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Mr Dale Norris
Headteacher
Hawthorn Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mr Norris

Short inspection of Hawthorn Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 December 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 October 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 have managed significant changes in staffing since the previous inspection and created an enthusiasm for new staff to take on subject leadership roles. With your support, and careful investment in professional development, new leaders are effective in their roles and ensuring that pupils make good progress in their learning. Staff and pupils work well together in a calm and purposeful environment. Parents and carers are exceptionally pleased with the school's work with their children.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Teachers create plenty of opportunities for pupils to answer questions and engage fully in their learning. This was an aspect you were asked to improve at the previous inspection and you have been successful in doing so. Your subject leader for English has made sure that teachers are thorough in checking that pupils' English grammar, punctuation and spelling are accurate – another area that has strengthened since the previous inspection. I visited classrooms and analysed pupils' work. I found that there are a wealth of opportunities for pupils to write extensively. For example, Years 1 and 2 completed lengthy pieces of writing about their visit to Skipton Castle. Good writing is the norm in the school.

At the previous inspection, you were asked to make sure that subject leaders stopped progress slowing for pupils at times. Should teacher assessments show that pupils' progress is not good, subject leaders put in place additional support from teachers and teaching assistants to improve learning. These interventions boost learning and are working well. Although subject leaders use teacher assessments effectively, they are not analysing pupils' work comprehensively to determine pupils' progress precisely.

In the 2018 national tests, you, leaders and governors were disappointed with the progress pupils made in reading at the end of key stage 2, especially since progress was positive in 2017. Governors were quick to hold you to account and wanted to know how you intended to strengthen reading. Leaders completed an analysis of pupils' weaknesses from test information and you set about improving pupils' comprehension skills. Leaders adjusted the curriculum for reading to make sure that pupils practise comprehension skills several times each week. This is giving pupils a deeper understanding of how to analyse texts, retrieve information and justify their reasoning from the evidence. We saw this working well across the key stage, especially in Years 5 and 6, where pupils were analysing poetry. Pupils are confident readers and becoming much more adept at analysing texts because of the good guidance given to them by staff. In reading, the most able pupils produce high-quality work. However, occasionally, middle-ability pupils do not give sufficient detail in their responses and this is not picked up quickly by staff.

At the time of the previous inspection, your plans for improvement did not show how much the actions being taken would contribute to improving teaching and learning. Your plans now show clearly what you expect to improve and by how much. Staff and governors know well the school's priorities and your expectations. Consequently, staff are working diligently to make sure that their teaching is resulting in good progress for pupils. You have effective procedures to support the very small number of disadvantaged pupils and they attend well. Work is focused on individual needs, as you have identified barriers to learning for these pupils. However, you have not analysed how well these barriers are being overcome. This makes it difficult for you and your governors to evaluate the extent of improvement.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your leadership team have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You have made sure that pupils are well cared for. You provide early help – swiftly – if there are any concerns about pupils' welfare. The school works closely and very effectively with parents and external agencies in the local authority. This helps to make sure that children's needs are met. Safeguarding records are of high quality and clearly indicate the school's commitment to keep all pupils safe. Parents are unanimous in saying that their children are well cared for and safe at school.

Child protection training for staff – including those organising the school's before- and after-school clubs – means that they are knowledgeable and up to date in terms of the most recent guidance and legislation. Staff are vigilant and know what

to do should they have any concerns about children's welfare. Governors make sure that all adults on the school site are checked to confirm that they are fit to work with children. The school's central register is well kept. Governors receive regular reports about safeguarding. They check the school's procedures carefully and commissioned an audit to assure themselves that children's needs are being met.

Inspection findings

- Teachers plan tasks that capture pupils' interests and promote enjoyment of learning. This leads to good behaviour, inquisitive pupils and good attitudes to learning. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were keen to share their views about what skills are needed to become an astronaut, a journalist or a photographer. This resulted in good note-taking to prepare for writing about a variety of careers. Usually, teachers make pupils think deeply by questioning them skilfully and allowing sufficient time for them to provide extended answers.
- Pupils' mathematical skills are developing effectively. Teachers set work that is pitched well for the mixed-age classes, as well as the varying abilities of pupils. Teachers check and assess pupils' work quickly to support good learning. However, there are times when work is not adjusted quickly to increase challenge for the most able pupils, and this can slow their learning. Occasionally, misconceptions and errors are not cleared up promptly for middle-ability pupils before they move on to further work, and this results in progress slowing.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. They are skilled in supporting pupils, are clear about what is expected of them and support learning well. When completing intervention work with small groups or individuals, they make detailed notes of how pupils are progressing. This assists teachers and leaders in determining the effect of their work. Leaders need to link this more carefully to the gains in pupils' work.
- Children in the early years are benefiting well from adults' high expectations. Over time, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development has been above average. Children are keen to show how well they are learning. For example, they were delighted to read the 'tricky words' highlighted by the teacher and to use their phonics skills with other words. It was particularly impressive to see children beginning to use cursive handwriting successfully.
- Partnership with parents is strong. Parents know they are welcome in the school and their children are benefiting from a good education. Consequently, they make sure that their children attend regularly. Pupils' attendance is above average, with exceptionally few regularly absent.
- You make sure that pupils are taught how to stay safe in a wide range of circumstances, including when using the internet. I found pupils to be respectful, welcoming to visitors and playing well together at breaktime and lunchtime. They told me how much they enjoy school, including their time in the before- and after-school clubs. Pupils told me that 'staff are kind and help them'. They also have access to a learning mentor who works with pupils and parents, should the need arise.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- subject leaders are skilled in checking the effect of their actions on pupils' learning and progress
- reporting on the use of pupil premium funding sharply focuses on how barriers to learning are being overcome
- across key stage 2, middle-ability pupils consistently develop good comprehension skills and overcome misconceptions in mathematics
- teachers make sure that the most able pupils engage swiftly with challenging mathematical tasks in key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

James McGrath
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met regularly with you as part of a professional dialogue throughout the day. I also met with the chair of the governing body and three other governors. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I conducted an analysis of pupils' work with subject leaders. I observed a range of teaching and listened to pupils reading in each class. I spoke to pupils throughout the day about their safety and their learning in school. I spoke with parents at the start of the school day. I analysed 15 staff questionnaires, 39 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire and 47 parents' responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. I looked at the school's review of its own performance, its development and improvement plan, a number of key school policies and the minutes of governing body meetings. I considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.