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27 February 2019

Mr Mark Millbourne  
Headteacher  
All Saints' Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School  
Main Road  
Dovercourt  
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Essex  
CO12 4HT

Dear Mr Millbourne

### **Short inspection of All Saints' Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 12 February 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 July 2015.

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

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

Since your appointment, you and other leaders have created an effective staff team. There is a strong sense of all working together for the same goal, to achieve strong outcomes for the pupils in your care.

Leaders and governors have an accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and what needs further development. They have a clear and shared understanding of how to achieve these improvements.

Teachers are well supported in their own professional development. By working with the local education partnership, staff have access to training and support from peers in other schools. The teachers work together closely within the school to enhance pupils' progress. For example, they meet termly to share assessment information and discuss their plans for intervening to support specific pupils. They then share ideas on how to improve provision.

Pupils are very well behaved. They are polite, and move around the school site sensibly and calmly. They listen carefully to teachers and try hard with their work. The few pupils who struggle with their behaviour are well supported by adults in both the classroom and playground environments.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

Staff have a good understanding of how to keep pupils safe. They have regular training and are aware of the signs that might indicate a pupil is at risk. Leaders ensure that they deal promptly and correctly with all concerns. Detailed record-keeping means that you can identify patterns of concerns easily.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They know who to talk to if they feel unsafe and are happy that staff will deal with any issues. Most parents spoken to and who responded to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey, said that they are happy with the school and that their children feel safe. However, some parents are concerned that poor behaviour is not always dealt with in the right way. I looked at records of behaviour and communication with parents in detail and all incidents have been dealt with in an appropriate way. I saw no incidents of disruptive behaviour during the inspection.

Leaders have ensured that all the required checks have been carried out on adults who are regularly in the school. A link governor regularly reviews the records of these checks, which are also audited by the local authority.

## **Inspection findings**

- I identified some lines of enquiry to check whether the school remains good and agreed these with you at the start of the inspection. First, I considered whether the standard of writing is as high as it should be and whether pupils are making the progress that they should be. This had been identified as a key area for improvement at the previous inspection. In 2017, progress from the end of key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2 was below national averages for pupils in Year 6. In 2018, achievement in writing was stronger, with the percentage of pupils in Year 6 reaching the expected standard above the national average. I wanted to see if this improvement was established across the school.
- Recently, writing has been a high priority for the school. All classes have displays of the pupils' writing over the year so far. Teachers model examples of good writing during teaching and then display these for pupils to refer to. There is a consistent approach to teaching writing, with shared writing, support where needed, and opportunities for pupils to write at length. In some classes the pupils have been writing at length regularly all year, in others this has increased recently.
- The focus on writing is also evident in the early years. In their independent play, there are many opportunities for writing, which children choose to take up. Examples include writing valentine cards, planning building materials for outside construction and labelling minibeasts.
- Leaders plan to review the curriculum, focusing on subjects other than English and mathematics. The intention is to plan specific opportunities for pupils to practise skills developed in English lessons in other subjects. At present, teachers plan to include writing in the wider curriculum, with pupils given opportunities such as writing plans for a debate and composing letters. However, some

activities focus too much on the writing skills, with the consequence that pupils do not achieve the intended subject-specific knowledge and understanding. Some pupils do not have strong enough understanding of topics they are studying in subjects such as science and geography.

- My second line of enquiry considered what leaders and teachers are doing to ensure that the progress and attainment of girls in mathematics is in line with the progress and attainment of boys. In 2018, girls attained standards well below those of boys at the end of both key stages 1 and 2 in mathematics. Girls also made much less progress than boys by the end of key stage 2.
- Leaders have considered this issue carefully. They have looked at information from across the school and teachers' own assessments do not show a gap between girls and boys. In lessons I saw, there was no difference in the engagement of girls and boys. With senior leaders, I looked at books from all year groups and, again, there was no noticeable difference between girls and boys.
- However, leaders' analysis has found that there is a gap in attainment when pupils sit tests. They have identified a lack of confidence in working quickly and using number knowledge fluently to solve calculations. Leaders have introduced a new daily session to develop speed and recall in mathematics. The local education partnership is also working on this as a priority, so teachers are working alongside peers in other schools to share what works well. This has been a focus for a 'lesson study', where teachers in the school observe each other and share good practice.
- The previous inspection reported that the responsibilities of leaders in relation to behaviour and attendance were not clear enough. Historically, persistent absence and the number of exclusions have been high, so I looked at this with you and other leaders.
- The pastoral leader has responsibility for both behaviour and attendance. There is a systematic approach and better record-keeping and sharing of information than in the past. Teachers say that they are kept well informed of any actions taken or information that they need to have. Consequently, the overall leadership of these is strong and all stakeholders are well informed.
- Systems for managing behaviour are good. Pupils understand them and teachers feel well supported by leaders in using these. Pupils appreciate the positive awards, such as merit points and certificates.
- Where there have in the past been a small number of incidents of unacceptable behaviour, you have dealt with these appropriately. Leaders have reviewed the curriculum to ensure that lessons and assemblies celebrate diversity and have worked with pupils to promote anti-discriminatory language and behaviour. I discussed the use of exclusions with you. These are only used as a last resort.
- Attendance is broadly in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has fallen dramatically. This is a result of the high profile put on attendance. It is promoted in many parts of school life – in newsletters, on posters stating recent statistics in classroom windows, badges awarded for good attendance and certificates awarded to classes for the same. The pastoral

leader makes home visits to families to check on pupils' well-being where no contact has been made following an absence; she meets with families who are at risk of their children being persistently absent.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers are clear about exactly what pupils should learn over time in subjects other than English and mathematics
- teachers give pupils appropriate opportunities to practise their reading and writing skills in subjects other than English
- teachers enable pupils to build up their confidence and fluency in mental arithmetic, continuing to check that girls are not falling behind
- all teachers consistently teach at a good or better standard, so pupils continue to make good progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Tessa Holledge  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

You and I discussed the lines of enquiry for this inspection, the school's own evaluation of its performance, progress since the last inspection and information about current provision in the school. We, together with other senior leaders, discussed procedures for safeguarding and examined case studies of referrals made, and I examined the single central record of pre-employment checks on staff.

I spoke with parents on the playground. I considered the 20 responses submitted to Parent View.

We visited every classroom at least twice. We looked at a wide range of pupils' work, in class and out of class, focusing on writing and mathematics. I met with a range of senior staff and also other teachers. I met with a group of pupils formally and also spoke to pupils in class and on the playground at lunchtime. I met with the chair of the governing body.