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Mr Mike Jory
Headteacher
Draycott and Rodney Stoke Church of England First School
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Dear Mr Jory

Short inspection of Draycott and Rodney Stoke Church of England First School

Following my visit to the school on 10 July 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 October 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Together with staff and governors, you have made sure that the school continues to be a happy and caring community. Leaders place the Christian values of compassion, equality, justice and hope at the heart of the school's work. This has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and their attitudes to learning. Pupils behave well, are kind to each other and keen to do their best. Displays around the school, such as artwork of high quality, reflect the school's work to help pupils develop their talents in a range of subjects.

You have largely addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection. Teachers have worked closely with colleagues in the Mendip Edge Federation to share good practice and improve the teaching of mathematics for the most able pupils. You have also improved the teaching of writing. Consequently, the proportions of pupils who write with the accuracy and complexity in advance of their age, by the end of key stage 1, has increased. Most boys are now making strong progress in writing. However, a small number of pupils from lower starting points do not progress as well as their peers.

Increasingly, subject leaders for mathematics and English understand the strengths and weaknesses in teaching in their areas of responsibility. Leaders have helped teachers adapt their planning so that pupils of all abilities receive appropriate challenge and support. Leaders' actions have led to improvements to the teaching of mathematics. As a result, pupils can solve mathematical problems and reason in

in mathematics well.

Governors are knowledgeable about the school's priorities as a result of the detailed and accurate information that they receive from school leaders. This helps them to ask challenging questions to leaders about how well groups of pupils achieve. For example, governors identified a need to enhance the leadership of the provision for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This work is proving successful. Teaching and additional support is increasingly adapted to these pupils' needs and so pupils' achievements are improving steadily. However, governors do not use their visits to the school to identify which aspects of leaders' improvements initiatives are working well or where further development is needed.

Pupils are proud of their school and their achievements. They enjoy an engaging curriculum which provides a broad range of experiences. Pupils told the inspector that they particularly enjoy learning with musical instruments, conducting investigations in science and competing in sporting clubs and competitions. The curriculum also develops pupils' understanding of equalities well. Pupils are knowledgeable about many faiths and cultures and they told me that in school they are taught to 'treat everyone the same'. Pupils gain a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy through their science and physical education lessons.

The great majority of parents and carers are happy with the school's provision. One parent expressed the views of many by saying, 'My children love coming to this school, they enjoy the lessons, their friendships with others and they have excellent relationships with staff.' A very small minority of parents, however, felt that their children do not make enough progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have effective procedures and policies to keep pupils safe. The single central record of recruitment checks is maintained carefully and this ensures that adults who work with pupils are thoroughly vetted. Staff receive regular training to keep their knowledge of risks to pupils up to date. Designated safeguarding leads keep thorough records of referrals they receive. They follow up concerns promptly and work well with outside agencies to make sure that pupils and families receive the support they need. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding monitors the school's work, for example through talking with staff and pupils to make sure that policies are put into practice.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school. They recognise how the staff keep them safe and know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, for example when using the internet. Pupils say that adults deal quickly and effectively with any poor behaviour and trust that adults will listen to them if they have a concern. They say that bullying is extremely rare. Pupils attend well and leaders take swift action to help improve attendance for the very small number of pupils who miss school regularly.

Inspection findings

- To establish whether the school remains good, I investigated how well boys and girls are progressing in reading and writing across the early years and key stage 1 because boys have attained less well than girls in the past.
- Boys get off to a strong start in the early years. They make equally good progress as girls. Staff make appropriate checks on the progress that children are making in their reading. Any children who are at risk of falling behind receive timely additional help so that they catch up quickly. Boys and girls in the early years also make good progress in writing as a result of the strong support they receive. They form letters accurately and apply their knowledge of sounds to writing words well.
- In key stage 1, pupils enjoy reading. Teachers' questions help pupils to think more deeply about what they read. As a result, most boys are now making strong progress in reading. Most boys and girls write with accuracy because teachers develop their understanding of grammar and punctuation well. For example, during the inspection pupils were challenged to improve sentences using adverbs, adjectives and conjunctions.
- However, a small number of pupils from low starting points are not making enough progress in reading and writing. Pupils' reading materials are not matched closely to their stage of understanding. Consequently, they struggle to read unfamiliar words accurately. Similarly, teaching does not address these pupils' spelling errors consistently well. As a result, their progress falters.
- I also investigated how well pupils, especially the most able, are progressing in mathematics across the school. Teachers plan lessons which build on prior learning well. Pupils are challenged to apply their knowledge to solving problems and to think more deeply about what they have learned. As a result, the most able pupils are making strong progress across the school.
- Workbooks show that the most able pupils tackle demanding problems such as proving or disproving statements about equivalent fractions or the value of digits in decimal numbers. Consequently, the proportions of pupils currently in Year 2 who have knowledge and skills above that which is expected for their age is increasing.
- The wider curriculum is broad and balanced. Work in books show that pupils are developing an improving body of subject-specific knowledge across a number of subjects. This includes knowledge of scientific terminology and of locations around the world. Pupils develop their understanding of historical changes and apply their writing skills well in history. However, teachers' assessments do not consistently build on pupils' prior knowledge so that pupils can deepen their understanding. As a result, teaching does not offer sufficient challenge or high enough expectations in a few subjects. For example, pupils complete practical investigations in science but they do not use their observations and measurements accurately enough to draw conclusions or classify information.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils with lower starting points in key stage 1 make good progress in reading and writing
- governors use the information from their monitoring to ensure that leaders take swift action to improve teaching and outcomes
- teaching in the wider curriculum is carefully planned so that pupils develop and deepen their subject knowledge across all subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Claire Mirams
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke to parents at the start of the school day. I held meetings with you and with two senior leaders. We reviewed your plans for improvement, information on current pupils' progress and your own evaluation of the school's performance. We conducted learning walks and scrutinised pupils' workbooks together. I listened to pupils read and reviewed records of their reading. I met with members of the governing body and scrutinised records of their meetings. I met with a group of pupils. I scrutinised various safeguarding records including the single central record of safeguarding checks.

I also considered six responses to the staff survey, 18 responses to the pupil survey, 46 parent responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, 42 free-text responses, and a letter from a parent. I also spoke to a parent on the telephone.