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Miss Lisa Tudor  
Headteacher  
The Minster CofE Primary School  
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Wiltshire  
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Dear Miss Tudor

### **Short inspection of The Minster CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 18 September 2018, 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 March 2015.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Over time, pupils achieve well at the end of each key stage. Their attainment is broadly in line with, and often above, that of pupils nationally. You have successfully addressed the recommendations of the last inspection. As a result, pupils' achievement in the Year 1 phonics screening check is consistently strong. Good teaching in all year groups ensures that the majority of current pupils make strong progress and achieve well.

You work tirelessly and with the utmost dedication in order to drive school improvement and provide stability for pupils. You took on a considerable teaching commitment when your previous Year 6 teacher left during the last academic year. This helped you to minimise the disruption to pupils' learning until you could recruit another teacher. You delegate responsibilities so that there is a shared accountability for leadership. For example, you have provided guidance to help the special educational needs coordinator to fulfil his role. Staff value your leadership and say that they feel respected and well supported. A member of staff commented, 'This is the happiest, most well-led team I've worked in and I believe that filters through to the children.'

You and other leaders, and governors, routinely evaluate your work. This enables you to identify appropriate targets for improvement. For instance, your plans accurately identify the need to improve the academic progress of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. You also have plans in place to improve pupils' fluency in mathematics. Governors ask

searching questions and undertake visits to assure themselves that your actions are making a difference.

Pastoral provision at the school is a particular strength, because you know pupils and their families well. This helps you to recognise when they require additional support. You make effective use of the parent support adviser, which enables you to point families to appropriate sources of help. You also deploy an intervention teacher to support pupils who need to catch up. As a result of the additional help that you provide, pupils are gaining the confidence to tackle their learning more effectively. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about your leadership. Typical comments include, 'The headteacher knows every child and really makes time to interact with everyone.' One parent stated, 'It is obvious from the headteacher's efforts that she cares deeply about the school and its pupils.'

Pupils are happy, welcoming and sociable. They know what is expected of them and consequently their behaviour is exemplary. Adults form strong, mutually respectful partnerships with pupils. This means that pupils feel well cared for. Pupils are enthusiastic to learn. As a result, they listen carefully to instructions and tackle work with enthusiasm.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a clear culture of safeguarding across the school. You routinely provide staff with updates to training. This ensures that they understand their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe. Staff can explain what to do if they have concerns. You maintain detailed records of all safeguarding referrals and follow up your actions to check that they are having an impact. You can describe how to refer serious concerns to external agencies. You carry out thorough checks to ensure that adults are safe to work with children and carefully record details on the school's single central record.

The vast majority of pupils attend school regularly. As a result, pupils are well-placed to take advantage of all that the school has to offer. You work closely with families to follow up the reasons for absence and share the importance of regular attendance. However, despite your actions, a few pupils have below-average attendance.

Staff are well trained to meet pupils' medical needs and administer first aid. There are well understood procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. You provide internet safety workshops for pupils and parents. Pupils can describe how to stay safe online and know that it is important not to share personal information. Pupils feel safe in school and say that behaviour is good.

### **Inspection findings**

- Firstly, I wanted to find out how effectively teaching in key stage 1 supports pupils to make strong progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. This is because fewer pupils achieve well in reading at the end of key stage 1 compared

to their high attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Also, last year the proportion of pupils who attained high standards in mathematics declined to a position well below the national average. Pupils enjoy reading and you provide opportunities for them to read regularly. You are improving teaching through the development of focused questions to deepen pupils' comprehension. Pupils read fluently and confidently and have a good vocabulary. This helps them to explain the reasons for events. For example, a pupil commented, 'The king is standing on a box because he wants to get higher.' Another pupil explained, 'The characters are able to get into the hamster cage because they shrink.'

- Reviews of pupils' learning in mathematics show that teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their number skills. This helps them to calculate accurately. Approximately three quarters of current pupils in key stage 1 make strong progress in all subjects in relation to their starting points. As a result, they achieve well. However, at times, teachers do not provide work that is sufficiently challenging. This hinders pupils from moving on in their learning.
- Next, I wanted to investigate how well leaders are improving teaching so that disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong academic progress. This is because, over time, few of these pupils achieve well. You work closely with the special educational needs coordinator to monitor teaching and evaluate provision. This helps you to identify pupils' specific needs and provide targeted support. For example, you have recruited a parent support adviser to provide guidance to families. You also provide play therapy and 'time out' spaces. This helps you to defuse any potential conflicts and promotes positive engagement in pupils' learning. You deploy additional adults effectively to provide extra teaching support. Adults explain tasks and model learning carefully, so that pupils understand what to do. This is improving pupils' self-esteem, confidence and attitudes to learning. The case studies we discussed provide striking examples to illustrate how effectively your actions are improving attendance and accelerating pupils' progress. Although pastoral support proves to be valuable for helping pupils to learn, it is not yet having a demonstrable impact on pupils' academic progress. Most pupils' attainment is below average and this is often due to the nature of their complex needs.
- Finally, I wanted to find out how you are improving the teaching of mathematics across key stage 2, following a decline in pupils' outcomes in Year 6 last year. You have identified the need to improve pupils' fluency in mathematics. As a result, you have recently implemented a daily 'maths MOT'. This is providing opportunities for pupils to practise, consolidate and apply their knowledge of number facts. As a result, pupils are developing the ability to explain their understanding and solve problems. Your latest assessment information and pupils' work confirm that most current pupils make strong progress in mathematics. Consequently, approximately three quarters of pupils in key stage 2 are working at standards appropriate for their age. One quarter of pupils are working at higher standards. However, our reviews of pupils' learning revealed that work sometimes does not challenge pupils sufficiently well. This hinders pupils from achieving what they are capable of. A few pupils confirm that work is sometimes too easy.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching in mathematics routinely challenges pupils, so that they consolidate their reasoning skills and make consistently strong progress
- precisely targeted support for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities accelerates their progress and continues to improve attendance.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, 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

Catherine Beeks  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held several meetings with you and your deputy headteacher. I had a meeting with the special educational needs coordinator and reviewed several case studies of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. I met with the chair of the governing body and had a telephone conversation with the local authority adviser. I checked the school's single central record and we discussed your safeguarding procedures and training. We reviewed the school's latest assessment information and discussed the school's self-evaluation and school development plan. Together, we observed learning in mathematics in Years 1, 3, and 5. Along with your deputy headteacher, we reviewed the mathematics workbooks of pupils in Years 2, 3 and 5 last year. I spoke with several pupils during lessons and at break and lunchtime, in order to gain their views of the school. I listened to key stage 1 pupils read. I spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day and considered 31 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, along with 19 additional free-text comments. I took account of 24 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and 13 responses to the online pupil survey.