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Mrs Sarah Dunning
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Dear Mrs Dunning

Short inspection of St Peter's CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 17 October 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 June 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Together with the senior leaders and governors, you have established St Peter's as a caring, nurturing community that works hard to help pupils achieve their best. In our initial meeting, you said that leaders 'put children first and empower staff to provide the best for them'. As a result, pupils thrive and place a high value on learning. The school is founded on clear Christian values and is wholly inclusive. It offers a warm welcome to all pupils and families, whatever their background or individual circumstances.

Pupils love coming to school. They enjoy lessons because teachers make learning interesting and relevant. These very positive attitudes to learning, underpinned by strong respectful relationships, help pupils to become confident and purposeful. Pupils are articulate and explain clearly what they are learning and reflect on why they are learning it. Most pupils enjoy high levels of attendance but, despite leaders' efforts, a few disadvantaged pupils attend school much less regularly.

Senior leaders have designed a rich curriculum that opens a treasure chest of exciting learning opportunities for pupils. Pupils speak with great enthusiasm about how their learning extends well beyond the walls of the classroom. They are particularly enthusiastic about their extensive school grounds and the way that learning outdoors helps them to think more clearly and to approach learning from a

different angle. One boy explained how making a picture of a creature out of the natural materials found in the forest area helped him to imagine it more clearly and to shape his writing more accurately.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils and expect them to work hard and do their best. Work in pupils' books is presented neatly and accurately. This effectively addressed one of the areas for improvement at the previous inspection. Inspectors also asked leaders to ensure that pupils, including the most able in mathematics, are always given hard enough work. Teachers know pupils well and provide the right amount of support and challenge so that pupils of all abilities, including disadvantaged pupils, make good progress. Pupils know that if work is too easy, teachers will always provide something more challenging. Pupils are achieving well in writing but senior leaders recognise that work still needs to be done to help pupils make the same strong progress in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.

Teachers understand the importance of helping pupils to acquire a wide and rich vocabulary and applying this in writing across the curriculum. This successfully addressed the final area that inspectors asked leaders to improve. Pupils value words and use them carefully right from the start of their time in school. We saw pupils in the early years choosing words carefully to describe leaves, seeds and other natural objects. In Year 3, we saw pupils working together to act out sections of famous poems, taking great care to reflect the meaning of the words in their movements.

Morale among staff is high. All who expressed an opinion, both in the staff survey and in conversations during the day, feel proud to be part of the school team and enjoy working at the school. Parents and carers are also overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many single out for praise the way in which leaders combine a care for individual pupils with a successful drive for pupils to achieve well academically. A few parents felt that communication between the school and home could be improved.

Governors have a good understanding of the school. They do not take what the headteacher says without checking carefully for themselves, including through their visits to the school and regular conversations with pupils and staff. Governors have a range of professional skills and experience to offer the right balance of support and challenge to senior leaders.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders, staff and governors all place the well-being of pupils at the heart of the school's work. Pupils learn how to stay safe, both in and out of school. Staff teach pupils to recognise and manage risk in a range of situations, for example when working in the forest and garden areas or when using knives when they are cooking.

Pupils feel safe in school. They are confident that staff have their best interests at heart and will provide a listening ear if they are worried or anxious about something. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of bullying, including cyber bullying, but say that it happens only rarely in school. Staff deal with any cases of bullying quickly and fairly.

Leaders provide all staff with thorough training in safeguarding, equipping them to recognise signs of radicalisation and extremism. Volunteers also receive information to help them understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff understand the importance of reporting concerns promptly to senior leaders in the school. Most also appreciate the need to make an accurate written record of these concerns, but not all staff fully understand this. Senior leaders must ensure that all adults record their concerns in writing, as well as reporting them verbally.

Policies and protocols also contribute to the strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff carry out checks so that only suitable people can work in the school. In almost all areas, these checks are fully compliant, but not all the required checks have been carried out on the very few people who have lived or worked overseas.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, I focused on three aspects of the school's work. The first of these looked at how well teaching enables pupils and children to achieve the higher standards, especially at the end of key stage 1 and the early years. In recent years, too few pupils have achieved the greater-depth standards at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, in 2018, outcomes improved sharply. The proportion of pupils who achieved the greater-depth standards improved in all three subjects and was in line with the national averages seen in recent years.
- Leaders have prioritised writing as an area for further improvement because they recognise that pupils achieve slightly less well in writing compared to other subjects. Their actions are already improving writing across the school.
- Outcomes in phonics are improving because teaching is stronger. As soon as children start school, there is a strong focus on providing them with a mastery of phonics and the physical skills needed to write letters accurately. Teachers have placed a stronger focus on spelling, which has resulted in more accurate written work across the school. Staff have also learned to recognise what pupils need to do to achieve the higher standards in writing so that pupils can be suitably challenged to reach them. Teachers have enriched the curriculum with many opportunities for writing. Pupils' books, especially in key stage 2, contain many examples of high-quality writing in a range of subjects.
- Next, I inspected how well the wider curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and enables them to achieve well in a range of subjects, especially in key stage 2. The curriculum is a particular strength of the school. Pupils enjoy many memorable experiences that open an exciting window on the world and help them to develop a growing knowledge of different people, places and ideas. Links with schools from other countries, as well as those in their local area, help pupils

to encounter people, ideas and situations that are very different to their own. This helps pupils to develop an understanding of their place in the world and to think about ways in which they can make a positive contribution. Pupils are actively involved with global issues such as fair trade, and learn about environmental issues faced by themselves and others around the globe. The extensive grounds give pupils opportunities to grow food and sell it, as well as using it for cooking. Their regular visits to the forest area of the school help them to learn at first hand about a range of subjects, such as Anglo-Saxon history, the properties of materials and the Great Fire of London.

- The curriculum is rich in opportunities for physical education, music and art, both in lessons and in the extensive clubs and out-of-school activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well catered for. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to take positions of responsibility and contribute to the life of the school. Pupils are caring, thoughtful and always on the lookout for opportunities to help others. One parent said that staff 'are helping to mould our boys into future active members of the community'.
- Finally, I looked closely at how regularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities attend school. In recent years, their attendance has been well below the national average. The firm and decisive actions of senior leaders have seen improvements, especially for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is still too low. You showed me convincing evidence that these figures are disproportionately affected by a few pupils who are persistently absent. However, work still needs to be done to encourage these pupils to attend more regularly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- improvements in the teaching of writing result in consistently strong progress across the school, with more pupils achieving the greater-depth standard at the end of key stage 1
- the administration of safeguarding is strengthened to mirror the strong culture of safeguarding in the school
- they further improve the attendance of the few disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent.

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

Yours sincerely

Bruce Waelend
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and the deputy headteacher to discuss various aspects of the school's work. I also had meetings with four members of staff and four members of the governing body. I had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local diocese. With you and the deputy headteacher, I visited all classes that were in school to observe teaching and learning, to talk to pupils and to look at their work. Year 6 pupils were not in school on the day of the inspection. I observed pupils' behaviour around the school, including at playtime. I also held a meeting with 24 pupils drawn from Years 1 to 5. I considered 44 responses to the staff survey, 21 responses to the pupil survey and 174 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 106 written comments from parents. I received a letter from a parent that was included in the evidence. A range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation documents, school improvement plans and safeguarding policies, procedures and checks, were also taken into account.