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Mrs Susan O'Boyle
Headteacher
West Wittering Parochial Church of England School
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Dear Mrs O'Boyle

Short inspection of West Wittering Parochial Church of England School

Following my visit to the school on 15 February 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 May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your senior leaders work extremely well together, complementing each other's skills well. Parents are very supportive of the school. One parent, indicative of many, said 'I cannot praise the school highly enough.'

You have established a culture of care and consideration, underpinned by a very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils told me that they enjoy school. This was evident from the quality of the work in their books and their focus and level of engagement in the lessons I visited. Pupils work hard in lessons and are clearly keen to learn and do well in all subjects. They are particularly proficient at working in groups and willingly share their ideas, which helps them to learn successfully. When working independently, pupils focus well on what they are learning. They use the strategies they have been shown confidently, in order to produce high-quality pieces of work. Children in the Reception class concentrate well and demonstrate keen attitudes to learning whether working inside the classroom or in the outside area.

Your evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate. Your actions to address weaknesses are having a significant impact on improving teaching and learning. Leaders, including governors and middle leaders, fully understand the part they play in whole-school improvement. As a result, the pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is quickly rising because their progress is fast and

thoroughly checked, and extra help is given to those who need to catch up. Children in the early years also make good progress because teaching is effective.

You have rightly prioritised pupils' writing skills as an area for improvement because they have been weaker than those in reading in recent years. Pupils do not write widely enough in different subjects and this limits how well they organise their writing. It also means that they do not practise their knowledge of spelling in different types of writing. Work is usually pitched well to challenge pupils but there are times when they, particularly the most able pupils, do not have to think deeply.

Following the previous inspection, leaders were asked to raise pupils' attainment in mathematics. This did not happen immediately but the assistant headteacher, appointed since the previous inspection, wasted no time in improving the quality of teaching in mathematics. This has borne fruit this year; pupils now make good progress and attain well. Pupils use calculation strategies effectively in investigations and apply their skills in a wide variety of real-life and problem-solving tasks. As a result of the previous inspection, the school was also asked to improve teaching. The quality of teaching is now consistently good. Staff have benefited from training that has helped them to have a very good understanding of how to systematically help pupils to write well and use their mathematical skills accurately.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding has a very high profile in this school. Leaders ensure that concerns are taken seriously and documented carefully. Records show that staff are vigilant to all concerns raised. Staff are trained in safeguarding and they understand their responsibilities. Parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agree that their children are safe at school. Pupils are taught how to be safe online. They are aware of issues such as bullying, which is rare, and know what to do if they feel worried or anxious.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. As the designated lead with specific responsibility for child protection, you work very closely with other agencies when any safeguarding concerns arise. You and your assistant headteacher are tenacious in following up on actions and communications with, for example, the local authority about social care concerns.

You are meticulous in your checking that all staff attend training and rigorously follow up with subsequent training if anyone has missed out on this important aspect of safeguarding. School policies are reviewed annually to reflect the latest government guidance about, for example, the risks of extremism. The school uses safer recruitment practices effectively to ensure that those employed are suitably qualified and vetted to work with children.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, I explored: how well the school helps pupils to make progress in writing; whether attainment in mathematics has improved; how effectively leaders of the school monitor pupils' outcomes; how well the school is raising attainment in key stage 1; and how rapidly disadvantaged pupils are progressing.
- Pupils leaving Year 6 in 2016 had made less progress than other pupils nationally, particularly in writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that pupils are now making much faster progress because teaching quickly addresses weaknesses in their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils from the middle-attaining group make good progress in writing. This is because staff know where pupils have limited skills and swiftly support them to improve. However, pupils do not write widely enough across the curriculum, so many do not reach the highest standards.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics, using and recalling mathematical vocabulary well. Pupils develop their understanding of mathematical concepts by using a wide range of apparatus and equipment in practical activities. The quality of learning is good because teachers plan it to build on what pupils already know, understand and can do. Pupils enjoy thinking hard as they improve their mathematical skills.
- Leaders have been relentless in monitoring the progress that pupils make after the school did not meet the 2016 standards set for schools by the government. Rigorous meetings about pupils' progress help you to identify pupils who need support to address gaps in their learning. You constantly check pupils' progress through robust analysis of assessment information and reports by school leaders. You consider very carefully the right actions to take and check their impact. As a result, the progress of middle-attaining pupils, particularly, has improved, especially in mathematics.
- There is a healthy transparency between the work of governors and that of the leadership team. Governors use their accurate knowledge of pupils' performance to support and challenge you and to ensure that the best course of action is taken to improve pupils' progress.
- Attainment at key stage 2 is rising quickly because of your focus on making sure teachers use a variety of techniques to challenge pupils. Teachers are especially skilful at asking questions which encourage pupils to think more deeply. However, work is not always sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils, who do not achieve as well as they could.
- At key stage 1, teachers take every opportunity to make learning interesting and set it in a real-life context. This motivates pupils to work hard and improve their skills. Consequently, they now reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics which are in line with those expected for their age.
- The small number of disadvantaged pupils, and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive high-quality teaching and care because of the expert direction given by the special educational needs

coordinator. Extra support for these pupils ensures that they make good or better progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers plan work that challenges all pupils, particularly the most able, so that they make consistently good progress in all years
- teachers provide more regular opportunities for pupils to write in many subjects within the curriculum so that they can practise their basic English skills, particularly their spelling.

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

Yours sincerely

Richard Blackmore
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, four governors and the subject leaders for mathematics and English. I spoke to a representative of West Sussex local authority. I read a wide range of documentation and policies, including the school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement and relevant safeguarding information. With you I observed teaching and learning first-hand in all classes. I looked at a sample of pupils' work for different groups of pupils and talked to pupils during lessons. I analysed 48 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also took account of eight responses to the staff questionnaire and 50 views from the pupils' questionnaire.