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Mr Michael Warren
Headteacher
West Tytherley Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mr Warren

Short inspection of West Tytherley Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 23 February 2016, 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 June 2011.

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 maintained a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning within the school, developing the curriculum and ensuring that pupils of all abilities are well supported. Staff enjoy working at the school and there is a skilled governing body whose members challenge leaders effectively. Parents praise and value the pastoral care afforded to pupils, particularly pupils who are in need of additional support. One parent commented: 'All the children are given opportunities and many achieve remarkable things. There is a strong community spirit and I feel that children leave the school with a well-developed sense of responsibility to others'.

Pupils show pleasure in their learning at school and are diligent in their work. Pupils develop a love of learning because you and other leaders ensure that the curriculum provides enriching experiences across a wide range of subject areas, capitalising on outdoor learning. Leaders have a strong commitment to equality and inclusion that is evident in policy and in practice. This positively influences staff and pupils' attitudes towards others. Pupils show a desire to learn and behave well, both in and out of lessons, and are able to articulate strong levels of care and concern for others.

You and other senior leaders monitor pupils' progress carefully and use the information you hold about what pupils know and can do to shape the teaching that pupils receive. Leaders know which pupils are at risk of falling behind and tailor additional support effectively to meet their needs. Small cohorts mean that comparisons with national indicators are unreliable. However, pupils in the school achieve well overall and make good progress from their starting points.

At the last inspection, inspectors identified the need to raise the attainment of pupils by providing challenge for the most-able pupils. Inspectors also identified the need to ensure that spelling and punctuation are used accurately and to provide opportunities for pupils to consolidate their numeracy skills in other subjects. Leaders have tackled these areas effectively so that:

- lessons include regular opportunities for all pupils, including the most able, to challenge themselves, particularly in writing and mathematics
- pupils' spelling and punctuation are reinforced and regularly practised in their writing so that these are now more accurate
- pupils' numeracy skills are used in a wide variety of contexts across the curriculum, including in outdoor learning activities.

Although pupils' overall achievement is good, pupils' learning is not always broadened and deepened sufficiently well in phonics and mathematics and this reduces the rapidity of pupils' progress.

Leaders and governors ensure that the impact of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs is evaluated and reported to parents. However, the impact of sports funding is not similarly evaluated or reported on the school's website.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding training is updated regularly. Practice in school reflects the latest national guidance and all staff know the procedures they should follow if they are concerned about any pupil. Leaders ensure that there is prompt identification of any pupils who may be at risk of harm.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Concerns are addressed quickly and leaders liaise well with other agencies to reduce any risk of harm. Pre-employment checks on staff meet requirements, with clear records kept of checks made on visitors and contractors. Attendance is above the national average and very few pupils are persistently absent.

Inspection findings

- Leaders, including governors, have a clear strategy for the school's journey towards becoming outstanding in the future. Plans are rooted in accurate self-evaluation and communicated well to all members of the school community. Leaders are ambitious for pupils to 'believe, enjoy, grow and succeed', captured in their vision statement: 'branch by branch we reach for the sky'.
- Parents are positive about their child's educational experiences, particularly in the early years provision. In 2015, almost every child secured a good level of development. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make and feel they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. One parent commented: 'Thanks to Tytherley School my daughter is a happy and confident child ready to accept the challenges of secondary school'.
- Leaders have made a number of changes to the way in which phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is taught in the school, ensuring that teachers make better use of assessment information to target any gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge. In the early years provision and Year 1, pupils develop their ability to hear, say and blend sounds accurately because teachers model pronunciation well and pick up errors quickly. In Year 1, more pupils this year are working within the expected standard in phonics for their age and standards are rising. However, teaching does not always move pupils on further when they are ready to deepen and extend their phonic knowledge, and this reduces the rapidity of their progress.
- Practical opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge by writing or sorting words with similar sounds ensure that early reading skills are practised and consolidated. In Key Stage 1, independent writing shows that pupils apply their phonics knowledge accurately to their sentence work, using appropriate punctuation. Pupils use the criteria they are given to evaluate their work. One pupil was able to talk confidently about her use of the possessive apostrophe and alliteration in her sentence, 'Georgie's giraffe goes to a gig with a girl called Grace'.
- There is an attractive library within the school which is well maintained. Pupils read often, both at home and at school. Additional support is targeted appropriately for pupils who need to catch up. Consequently, in both the early years provision and Key Stage 1, the proportions of pupils meeting or exceeding the expected standard for their age have increased. However, leaders accurately identify that in Key Stage 2, opportunities for pupils to interrogate and analyse text need to be strengthened. This work and the evaluation of its impact are at an early stage.

- Pupils are animated, vocal and engaged in their learning. They show diligence and care, taking pride in their work. In Years 5 and 6 in mathematics, pupils were able to maintain their energy and concentration during work about the order of operation because the teacher's explanation was clear and explicit. Pupils used technical vocabulary, such as 'indices', accurately and are supported to amend and explain errors. In pupils' workbooks, however, there are examples of missed opportunities to deepen and broaden pupils' mathematical thinking across concepts.
- The very small number of pupils with special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged receive good support. The leader with responsibility for these pupils has a clear grasp of their individual needs and closely evaluates the difference that additional support makes to pupils' progress.
- Current school performance information shows that the vast majority of pupils are on track to secure end-of-year expectations in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Governors' evaluative skills have strengthened and they provide robust challenge to check that leaders' actions make a difference. They visit school regularly and ensure that their visits focus squarely on aspects of the school improvement plan. They do not shy away from difficult resourcing decisions and ensure that performance management arrangements support continuous improvement to the quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupils say that they particularly value their time in the new outdoor area that has been created recently. Pupils recall cultural experiences such as Chinese New Year and the festival of Sukkot. They talk maturely about how members of the community help them to understand different faiths and cultures.
- New values are threading through the curriculum and other areas of school life. During an assembly, for example, pupils were encouraged to think about how Christians prepare for Easter during the period of Lent. They were encouraged to consider how they could show the value of 'care' to others during this time. Pupils enjoy taking on additional responsibilities, particularly those that involve them helping younger members of the school community.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school website includes an evaluation of the impact of the sports premium on pupils' participation and achievement
- pupils' learning is deepened and broadened during lessons when they show that they have grasped a skill, idea or concept quickly, particularly in phonics and mathematics.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Winchester, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Abbie Wilkinson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, other leaders, pupils and six governors including the Chair of the Governing Body. I also met with a representative of the local authority. I visited classes in Key Stages 1 and 2. I scrutinised pupils' writing and mathematics books and observed pupils' learning. I looked at a sample of guided reading records. I took account of nine responses to the staff survey and 29 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, I considered a further 28 written comments from parents. I also considered 23 responses to the school's most recent survey of parents. I spoke with a group of pupils from across the school. I analysed a range of the school's documentation, including leaders' checks on pupils' current performance, leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and safeguarding policies and procedures. I discussed your own evaluation of the school's performance with you.