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Mrs Anne Harvey
Executive Headteacher
Croxton Kerrial Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mrs Harvey

Short inspection of Croxton Kerrial Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 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 your school was judged to be good in June 2015.

This school continues to be good.

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

Leaders and governors are determined to make the school as good as it can be. You have created an ethos where pupils' happiness and well-being are at the heart of the work of the school. You have correctly identified the most important priorities for improvement and have detailed plans in place to address them.

School leaders tackled the areas for improvement which arose out of the last inspection in June 2015 with urgency. Pupils' progress is now checked much more closely, and the accuracy of teachers' assessments is checked by teachers from other schools. This helps the teachers to have appropriate high expectations of what individual pupils, within each small cohort, can achieve.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They work, learn and play together very well. They feel confident that teachers will always 'sort things out', whether that be small disagreements on the playground or challenges with school work. Pupils particularly appreciate how they help one another in their learning and I saw this for myself when I visited the classrooms. Most parents are happy with the school and one parent praised the 'homely friendliness' of Croxton Kerrial. However, a number of parents would like to see better communication between school and home.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of topics in a broad and balanced curriculum. They were

very proud to show me the large-scale, three-dimensional maps of the Indus Valley that they had made during a geography topic. Pupils also particularly enjoy physical education lessons which are taught by specialist sports coaches and the chance to keep fit in the 'daily mile' (which takes place frequently). The members of the school council are proud to have led a number of fundraising initiatives for charity, including cake raffles and bracelet sales.

The early years is inviting, well-organised and stimulating, both inside and outdoors. The adults guide and question the children skilfully. For example, during my visit I observed a small group of children engrossed in modelling fishes out of clay. The teaching assistant prompted, 'What do we need to add on?' and the children decided that they needed to make some fins. All the children worked and played with sustained concentration; for example, one pupil carefully used dominoes to count and then record numbers to 10. The proportion of pupils who reach a good level of development has increased steadily over the last two years and is now above the national average.

The governing body has a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is tenacious in holding school leaders to account. Governors check carefully on the impact of your school improvement plans.

The school is an active member of the multi-academy trust. The trust senior school effectiveness officer said the school 'punches above its weight', in effectively supporting other local schools.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils feel safe at school. They can confidently talk about the many different ways that they learn how to stay safe, for example when they are online or when they are crossing the road. The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Procedures for assessing risks and recording accidents are thorough and well organised. All staff have been appropriately trained and know what to do if they have any concern about a child's safety or welfare. Governors regularly check that the school's safeguarding arrangements are effective.

Incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are rare, but, if they do occur, they are dealt with promptly and effectively. There have been no exclusions for poor behaviour and no recorded incidents of racism over recent years. When I asked pupils if there was ever any homophobic name-calling, I was told that there was not. One pupil said that 'Someone started to do it but no one liked it, so they stopped'. School leaders have established a nurturing ethos which underpins the safeguarding arrangements and the pupils contribute to this by the way they look out for and care for one another.

Inspection findings

- I explored a number of key lines of enquiry during this inspection.

- School leaders have taken effective steps to improve the level of attendance so that it is now close to the national average. They work well with outside agencies to ensure that good support is provided for pupils who are unable to attend school for medical reasons.
- The additional funding that the school receives to support disadvantaged pupils is allocated to good effect. There is an appropriate balance of investment in both supporting academic work and extra-curricular opportunities. Analysis of work in disadvantaged pupils' books shows that they make good progress in all year groups. School leaders are ambitious for pupils to achieve well. However, a few disadvantaged pupils, although making good progress, are not making strong enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics to catch up with other pupils.
- The training that school leaders have provided for the teachers has led to the improvement in the teaching of writing. Work in books shows that pupils who had not met the expected standard in writing by the end of key stage 1 are now making strong progress in key stage 2.
- Pupils have plenty of opportunities to write at length and to use writing skills in other subjects. They take pride in their work and take as much care with writing in topic work as they do in English work. Although pupils are more accurate when using grammar, punctuation and spelling, these important features of writing have not improved enough for pupils' writing to be of a consistently high standard.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling continues to improve so that pupils' writing reaches a consistently high standard
- a greater number of disadvantaged pupils make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics
- they improve communication between school and home.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Leicester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leicestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Peter Strauss
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, other school leaders and members of the governing body, including the chair. I spoke with parents at the start of the day. I spoke to pupils during lessons and held a formal meeting with a group of pupils from the school council. I observed teaching and learning throughout the school jointly with you and the assistant headteacher. During these visits I looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils to evaluate the quality of their learning. I spoke on the telephone with the senior school effectiveness adviser from the Diocese of Leicester Academies Trust. With you and the assistant headteacher, I examined pupils' work in a sample of their books.

I examined a range of documents related to safeguarding; behaviour; the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; pupils' attainment and progress; and leaders' plans for improvement. I assessed the impact on teaching and learning of leaders' actions taken since the last inspection, as well as other lines of enquiry. I considered the 28 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, as well as the seven responses to the staff questionnaire. I also considered the range and quality of information provided on the school's website.