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Mr S Shaw
Headteacher
Church Eaton Endowed (VA) Primary School
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Dear Mr Shaw

Short inspection of Church Eaton Endowed (VA) Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 2 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 school was judged to be good in May 2015.

This school continues to be good.

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

The warm and welcoming atmosphere, based on the school's motto of 'Caring, Educating, Succeeding', permeates throughout the school. As a result, pupils are well behaved, courteous and kind.

You provide strong and effective leadership of this small, rural primary school. You lead by example and have gained the respect and trust of pupils, parents, carers, staff and governors. There have been good improvements since the school's previous inspection.

Your drive and determination to improve teaching and learning, and to develop the roles of key staff, have improved pupil progress throughout the school. This is an inclusive school, where pupils of all abilities achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The very small number of pupils taking national tests each year makes it difficult to judge trends over time reliably. However, assessments and pupils' work in books show that they make good progress in phonics, reading, writing and mathematics in relation to their starting points.

Leaders accurately evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their evaluations link well to improvement plans. Leaders have put in place a range of effective monitoring systems to improve teaching and learning and these are having a positive impact. Feedback to teachers is regular and precise. Teachers value the feedback and use it effectively to improve their practice.

Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development well and work closely with leaders to make improvements. Governors make important decisions, such as deciding to create a single-age class for pupils in Year 6 this year so that progress and attainment for this group of pupils can be maximised. This action is having a positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment. Governors are also well aware of the impact of leaders' actions within the school improvement plan. For example, they regularly visit school to conduct monitoring and evaluation work, and meet with subject leaders to discuss their work and hold them to account for progress and attainment in subjects.

At the last inspection, you were asked to ensure that more of the most able pupils reached the highest levels at the end of key stage 2. At the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment in combined reading, writing and mathematics at the higher standard was above the national average in both 2017 and 2018.

Leaders have implemented a range of strategies to improve attainment and progress in reading. Pupils demonstrate a love of reading, something which school leaders have been striving for. Your work in this area is having a positive impact on progress and attainment in reading. In 2017 and 2018, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 achieving the expected standard in phonics was above the national average.

Children describe their learning with enthusiasm, including a number of visits which have captured their interest. For example, in learning about the First and Second World Wars, pupils visited the National Memorial Arboretum to enhance their learning. The school offers a wide variety of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, such as physical education tuition, and a variety of visits. Pupils experience woodland outdoor education provision as part of the school's rich curriculum. Pupils participate in a wide range of sporting activities and are keen competitors. Pupils confirm that they enjoy taking part in sport and physical education activities and recognise the important contribution this makes to developing a healthy lifestyle.

You place a strong emphasis on ensuring that pupils show positive attitudes to learning and that they are considerate towards each other. They say that they feel safe and are confident that staff will sort out any problems they have. Children said, 'Everyone is in one big family in our school.'

Leaders, staff and governors have maintained very positive relationships with families. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, indicated that they would recommend the school. The comments that school staff are 'very caring' and 'supportive' were typical of the views of many parents.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a culture of vigilance surrounding the safeguarding of pupils and records are detailed. The single central record indicates that all required checks are made to ensure that staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children. You ensure that staff receive the up-to-date training, including training to protect pupils from extremism and radicalisation. Governors work closely with senior leaders to ensure that the work to

keep pupils safe is given high priority and meets current requirements.

Pupils feel safe in all parts of the school and say they are well cared for. They explained that any very rare instances of bullying or name-calling are dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils play well together, respect each other and follow the school rules. All parents agree that the school keeps pupils safe.

Inspection findings

- As it is a very small school, the staff adapt their lessons and plan tasks well to take account of the mixed-age groups they teach. In addition, a significant number of pupils join the school at different times to the usual entry points in the Nursery and Reception Years. Teachers and support staff accommodate these potential difficulties well and provide effective support and interventions which are tailored to meet pupils' needs and abilities.
- My first area of focus was to check on pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. In 2018, attainment at the end of key stage 2 at the higher standard in combined reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average, but at the expected standard it was below the national average. In 2018, progress at the end of key stage 2 was below the national average in reading and writing. The very small number of pupils make judgements based on specific assessment data unreliable. Pupils are taught well in all classes across the school and make good progress from their individual starting points, as evidenced by work in books. Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge. This ensures that lesson planning is carefully thought through and lessons are delivered effectively. In lessons, pupils demonstrate excellent learning behaviour by staying on task at all times. They carefully follow the advice given by their teachers on how to improve their work. However, in writing, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length and apply the skills they learn in English lessons.
- The second area I looked at was how effectively subject leaders improve teaching and learning in their subject areas. School leaders have a clear understanding of the priorities for improving teaching and learning, and have been successful in driving forward improvements across the school. There have been good improvements in the curriculum since the last inspection. You have worked alongside subject leaders to improve the curriculum, by increasing opportunities for pupils to apply and consolidate their reading and mathematics skills in other curriculum subjects. Subject leaders have created action plans that link to the school development plan, and now undertake monitoring and evaluation work to ensure that teaching and learning in their subject areas are continually improving. The work of subject leaders is having a positive impact on pupil progress across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 2 were able to describe the process of metamorphosis with detail and clarity as a result of their learning during a reading comprehension lesson.
- Another area I looked at was the school's website, which has been improved since the last inspection. It is colourful, informative and complies with the Department for Education's statutory requirements. Pupil premium and sport premium impact statements for 2017/18 are now available on the school's website.
- Finally, I looked at how well teachers use assessments to identify the learning needs

of all pupils. Leaders have taken action to ensure that assessment systems and procedures are effective in tracking the attainment and progress of groups of pupils in English, mathematics and science. However, ongoing assessments in lessons for all pupils need further improvement, particularly for children who begin school at times other than are usual, so that pupils' learning needs are identified more effectively.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- opportunities to write at length are increased in order to sustain standards in writing
- teachers use assessment information more effectively to identify children's learning needs, particularly those who start school at times other than are usual.

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

Yours sincerely

Emma Titchener
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you throughout the day's inspection, as well as subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. I also met with two members of the governing body. We visited all four classes together, during which we observed teaching, looked at pupils' work in books and spoke to pupils. I observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and at lunchtime. I spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. I took account of the 27 responses to Parent View, the 21 free-text messages, the 12 staff questionnaire responses and the 10 pupil questionnaire responses. I met with pupils to listen to their views and take them into account. I scrutinised the school's improvement plan, leaders' evaluations of the school's work and lesson observation feedback forms, as well as some governor minutes and headteacher reports to governors. I spoke with the school's external support provider. I analysed national assessment information to consider pupils' attainment and progress. I checked staff vetting and safeguarding procedures with the school's office manager to determine whether arrangements for safeguarding are compliant and effective.