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Mrs Nichola Stevenson
Headteacher
Bishop Carpenter Church of England Aided Primary School
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Dear Mrs Stevenson

Short inspection of Bishop Carpenter Church of England Aided Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 18 April 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in December 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Following your arrival in September 2017, you quickly and accurately evaluated the school's effectiveness, and used this information to identify the correct areas for further improvement. You have a relentless drive, enthusiasm and determination to ensure that Bishop Carpenter is a successful village school in the heart of the community. Many parents who I spoke with were very complimentary about your enthusiasm, determination and the new ideas that you have brought to the school. One parent who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, said: 'Since Mrs Stevenson took the position of the head, the school has grown and all the children and staff seem to be doing very well under her leadership.' One pupil said that you have 'made a lot of good changes' and you 'listen to everybody'.

School leaders are very effective in reviewing current practice and swiftly take any actions needed to improve teaching for pupils. Governors have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and appropriate areas for further development. They challenge and support the senior leadership team effectively. Governors visit regularly to carry out a wide range of tasks, including evaluating learning and safeguarding. You are supported well by the multi-academy trust, which provides additional training for staff, including support with teaching, learning and assessment.

A small number of parents reported that the poor behaviour of a few pupils is not always dealt with effectively. On your appointment, you identified the need to review the effectiveness of the school's behaviour policy. You rightly recognise that there is still some more work to be carried out to further support a few pupils who do not always behave as well as their peers. You absolutely value feedback from parents about the school's approach to behaviour. Both the pupils and the parents who I spoke with were very positive about the new house system that you have introduced. This well-chosen initiative is developing pupils' sense of responsibility and promotes good behaviour from pupils.

Bishop Carpenter is a very happy school, where pupils learn well together. Pupils say that work is sufficiently challenging for them. One pupil said: 'People looked after me when I was new here.' In lessons, pupils are engaged and motivated, and learning activities are appropriately matched to their needs. Pupils are very positive and value their new headteacher. They told me that they can always find an adult to talk to if they are worried about something. Pupils are very proud that they have many exciting clubs and extra activities, including orchestra, stamp collecting, science, basketball and forest school. The effective displays in the corridors and classrooms enhance the learning environment and celebrate pupils' achievements. Pupils move around the building in a calm manner, and they are respectful of each other.

You have addressed effectively the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Pupils enjoy and are highly engaged in their learning. Your new assessment systems ensure that you can accurately track pupils' achievement. Through the curriculum, pupils have a growing awareness of different faiths and cultures. You rightly acknowledge that developing pupils' writing skills in key stage 1 remains a priority for the school. Equally, you know that developing pupils' application of reasoning and problem-solving skills remains an area for development.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a culture of vigilance at Bishop Carpenter. You ensure that there is well-chosen, ongoing training for staff and governors, so that they know how to keep pupils safe. Pre-employment checks to ensure the suitability of staff are firmly in place. Governors have a good knowledge of safeguarding and ensure that systems are reviewed and evaluated appropriately.

Bishop Carpenter offers pupils a very caring and secure environment. Pupils are aware of the potential dangers when using the internet. They said that if they ever viewed anything on the internet that made them feel unsafe, they would tell a member of staff. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident to speak with staff if they have any worries. The school's curriculum provides regular opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, Year 6 recently took part in a 'Junior Citizen Day' in Oxford. Pupils attending the breakfast club are cared for very well. This is because they are well behaved and are supported in a calm, well-organised and nurturing environment.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we agreed to focus on: how leaders are improving pupils' writing standards in key stage 1; how effectively leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well; and how leaders ensure that pupils from the middle prior-attainment group make good progress in mathematics.
- You and your team have wasted no time in addressing the causes of the dip in the 2017 key stage 1 teacher assessments in writing. You rightly identified that some pupils in Year 3 who did not meet the expected standard need to accelerate their progress to meet age-related expectations. The English leader has accurately evaluated the strengths and areas for development in writing. The assessment procedures for pupils' writing are now rigorous enough to enable staff to be more accurate in the next steps in pupils' learning. The progress of pupils' work is tracked thoroughly and, where gaps appear in their understanding, timely additional support is provided. You provide a range of well-chosen training opportunities for staff to develop their skills and knowledge in the teaching and assessment of pupils' writing.
- Pupils are provided with many opportunities to talk about their work and then write about it. For example, in one lesson, pupils took part in a well-planned drama lesson, where, afterwards, pupils wrote thought-provoking sentences showing a successful understanding of empathy. Teachers are correctly developing more opportunities for pupils to write for a purpose. You wisely acknowledge that there is a need to make greater links to writing across the curriculum.
- The English leader has made changes to the teaching of writing so that pupils' next steps in learning are planned effectively. For example, the use of new writing books enables pupils to write in a wide range of styles, linked to work across the curriculum. Pupils are making good progress in their writing at key stage 1. Consequently, in comparison with last year, a higher proportion of pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to reach the expected standard this year. Leaders rightly recognise that writing remains a key focus in key stage 1.
- Most disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points. This is because support is carefully planned and is monitored effectively. The tracking of pupils' progress is sharp and thorough, and additional support for pupils is evaluated effectively. Disadvantaged pupils receive a range of useful additional adult support. In the lessons we visited, disadvantaged pupils were engaged and working well to meet their targets. Funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. The governing body holds leaders to account for the spending of the pupil premium funding and how it benefits pupils. An effective range of training is provided to staff, so that they can support pupils effectively.
- You have clearly identified the need to raise achievement in mathematics for some middle-attaining pupils. The mathematics leader prudently evaluated the curriculum and made some adjustments to the teaching of mathematics across the school. Staff ask good open-ended questions to allow pupils to explain their understanding. Additional support is provided to ensure that any gaps in pupils' learning are addressed swiftly. Because of the effective teaching, learning and

assessment, middle-ability pupils are now making strong progress. Pupils are supported well by the availability of a range of mathematical apparatus. For example, in one class, pupils used a range of resources effectively to support their knowledge of column addition. The mathematics leader rightly acknowledges that developing further the application of reasoning and problem-solving skills remains an area for development. This will ensure that all pupils make stronger progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers develop greater writing opportunities across the curriculum, so that more pupils reach the expected standard in writing by the end of key stage 1
- pupils are given more opportunities in mathematics to solve problems and develop their reasoning skills.

I am copying this letter to the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Oxford, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Oxfordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Darren Aisthorpe
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the subject leaders for English and mathematics, the pupil premium leader, five governors and the clerk to the governing body. I also had a meeting with a group of pupils, the chief executive officer from the multi-academy trust and I spoke on the telephone to a representative from the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education. I spoke with seven parents on the playground and considered 63 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 36 free-text comments. I also considered 10 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire, one letter from a member of staff, a governor and a parent.

Together with you, I observed teaching and learning across the school and visited all classes. I looked at evidence of pupils' learning in their mathematics and English books. I observed pupils at breaktime and spoke with them informally. I also considered a range of documentation, including documents related to safeguarding, assessment, governance, curriculum planning, school self-evaluation and the curriculum.