

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



26 April 2017

Mrs J Driver
Headteacher
Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School
Church Street
Clayhanger
Brownhills
Walsall
West Midlands
WS8 7EG

Dear Mrs Driver

Short inspection of Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 March 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 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 lead the school well, are ambitious and have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas to improve. You work well with the governing body and leadership team and together strive to ensure that Holy Trinity provides the best education possible for its pupils. Under your leadership, you have successfully ensured that leaders, at all levels, know and understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff who completed the staff questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school's work. You and your leadership team know your pupils well and provide them with the very best care and guidance. The school's values and ethos strongly promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Because of this, pupils enjoy coming to school and show great respect to each other and the adults they work with.

Over the past year, you have worked exceptionally well with your deputy headteacher and governing body to support the school through a challenging time. You have dealt with some difficulties that have arisen between the school and some parents. I considered the concerns raised by parents very carefully during the inspection and am satisfied that you have responded to them appropriately.

During the inspection, the majority of parents spoken to were very supportive of the school and the improvements that have been made since the last inspection. One parent commented, 'My child is very happy at school and they love coming to school every day. I could not be happier.'

During the last inspection, you were asked to improve the opportunities for pupils to revisit, redraft and improve their writing. You have done this successfully by introducing a clear, structured system for pupils to follow when editing their work. Teachers use this system consistently across all year groups. These actions have strengthened the teaching of writing, and as a result, standards have improved. Teachers now have higher expectations of what pupils can do when redrafting and reviewing their written work. The books we looked at demonstrate that pupils are clearly engaged in this process and are successfully identifying how they can improve their own writing. Books clearly show that pupils across the school are now making better rates of progress.

As leaders you have introduced a rigorous tracking system that allows you to closely monitor the progress of all pupils over time. This system is used effectively in pupil progress meetings to hold teachers to account and provide them with a clear analysis of what is working well. This system also helps them to quickly identify those pupils who may be falling behind. Interventions are devised for any identified pupils so that they can speed up the progress they are making.

While you have developed your own system to measure attainment and progress across the school, you also acknowledge that this system could be improved further. It does not yet enable you to look specifically at the progress pupils make from their individual starting points. An example of this was seen when we looked at information about the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. As a school you are not tracking those most able disadvantaged pupils who left key stage 1 with high levels of attainment. As a result, you are not clear about how many of these pupils should also be achieving at a higher standard by the end of key stage 2. By tracking this group more carefully, leaders and teachers will be able to better identify those pupils who could be challenged more across all subjects to achieve higher standards and in greater depth.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. During observations of teaching that we conducted together, it is clear that the pupils are enjoying the rich and varied curriculum the school provides. This was seen in the two art lessons we visited. In these lessons, all pupils were engaged and focused on creating a three-dimensional Viking longship. They listened to instructions well in a purposeful and calm atmosphere. During these observations, we discussed how some of the more talented artists were not being given the chance to master their artistic skills further. In our discussions you acknowledged that this was an area that needs further improvement. Mastery within the curriculum is not yet fully embedded across all year groups and subjects.

During the observations of teaching we looked at a number of books across all year groups in writing and mathematics. These books clearly demonstrate that pupils are making secure progress. However, in some of the books, presentation is poor and it is clear that not all teachers have high enough expectations of how pupils should present work. You also felt that it is clear that pupils are not yet demonstrating sufficient pride in their own work. We agreed that this should be a focus for future improvement work with both the staff and pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

As you are aware, during this inspection I looked at how the school had dealt with a qualifying safeguarding complaint. This complaint had been sent to Ofsted and formed part of this inspection. I examined all of the paperwork and the process that you had followed in dealing with this complaint. The records you showed me were detailed, accurate and well maintained. It was clear that you and the governing body had taken this complaint seriously and carried out a thorough investigation. You had taken appropriate action based on your findings.

Your leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. Leaders have carried out all the necessary checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work in the school. The safeguarding link governor audits the school's single central record to ensure that procedures for staff recruitment meet statutory requirements.

The pupils I spoke to during the inspection reported that they feel safe in school and that behaviour is good. They are taught how to keep themselves safe as part of the curriculum. They say that there are very few incidents of any kind of bullying. Pupils know how to report a concern and whom to turn to if they are worried about something. They felt that the staff would deal with these worries quickly. Pupils could talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe online.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we explored how effectively middle-ability pupils are being challenged in lessons. Together we looked at your school assessment information. This identified that the majority of middle-ability pupils are making at least secure progress in reading, writing and mathematics. During lesson observations, the rate of progress in pupils' books also confirmed this. However, we could see that the most able pupils are not always challenged enough to deepen their understanding and learning. Across the school, concepts are not developed sufficiently well for pupils who are capable of working at a greater depth. This is also reflected in the school's own assessment information, where it is clear that not enough pupils are reaching greater depth. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils. You are aware of this and have clear plans in place to address this issue.

- A further area we looked at was how you rightly explored why the 2016 standards achieved in the Year 1 phonics screening check had dropped compared with the previous year. The reasons for this were understandable. You showed me a very thorough analysis of this year group. The group contains a high number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Your records show that pupils with any specific needs are well supported within your school. Assessment information also shows that pupils currently in Year 1 are making strong rates of progress in their phonics.
- We scrutinised how effectively leaders are tracking the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. You and your leaders know each and every one of your disadvantaged pupils well and can confidently talk about each pupil's individual needs. This ensures that their academic and pastoral needs are given the highest priority. However, the system used to track these pupils could be developed further to ensure that more of the most able disadvantaged pupils reach greater depth at the end of key stage 2.
- You have also clearly identified the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities as an area of concern. You have taken appropriate action and introduced many initiatives to encourage pupils to attend school. You monitor and track these pupils well and it is clear that the strategies you have established are having a positive impact. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has risen significantly compared with last year's national figures.
- As a leadership team, you have a good understanding of the quality of teaching across the school. This is because of the effective checks you carry out on the quality of teaching and how you encourage staff to continually reflect on their practice. As a result, teaching is consistently effective and enables the large majority of pupils to make strong progress.
- Over the last two years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of early years has improved and is now above the national average. This is because of the highly effective provision that helps the children to get off to a good start. During our learning walk, I observed children who were concentrating and engaged in a range of interesting activities. It was clear that teachers know these children and their needs very well. As a result, the children develop positive and productive relationships with each other and adults, which contributes well to the good progress they make from their different starting points.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are tracked from their individual starting points so more pupils, especially the most able and the most able disadvantaged, reach higher standards and learn in greater depth by the end of key stages 1 and 2
- leaders and teachers embed mastery across all areas of the curriculum

- teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' presentation and ensure that pupils take pride in their work.

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

Yours sincerely

Kerry Rochester
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with the following people: the headteacher and deputy headteacher; the special educational needs coordinator; and four governors, including the chair of the governing body. I also spoke by telephone to one of the local authority's school improvement advisers.

I conducted a series of lesson observations with you. We visited lessons in Years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6. We scrutinised pupils' work in books and spoke to pupils during lessons. I reviewed a range of documentary evidence, including the school's self-evaluation, current progress and attainment information and attendance information.

I took account of the following documentation relating to safeguarding: staff vetting and safeguarding procedures; referrals to the local authority; and child protection records. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day and considered the 66 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as 20 written comments sent to Ofsted's regional office. I also considered the 21 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.