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Lindsay West
Principal
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Dear Mrs West

Short inspection of Durrington All Saints Church of England Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 1 May 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 predecessor school was judged to be good in June 2013.

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 led the school well through a period of significant staffing changes. Since your arrival, you have acted very effectively to raise standards and reduce absence and exclusions. For example, the percentage of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception rose from 54% in 2015 in the predecessor school to 70% in 2018. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check rose from 40% in 2015 to 86% in 2018. You have addressed the areas for improvement identified in the predecessor school's last Ofsted report, which were to do with improving teaching.

The responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, were almost completely positive, and almost all the written comments sent in said very good things about the school. All the parents I spoke to as they brought their children to school were very positive. Comments sent in included: 'I am very pleased with Mrs West and her wonderful team of teachers,' 'I would recommend it to anyone,' and 'I am blown away by the amount of help they have given.' Some parents who are in the armed services remarked particularly on how well their children had made progress. Pupils like being at the school. They say that it is a friendly place to be and they learn well. One said, 'The grown-ups help us if we start struggling, say with maths and stuff.'

You have established a team of staff who are keen to improve, are proud to work at

the school and enjoy working there. Almost all who responded to the staff questionnaire feel well supported. They support the school's ethos and vision effectively, summed up for the pupils in the motto 'Proud to be me, and be the best I can be.' You have a clear plan for improvement, and with the early years leader have made great strides forward in developing the provision in Reception. You are aware that there is fine tuning to do to develop the use of the outdoor area. At the moment, learning through play is more effective indoors than outside. Occasionally, some pupils do not engage well with the learning in the wider outdoor area.

You work effectively with the chief executive of the Salisbury Plain Academies, and with the academy trustees and the academy advisory board (AAB) for the school. Trustees and board members are clear about their different roles, and are effective. They offer support but also challenge, for example over the necessary improvements to attendance, which they have been tracking closely.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are very clear about their responsibilities and how to identify signs of neglect or abuse. When you have concerns, you keep very careful records of these and take prompt action to contact other agencies and pursue matters to the conclusion that is right for the child. The single central record of checks made on staff and their training records had minor administrative errors when I checked at the beginning of the day. The information needed was to hand and the systems were quickly updated.

Almost all parents said that their child feels safe at Durrington, and all the pupils I spoke to said that they were happy and safe. They say that they can talk to the adults and trust them to sort out any problems. They learn about key aspects of safety at school. For example, they understand the basics of keeping safe when using computers and told me about road safety training that had really made an impression.

AAB members give close attention to ensuring that pupils are kept safe. For example, the AAB's chair meets regularly with pupils to explore how they feel about the school and whether they have any concerns.

Inspection findings

- This inspection had three focus areas, which arose from an analysis of the school's data and self-evaluation. These were: the reasons behind the higher levels of absence and exclusions in 2015–2018; how well teaching meets the needs of the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and the most able pupils, particularly in writing; and how effectively the school is developing its curriculum in subjects beyond English and mathematics.
- Absence was 5.3% in 2017/18, compared to 3.8% for similar schools nationally. You took rapid action to raise attendance, for example making sure that parents were aware of the impact of pupils missing school and updating them on class

data through social media. Absence has dropped significantly and is no longer of concern in the school as a whole. So far this academic year, it is 2.9%.

- Exclusions were high between 2015 and 2018. The school has a comparatively high number of pupils with SEND and several showed particularly challenging behaviour. We looked at examples of the most recent exclusions: proper procedures were followed in these. Moreover, you and your staff took strong steps to support the pupils involved and their families. There have been no exclusions since September 2018. Behaviour is good and pupils with behavioural special needs are managed well.
- As a whole, pupils with SEND are making good progress in writing. Staff are effective in supporting children with particular needs to settle when they enter the school and providing special teaching to help them improve academically. Some parents of pupils with particular needs sent me very positive comments, including 'I honestly cannot believe the progress he has made.'
- The work of the most able pupils that we sampled also shows good progress in writing. We saw them being challenged in the lessons we visited together. Across the ability groups, pupils are making strong progress in their construction of sentences and in developing letter formation and handwriting. Spelling is a school focus for development, and pupils are given words to learn at home for a weekly test. As yet, these words are not systematically revisited in lessons to ensure that they remain embedded in memory. Also, there is no system for following up words identified as weaknesses when books are marked, to ensure that these words are thoroughly learned at home.
- You have been developing the skills of middle leaders effectively, including subject leaders. Your curriculum ensures that all national curriculum subjects and religious education are covered, with content grouped into topics. You enhance pupils' learning through a range of memorable experiences, for example Forest Friday in Reception.
- Teachers are clear about the skills and knowledge that different activities and topics are aimed at developing. However, there remains work to do on making sure that these skills and this knowledge are sequenced through the year groups in the most effective way, whether they are developed in lessons or in the forest. For instance, in our discussions you mentioned an example staff had been discussing, about how making a fruit salad might be different in Reception and in Year 2.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- staff fine-tune outdoor provision in Reception, so that it is used to focus learning in a way that is consistently effective for pupils
- staff establish a good link between spellings used in lessons and those learned at home, to help learning become embedded in pupils' long-term memories
- as the curriculum in subjects other than English and mathematics is developed further, planning of work takes full account of the sequence in which knowledge

and skills should be developed for the different age groups.

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

Yours sincerely

Deborah Zachary
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, your early years leader, the SEND coordinator and the chief executive of the academy trust, to discuss the work of the school. I also met with five members of the AAB and two trustees.

You and I visited lessons in all classrooms together. We also studied writing work for a sample of pupils in all year groups. I met with four Year 2 pupils, but also talked more informally with a further 15 pupils in the playground. I talked to various staff informally and took account of 15 responses to the staff questionnaire.

I looked at a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding and the reports on the school made by the academy trust's challenge partner.

I looked at 31 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, together with 17 written comments. I also talked informally to 12 parents and carers of pupils in all year groups, after they brought their children to school.