workbooks and talked with pupils in lessons. Together, we also looked at the quality of pupils' mathematics work. I had a discussion with a group of pupils from Year 5. We considered the school's information on the progress being made by current pupils.

We looked at a range of documentary evidence. This included the school's evaluation of its own performance and plans for improvement. I looked at various documents related to safeguarding, including the single central record and examples of referrals made to external agencies. I met with you and the deputy designated senior safeguarding leader. We evaluated current rates of attendance.

I gathered the views of many parents at the beginning of the school day. I also took account of the 88 responses to Parent View and considered the 54 free-text responses. I examined the school's website.