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Elizabeth Pearson
Headteacher
Teynham Parochial Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mrs Pearson

Short inspection of Teynham Parochial Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 07 February 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 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. The school is a welcoming, calm and caring place where everyone subscribes to the school's motto of 'Learn, Enjoy, Grow'. You have created a vibrant environment for learning where pupils are nurtured and thrive.

You provide strong, confident and inspiring leadership and are supported very effectively by your deputy headteacher. You work very well together as a team, sharing high aspirations. One parent commented, 'Mrs Pearson has led the school from strength to strength with her supportive wonderful team.' Staff and governors share your unwavering commitment and determination to provide the best possible learning experiences for pupils. Staff have every confidence in the school's leadership and morale is high. All of the staff say that they are proud of the school and enjoy working there. A real strength is how well you, all leaders and staff know the pupils. As a result, pupils' personal as well as their academic needs are met extremely well. One parent commented, 'I feel like the school has taken my child's whole well-being as an individual into account and not just scholastic ability.'

Senior leaders and governors conduct a range of monitoring activities that effectively and accurately identify the school's strengths and the areas that need to improve. You tackle any weaknesses swiftly to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is maintained. You know, however, that there is more work to do to strengthen pupils' attainment. You have sustained and built further on the strengths identified at the last inspection, and have addressed the areas that were identified

for improvement. Your strategy of 'teach, practise, apply' for learning is having an impact on writing as well as on the wider curriculum. You have, however, correctly identified that more opportunities are required for pupils to apply their skills and knowledge across the curriculum to consolidate and deepen their learning. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school who do not have specific and complex special educational needs and/or disabilities are making similar rates of progress to their peers and achieving as well as others.

Parents are pleased with what the school offers their children and supportive of the leadership. One parent wrote: 'I always feel welcome when entering the school, being greeted by a proactive headteacher who pays attention and shows interest in you and your child.' Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. They are enthusiastic about learning, try hard and want to do well. They are polite, friendly and welcoming to visitors. There are excellent, trusting and respectful relationships between staff and pupils. All pupils who responded to the survey agreed that they are encouraged to respect people from other backgrounds and treat everyone equally.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that they are confident to turn to adults if they have any concerns. A recently formed 'safety crew' of pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 help to promote ways in which pupils across the school can keep themselves safe. Pupils are involved, for example, in conducting risk assessments for their sessions in the Forest School. There is a culture of safeguarding in the school. Pupils' safety, well-being and welfare are paramount and given high priority by senior leaders and governors. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and fit for purpose and records are suitably and efficiently kept.

You, your deputy and your special educational needs coordinator are trained as designated safeguarding leaders and so there is always someone for staff to go to if they have any concerns. Staff recognise that child protection is everyone's responsibility. They all receive effective training, including updates to meet any new requirements in keeping children safe from a variety of risks, including those related to online safety. There are clear procedures in place and staff are vigilant in following these. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families get the prompt and effective support that they need. Staff, parents and governors agree that pupils are safe, happy and well cared for in school.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to focus on: pupils' progress in reading and writing and how well reading is taught, including phonics; how well disadvantaged pupils are achieving; how well the curriculum supports the learning of all groups; children's achievement in the Reception Year; and the effectiveness of safeguarding.

- In 2017, pupils' progress was similar to that found nationally. High levels of mobility and complex levels of need in both the Year 2 and Year 6 groups had a significant impact on the attainment figures. The proportion of pupils that reached the expected standard in reading and writing was below that found nationally. In mathematics, the proportion reaching the expected standard was below the national average at the end of key stage 2 but above it at the end of key stage 1. You keep a very close check on each pupil's progress from their various starting points. This means that you quickly identify where additional support is required and ensure that it is provided. As a result, progress for current pupils is more rapid. You are, rightly, aware that more pupils should be achieving greater depth in their learning and that the most able pupils should be challenged further in their learning. The proportion of pupils achieving at greater depth and higher standards improved in 2017 from the previous year but remained below the national figures.
- You have taken decisive action to raise achievement in reading with the introduction of a whole-school approach to help improve pupils' comprehension skills and reading stamina. Leaders' monitoring indicates that this is already having an impact on pupils' progress. Similarly, your monitoring activities show that phonics skills are taught effectively. You accounted effectively for the dip in the proportion achieving the expected standard in phonics in 2017 and, importantly, demonstrated that all of the pupils in Year 1 made progress from their starting points. Effective support is provided for pupils to catch up in Year 2.
- You and the governors have ensured that there are robust procedures to keep a check on the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils to ensure that it is having an impact on their achievement. In 2017, disadvantaged pupils made better progress than others and attainment improved from the previous year and was closer to that of other pupils in writing and mathematics.
- Parents and pupils are pleased and enthusiastic about the curriculum you provide. As well as an appropriate focus on basic skills, you ensure that pupils have a wide range of opportunities to learn new skills. Pupils spoke of their enjoyment of cooking and learning in the Forest School. A parent wrote, 'My son is thriving at the school. He particularly enjoys Forest School, which greatly enhances his learning.' The curriculum is broad and balanced and designed to meet the needs as well as the interests of all groups of pupils. You acknowledge that there is scope in the curriculum to provide more challenge to pupils of all abilities, and particularly the most able, to reach greater depth of skills, knowledge and understanding. We also agreed that pupils need more opportunities to apply their skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children continue to get a good start to school in the Reception Year. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development has been above that found nationally for the past three years. This demonstrates good progress from starting points that are typically below those expected for their age. Skilled, confident teaching, robust and accurate assessments of children's needs in their learning and their personal development and good links with parents all contribute to the successful outcomes for children.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- attainment continues to improve, with more pupils achieving greater depth in their learning and the most able pupils tackling challenging work
- pupils have more opportunities to use and apply their skills in reading, writing and mathematics across the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and your deputy headteacher to discuss your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and the aspects to focus on during the inspection. I met with other leaders, three governors, including the chair and vice-chair, and the local authority's senior school improvement adviser. You or your deputy accompanied me on my visits to classes. During these visits, I spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at their work. I observed pupils in the playground, at lunch and during assembly and asked them for their views on the school. I reviewed the school's website and sampled a range of documents and records, including: information about pupils' progress; leaders' checks on the quality of teaching; the school improvement plan; and documents relating to safeguarding. Only a small minority of parents responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, but there were 16 free-text comments. However, I also took account of your own survey of parents. I considered 18 responses to the staff survey and 49 responses to the pupil survey.