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Mr Peter Wright
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Wright

Short inspection of St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Following my visit on 19 April 2017, 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 July 2012.

This school continues to be good.

You and your leadership team have maintained, and further improved, the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Parents are very happy with the quality of teaching and learning provided by the school. One parent commented that her child was 'always keen to get to school', recognising the wide range of opportunities available and the high standard of teaching and care.

Leaders and governors aim to ensure that every pupil is highly valued and that pupils are taught to become well-rounded individuals. Leaders are determined to provide the highest quality of education and, through their knowledge of each pupil, recognise when further support is required to help pupils achieve well. The school has a sense of calm and respect, with a purposeful working 'buzz' in every classroom.

Pupils value the positive relationships in school, particularly between them and their teachers. Younger pupils comment that 'teachers are nice and kind' and are 'smiley and friendly'. Older pupils recognise and value the support teachers give to them to help them improve their work by providing 'work that's appropriate for our age' and 'asking challenging questions when we are stuck to help us work out the answer'.

Pupil behaviour is a strength, they are polite and courteous. Their behaviour around the school and in lessons is exemplary. Their impeccable conduct in lessons ensures that pupils are on task and engaged. Pupils value the range of rewards available for good behaviour.

You and your team have taken effective action to address the areas for improvement since the last inspection. Writing and mathematics are integrated into other subjects through an imaginative curriculum. Pupils' books show that a good range of different types of writing are used to record pupils' learning in other subject areas. The school now needs to work on raising the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard at greater depth in writing, particularly boys. Pupils are taught to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics, using everyday contexts and those which encompass other curriculum areas. Pupils state that these improvements have made their work 'interesting' and 'fun'. The next stage for the school is to increase the impact that middle leaders have outside of their own classrooms.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. Leaders and governors fulfil statutory requirements when appointing new members of staff.

Parents and pupils feel that the school is a safe place to be. Leaders, including governors, ensure that staff receive high-quality training and, as a result, staff know how to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse. Staff are very clear about the school's procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they have regarding the safeguarding of pupils. Documentation is thorough and detailed.

Pupils are taught about how to stay safe online. Leaders have introduced and implemented clear procedures for internet safety. Pupils understand the dangers associated with internet use and report concerns to staff.

Attendance rates of all pupils and groups of pupils are currently in line with, or better than, national averages. Leaders have implemented very good procedures to tackle absenteeism. Leaders are aware that significant absence of a small number of pupils last year was due to very specific individual circumstances.

Inspection findings

- Pupils at St Peter's Church of England Primary School make good progress from their starting points. Your analysis of pupil performance and progress in 2016 was robust and identified the successes and weaknesses in the progress made by significant groups of pupils.
- I considered the progress and attainment of the most able pupils during the inspection. Strategies introduced to improve pupils' writing are beginning to have a positive impact on standards but need to be used consistently across all classes. The next stage for the school is to increase the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standards in writing for their age but at greater depth.

Pupils are taught how to edit and improve their writing independently. Where these strategies have been implemented well and teachers have high expectations for their use, standards of pupils' writing are improving, especially that of the most able pupils. In these classes, pupils' books show better vocabulary use and improved sentence structure to create specific effects. There is an improving use of connectives and other linguistic devices to add interest to writing.

- In mathematics, leaders have introduced opportunities for pupils to talk through their mathematical thinking. This is having a positive effect on pupils' developing reasoning skills, particularly of the most able. Pupils' books show that, where the needs of the most able pupils are met and provision includes greater challenge and higher teacher expectation, pupils are tackling complex mathematical questions successfully.
- The school's mathematics leader has successfully identified the elements required to improve the teaching of mathematics to ensure that standards in this subject continue to rise. She has shared the importance of developing pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills with other teachers in training sessions, but needs more time to monitor the implementation and impact of these improvements, particularly in classes where improvements have not been consistently applied.
- A second line of enquiry focused on the progress and attainment of pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have created highly focused provision, each morning, for a small group of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils. Pupils working in this group are taught specific aspects of English and mathematics which have been identified through detailed assessment and diagnosis. They are also supported, each afternoon, by a teaching assistant to help ensure that learning is consolidated in subjects other than mathematics and English. This provision is having a very positive effect on the progress and attainment of the pupils involved.
- School assessment information shows that most pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. This is because leaders identify their needs early, assess accurately and teach to a high quality. The special needs coordinator works successfully with a range of outside agencies to diagnose and identify learning needs. This good liaison and partnership working ensures that individual pupils' needs are met through specific learning programmes, such as speech and language activities, delivered by teaching assistants who are very experienced and well trained for the role. The coordinator maintains very clear records of those pupils whose attainment or progress is a concern. High-quality teaching and support for class activities is given, and continues, until staff are sure that the pupil has fully understood the concepts and aspects of learning covered.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- writing improves, especially for boys, enabling a higher proportion of pupils to attain the expected standard for their age at greater depth
- middle leaders' skills improve so that they and experienced teachers influence teaching and learning beyond their own classrooms.

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

Yours sincerely

Ian Shackleton
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your senior leadership team, nine parents, seven members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority and the diocese.

I spoke with the family worker and the school's special educational needs coordinator. I also met with the school's key stage 2 and mathematics leader. In addition, I talked with small groups of pupils around the school, in lessons and formally in two groups.

I observed teaching and learning in various classes jointly with the headteacher and scrutinised writing, mathematics and topic books from pupils across the school. In addition, I listened to pupils read.

I examined a range of documents, including those relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding. I looked at the school's self-evaluation of how well it is doing, the school's improvement priorities and the school's assessment information. I reviewed the school's website. I considered 32 responses from parents to Ofsted's free-text survey.