

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



23 January 2019

Mr Chris Hackett  
Headteacher  
Burscough Lordsgate Township Church of England Primary School  
Lordsgate Drive  
Burscough  
Ormskirk  
Lancashire  
L40 7RS

Dear Mr Hackett

### **Short inspection of Burscough Lordsgate Township Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 10 January 2019, 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 November 2014.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

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

It was evident during the inspection, and from talking to pupils and their families, just how much pupils enjoy coming to school and learning. This is reflected in pupils' attendance, which is consistently higher than the national average. Pupils are keen to learn in lessons and show respect for each other and adults. Effective systems are in place to reward good behaviour and similarly there are sanctions for unacceptable behaviour. As a result, the school is an orderly place to learn. You ensure that pupils benefit from a dedicated staff team which provides good levels of pastoral support and academic challenge. As a result, pupils aspire to work as architects, doctors and musicians and in many other professional lines of work.

You, senior leaders and governors have an accurate and reflective view of the school's current strengths and priorities. Together, you are determined to improve the school further. Your school improvement plan identifies precise aspects needing attention and actions to resolve them. For example, leaders are focused on increasing pupils' vocabulary to support improvements in writing.

Following a dip in results of national assessments at the end of key stage 2 in 2016, you sought support from the local authority. Together, you focused on improvements to teaching, learning and assessment across the school. A period of turbulence in

staffing ensued. You have since made new staff appointments and formed new leadership teams. A seconded deputy headteacher and new coordinator for special educational needs and/disabilities (SEND) have strengthened the senior leadership team. This has contributed to stability in staffing and strong teaching and learning. As a result, outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics were higher than the national average for Year 6 in 2018.

Pupils get off to a flying start in early years. The local authority has helped the school get back on track by raising pupils' achievement across key stage 1 and key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Across current year groups, pupils are benefiting from good teaching and learning, and they are making good progress from their individual starting points.

At the previous inspection in 2014, inspectors asked the leadership team, including governors, to raise standards in mathematics, particularly for girls. The leader of mathematics has introduced a new, whole-school approach to teaching mathematics. This is proving to be effective and teachers carefully plan activities for the range of abilities in their class. Teachers now provide more challenge for pupils through problem-solving activities. They provide opportunities for pupils to explain why an answer may be right or wrong. Leaders have analysed the dip in the proportion of girls achieving the expected and higher standards in mathematics. As a result, teachers have focused on developing the confidence of girls' engagement with mathematics. Work in pupils' books demonstrates that girls currently in key stage 2 make similar progress as boys. Progress is good. In many aspects of mathematics, challenge is more evident. The focus is now on developing pupils' skills to investigate number and find ways to solve problems. The impact of this was seen in the Year 6 2018 test results. The proportion reaching the expected standard was broadly in line with the national average and more reached the higher standards than other pupils nationally.

Inspectors also asked you to raise the profile of mathematics across other subjects. Your response is evident in pupils' work and we saw the promotion of mathematics in science and in topic books. For example, analysing data from science experiments brings learning to life for pupils, as does making comparisons of the performance of a range of sports teams.

Inspectors asked leaders to develop the roles of key stage and subject leaders. Following the restructuring of leadership teams, you have ensured that subject leaders have the time and opportunity to monitor and evaluate their areas of responsibility. Subject leaders provide training for staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of a range of subjects. Through their work with a cluster of schools, leaders promote the sharing of best practice and have developed the ways in which pupils' progress across all subjects are monitored. As a result, pupils across year groups are making good progress in a range of subjects.

Parents and carers who spoke to me at the start of the school day were unanimous in how pleased they are with the teaching their children receive. One comment reflected the views of several parents, in saying that teachers 'make learning fun and

have a genuine passion for the school'. The majority of those who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, would recommend this school to other parents. However, a minority of parents who responded to Parent View said that they would welcome further information about changes that take place in school.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and your deputy designated safeguarding leader ensure that all safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Together, you make sure that staff fully understand their duties and follow systems and procedures for logging concerns. Staff make all necessary checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. Close scrutiny is given to visitors to the school. Staff and governors attend up-to-date training so that they understand the current guidance. You are prompt in making referrals to the local authority and diligently follow up all concerns to make sure that pupils are kept safe. You work closely with a range of external agencies to secure expertise to support pupils' welfare, as and when necessary. You and your staff provide a good level of care and support for pupils and their families. An example of this is the nurture group provided for those pupils who need to develop their social and emotional resilience for life's challenges.

### **Inspection findings**

- As part of this inspection, I focused on several agreed aspects. I explored how a love of reading is being embedded across the school. Staff have developed a culture that promotes the excitement and anticipation that comes with reading a book. This begins as soon as children start school in early years. You provide opportunities for parents to help their children with reading at home. You do this through information posted on your website and through workshops for parents. Staff are vigilant in recognising when pupils are not reading at home and therefore falling behind. When this is the case, teachers and teaching assistants provide support to help pupils catch up. Daily reading sessions are effective in improving pupils' skills of reading for understanding. Older pupils told me how important it is to become a competent and fluent reader, both for pleasure and to secure jobs when they are older. They enjoy the wider range of books, by different authors, which are now available in the refurbished library. Pupils' reading across year groups has improved.
- Next, I investigated how pupils' writing skills are being developed. The teaching of writing begins promptly in early years when children are encouraged to make marks using different media, such as sand and chalk. During phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) sessions, younger pupils are encouraged to write the letters and sounds that they are learning. Staff encourage pupils to be precise with their letter formation. Year 1 pupils took pride in their work as they wrote the words 'elbow' and 'pillow' as they learned the spellings of words. The high-quality displays of pupils' work around the school, as well as pupils' books, show that writing is taught effectively. The ideas that teachers use to stimulate pupils' writing are equally motivating to boys and girls. Older pupils' research in the local community, relating to the First World War, produced writing of a good quality. Your leader for English works effectively with other teachers across the school to

check and agree the accuracy of their assessments of pupils' writing. Some changes are not fully embedded and the impact on extending pupils' vocabulary and ensuring that more pupils work at greater depth is at an early stage.

- Finally, I looked at the opportunities pupils have to develop a love of learning across the wider curriculum. Pupils told me how much they enjoy all aspects of school life. Teachers provide learning opportunities to broaden pupils' horizons and raise their aspirations. Older pupils told me with excitement how much they were looking forward to developing their teamwork during their residential trip to an outdoor education centre. Year 4 pupils animatedly recalled their visit to a nuclear power station linked to their project 'sparks might fly'. In promoting relationships and appreciation of others, pupils have experienced workshops with a dance company comprising dancers with SEND. Pupils explained how this deepened their understanding of the barriers that some people have to overcome. During the inspection, a theatre company raised awareness of physical and mental well-being, which pupils responded to with real enthusiasm. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to develop an interest in the arts, including links with a choir in Uganda who have performed at the school. Staff provide extra-curricular activities such as chess, dance, gymnastics and choir and they promote pupils' spiritual understanding through a faith and values group. These types of opportunities encourage pupils to develop their interests and prepare them well for their next stage of education.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers embed the changes made to develop pupils' writing skills so that more reach greater depth
- they further develop communications with parents to ensure that they understand any changes being made in school.

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

Yours sincerely

Naomi Taylor  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I observed teaching and learning jointly with you. I held meetings with subject leaders and spoke to members of the governing body. I held a meeting with you as the designated safeguarding leader and with the SEND coordinator. I spoke to a representative from the local authority. I also spoke informally with parents at the school gates and took account of the 44 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I took account of 44 free-text responses from parents. There were 21 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire which I also analysed. I also spoke to staff informally during the day. There were no responses from pupils to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire. I held a meeting with pupils and spoke with pupils during breaks and in lessons. During the inspection, I reviewed a range of school documents. These included: the school's development plans and self-evaluation documents; minutes of the governing body's meetings; safeguarding documentation; records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance; the school website; school policies; and pupils' work and their reading logs.