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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Fiona Waller
Headteacher
Pimperne Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
Newfield Road
Pimperne
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT11 8WF

Dear Mrs Waller

Short inspection of Pimperne Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 26 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 November 2014.

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 high expectations for pupils and staff. You are ambitious for the school and work determinedly with other leaders to secure continued improvement in teaching and pupils' learning.

You have created a highly committed senior leadership team that works in close collaboration, sharing expertise and good practice, to improve outcomes for pupils further. As a result, your actions have had a considerable impact on raising pupils' achievement across the school. For example, the results of the tests at the end of key stage 2 in reading and mathematics in 2018 showed that pupils made exceptionally strong progress. Pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics was in the top 5% of schools nationally.

You have a precise understanding of what the school does well and what could be even better. You have addressed the areas for improvement in the previous inspection report successfully, while maintaining the school's strengths. For example, pupils' reading has remained good while you have improved the quality of pupils' writing.

You are watchful for any decline in pupils' achievement and respond swiftly through the implementation of well-targeted actions. You acknowledge that leaders must raise expectations for children's writing in early years so that more children exceed

the early learning goal in writing. You also recognise that the progress made by pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, particularly those with low starting points, needs further strengthening.

You are well supported by governors as a result of the positive and professional relationship you have. Governors work closely with the school. They know its strengths and weaknesses well. As a result, the governing body offers appropriate challenge and support to leaders. Governors share your passion and commitment to continuing school improvement. They undertake their duties with enthusiasm and diligence.

You have secured a hardworking and extremely dedicated staff team that is resilient and committed to enabling all pupils to do well. All staff who responded to the survey said that they enjoy working at this school and are proud to be a staff member. They agree unanimously that you support them well and treat them fairly and with respect.

Pupils behave well. They are welcoming and polite. The good progress they make reflects their positive attitudes to learning.

Feedback from parents and carers is overwhelmingly positive about the efforts made by staff to ensure that children are happy, and feel safe and looked after. Parents say that staff are friendly, amicable and caring. For example, a comment written by one parent, typical of many, said, 'There is a strong feeling of inclusivity throughout the school; all staff are very visible and approachable.'

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have created a robust culture around keeping pupils safe. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You train staff appropriately. As a result, they understand and carry out safeguarding policies and procedures effectively. They have the necessary knowledge to identify the signs of potential abuse quickly. Leaders know the pupils, their families and the local community well and ensure that they provide support when needed. You keep pupils safe and foster and develop constructive relationships with local agencies and the community to meet their well-being needs. Leaders' records show vigilance in following up concerns.

My discussions with pupils revealed that they feel safe and have a trusted adult to whom they can go with a worry or a concern. Rigorous recruitment procedures are in place to ensure the suitability of staff who work with children. Governors routinely check the effectiveness of the school's work to keep pupils safe and hold leaders to account. Pupils' good level of attendance shows that they value their education.

Inspection findings

- We examined leaders' actions to ensure that pupils, including the most able and disadvantaged, make strong progress in mathematics in key stage 1. In the 2016

and 2017 teachers' assessments, key stage 1 pupils' attainment in mathematics was below average. You provide teachers with effective training and guidance. You have put a range of measures in place to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics. Early morning mathematics sessions, and before- and after-lesson support, ensure that pupils revisit and practise their previous learning routinely. As a result, pupils' fluency and accuracy when working with number are strong.

- Pupils' progress in mathematics is now stronger. Discussions with pupils reveal that they are confident in their learning and feel better prepared for solving mathematical problems. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, successfully acquire knowledge, understanding and skills that are appropriate for their age. They make good use of technical terms to articulate their mathematical reasoning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils well in lessons. They use a wide range of resources and methods, including models, images and apparatus, to teach key concepts. Consequently, pupils grasp new mathematical ideas securely. Teachers challenge the most able pupils appropriately. They are routinely called upon to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding by solving and explaining problems of increasing complexity.
- We focused on evaluating leaders' actions in ensuring that children in early years, including the most able, achieve well, particularly in writing. In autumn 2017, you and other leaders introduced a range of strategies to engage children in independent writing more frequently. Together, you developed children's resilience as writers. Children are now making better progress and demonstrating improved perseverance.
- Children use their phonic skills successfully to support their spelling. They demonstrate sustained improvement in their handwriting and letter formation. They can record their ideas in simple sentences, showing an awareness of capital letters and full stops. Children are confident in applying their skills to write for a range of different purposes.
- The school's most recent early years foundation stage results show that children's achievement in writing is improving. Furthermore, improvements in early years mean that children in Reception are well prepared for Year 1. However, children do not apply their knowledge and skills consistently in their writing to support them to ensure that a greater proportion exceed the early learning goal in writing.
- Finally, we examined how effective leaders' actions are in supporting pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, particularly in key stage 2. Leaders have a strong grasp of the needs of individual pupils. They ensure that well-targeted, bespoke support is enabling pupils who have specific learning needs to make better progress. School systems ensure the timely referral of pupils who may have barriers to their learning. You work closely with external agencies to secure appropriate support. As a result, the achievement of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is improving and their requirements are being met effectively.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are alert to the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They respond quickly to clarify key learning points and address misunderstandings in lessons. Consequently, evidence in pupils' work

shows improving knowledge and skills. For example, pupils show a secure understanding of a range of writing devices confidently. They can apply these in their independent work.

- Teachers use a wide range of strategies. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities demonstrate good levels of interest and engagement.
- You are ambitious for all pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, particularly those who have low starting points. You regularly review the quality of provision that is available to pupils who have specific learning needs. Through this monitoring, you have identified that some of the support that is in place is more limited in its impact. Consequently, you are currently implementing a range of new systems to maximise the impact the school's actions are having in ensuring that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make the best possible progress from their starting points.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers raise their expectations for children's attainment in writing so that a greater proportion of early years children exceed the early learning goal in writing
- newly introduced SEN provision leads to pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities making stronger progress, particularly those with low starting points.

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 Dorset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Neil Swait
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I spoke with you and senior leaders. I spoke with staff members, four representatives of the governing body, your school evaluation partner and pupils. We made joint visits to classes to observe learning and to look at pupils' work.

I considered a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's self-evaluation, external reports, attendance and monitoring records, minutes of

governing body meetings and safeguarding documentation. In addition, I took account of 59 responses to Parent View, 18 responses to the staff survey, and 46 responses to the pupil survey.