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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Kay Vousden
Headteacher
Lea and Garsdon Church of England Primary School
The Street
Lea
Malmesbury
Wiltshire
SN16 9PG

Dear Mrs Vousden

Short inspection of Lea and Garsdon Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 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 February 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school's roll has increased from four to five classes since the previous inspection. Leaders work swiftly to assess and support the relatively high number of pupils who join you during the school year. Some of these pupils have not yet made enough progress to catch up to their peers. You have improved the quality of teaching of writing for the most able pupils since the previous inspection. In addition, you have made sure that the teaching of spelling, grammar and punctuation has improved across key stage 2. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard in writing by the end of key stage 2 has risen and the most able writers make good progress. In addition, pupils' achievement in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling assessment has been strong and above the national average in recent years.

The school's values of friendship, respect, honesty, inclusion and excellence underpin all aspects of school life. The supportive relationships between pupils and staff are the foundation of pupils' strong personal development and their enjoyment of learning. Pupils are courteous and thoughtful. The school is welcoming to new pupils and those I spoke to told me that 'everyone is kind to each other'. Pupils enjoy engaging lessons, including art and physical education. The curriculum helps them to understand other cultures and to develop a sense of fairness, for example by learning about life in fairly traded cocoa plantations. Pupils clearly appreciate the chance to have their say on aspects of school life such as voting on new playground equipment or in school council elections.

You, along with leaders and governors, know the areas the school still needs to improve. Governors are well informed and visit the school regularly, which helps them to check how well their plans to improve the school are progressing. You are working well with the newly appointed chair of the governing body to bring further improvement to the quality of teaching. Following pupils' disappointing results in the phonics screening check in 2018, you have put into place training to help teachers and teaching assistants provide high-quality phonics lessons. However, this training has not yet led to improvement to pupils' achievement in phonics.

Staff speak highly of the professional development they receive. Links with local schools have helped leaders to confirm their assessments of how well pupils are achieving and to identify areas for development. Leaders have produced action plans and have led training for teachers to address the weaker aspects of pupils' progress. Nevertheless, leaders' checks on the improvements they have introduced are not always precise enough to make sure that these changes are effective across the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff and governors receive regular and up-to-date training in child protection. This includes timely training on the latest statutory guidance and the government's 'Prevent' duty. Consequently, staff understand their responsibilities to identify risks and report any concerns about pupils. You keep thorough and detailed records and act proactively to engage extra support for pupils from external professionals such as the school nursing service.

Leaders ensure that all the appropriate checks on staff, volunteers and visitors are carefully recorded so that pupils are safe in school. Governors work with you to review all aspects of pupils' welfare and safety, including site safety. This diligent approach has ensured a strong culture of safeguarding pupils, including close monitoring of their rates of attendance. As a result, pupils feel safe and they attend regularly.

Pupils told me that they know that the school's 'trusted adults' are always approachable if they need to talk to them. They understand how the school keeps them safe by practising 'lockdown' procedures and fire drills. They report that there is no bullying in school and have a good understanding of the difference between bullying and disagreements between friends. They also have a good understanding of how to stay safe on the internet, including how to keep their personal information safe from strangers.

Most parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, believe that their children feel safe and happy in school.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry for the inspection was how well the most able pupils in key stage 2 progress in writing. You have made improvements to the quality of teaching of writing across key stage 2, including for the most able pupils. Your focus on teaching grammar, punctuation and spelling to a high standard has enabled the most able to write with accuracy and flair. Current pupils' workbooks show their skill as authors who use a good range of sentence structures and punctuation. Pupils edit and redraft their work regularly and effectively. They are able to spot and correct errors in their spelling and punctuation. In addition, pupils write at length across a range of subjects. This helps them to use more advanced vocabulary and to write in a wide range of formal and informal contexts.
- The most able key stage 2 pupils read high-quality texts and use them as inspiration for their own writing. Pupils' workbooks show that they have written diaries, stories and reports which engage the reader with imaginative sentences such as, 'The billowing smoke hung over the entire land.' As a result of better teaching, the most able now make good progress across all key stage 2 classes.
- My next key line of enquiry was about progress in mathematics in key stage 2. In recent years the progress of low- and middle-ability pupils in mathematics at key stage 2 has sometimes been slower than that of other pupils nationally. Teachers and teaching assistants now use practical examples and apparatus to help pupils understand mathematical concepts. This helps pupils to count and calculate more accurately, for example when using models to calculate equivalent fractions in Year 6. Leaders have identified the need for all pupils to routinely solve problems so that they can apply their mathematical knowledge. Some pupils, however, do not regularly apply their learning to problem-solving contexts, and consequently do not progress as well as they should.
- Leaders are improving the way they assess mathematics to provide themselves and teachers with useful information on what pupils need to know and understand. However, leaders have not yet used their analysis of these assessments to check that all pupils are making enough progress or that teachers set tasks at the right level of challenge.
- My last line of enquiry was to consider how well pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are progressing in phonics. Staff have begun training to improve the skills and knowledge needed to teach effectively. Leaders have, however, not yet been able to monitor how effectively this is improving teaching as the training is not yet complete. Currently, staff teach younger pupils in the early years and key stage 1 to blend sounds to build words, and to apply this knowledge in spelling. As a result, current pupils are making stronger progress. However, occasionally the most able pupils are not challenged to learn more complex spellings and apply them to their writing.
- Some pupils with lower starting points, including those who are disadvantaged, do not progress well enough when applying their knowledge of sounds to reading. Teachers do not always use their assessments of what pupils can and

cannot read to make sure that tasks and reading materials help these pupils to catch up more quickly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- subject leaders improve teaching more effectively
- teachers challenge and support pupils to make good progress in phonics.

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

Yours sincerely

Claire Mirams
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I held meetings with you and your leadership team. We reviewed your plans for improvement, information on current pupils' progress and your own evaluation of the school's performance. We observed teaching and reviewed pupils' workbooks together. I also met with members of the governing body and scrutinised minutes of governing body meetings.

I met with a group of pupils and discussed their viewpoints on the curriculum, behaviour, bullying, and keeping safe, including online. I scrutinised various safeguarding records and current information about school attendance. I spoke to a representative of Wiltshire local authority on the telephone.

I also considered 19 responses to the staff survey, and 52 parent responses to the online survey, Parent View.