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27 June 2018

Mrs Sarah Woolley
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Woolley

Short inspection of St Lucia's CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 14 June 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 November 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your confident, effective leadership has resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. You and your staff work closely to ensure that the school is a welcoming and happy place.

Pupils are proud to be members of the school. They have positive attitudes to learning and they work hard to do their best. Pupils are very polite and well mannered. They enjoy taking on additional responsibilities, including membership of the school council. Pupils whom I spoke to are particularly proud of the money that they have helped to raise for the Macmillan nurses. Pupils say that they enjoy learning because topics are interesting and varied. For example, they spoke enthusiastically about a visit to RAF Cosford linked to a project on the Second World War.

Leaders, including governors, have an accurate understanding of what is working well and what needs to improve. This is because you ensure that the systems that check the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils are robust. Leaders use this important information to address identified areas for improvement. Leaders are able to explain clearly how their actions have had a positive impact upon outcomes for pupils.

The majority of parents are supportive of the school. They agree that their children are happy and are making good progress. A small number of parents expressed concerns about bullying. However, school records show that leaders take any allegations of bullying seriously and deal with them effectively. Pupils whom I spoke to said that there is no bullying in the school and that any problems in relation to poor behaviour would be dealt with quickly.

Governors are highly committed to the school. They make regular visits and are well informed about all aspects of the school. They provide support and challenge, and hold leaders to account effectively. Governors have managed the budget well in order to eradicate the small deficit identified in the previous inspection.

At the last inspection you were asked to raise standards in writing and mathematics. Teachers adapt the curriculum to ensure that lessons are well planned and closely matched to meet most pupils' needs. You have provided training for staff and additional equipment for pupils so that information and communication technology is used effectively to motivate pupils. Pupils whom I spoke to told me that one of the subjects that they particularly enjoy is computing. School assessment information shows that, in the majority of year groups, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards and higher standards is either in line with or above those seen nationally. Occasionally, in mathematics, the most able pupils do not get to do the tasks that have been especially planned for them because they are expected to complete easier work first. Additionally, some pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable in writing because they do not have enough opportunities to practise and refine their skills in extended pieces of writing.

You were also asked to present the progress made by children in Reception more clearly, ensuring that contributions of parents are included. Leaders analyse carefully the progress made by each child across all areas of the curriculum. You value the reflections of parents, and contributions from parents are included in every pupils' learning journey record.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff receive regular training in child protection, including the government's 'Prevent' duty. They are knowledgeable about their responsibilities, including how to use the school's system for reporting concerns about pupils' safety and welfare.

Governors take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. The recently appointed safeguarding governor has already carried out an audit on staff recruitment and pre-employment checks. All staff who responded to Ofsted's survey and the majority of parents agree that pupils are safe and well cared for.

Pupils say that staff help them to stay safe. They are confident that if they had any problems an adult would deal with them. Pupils say that they learn about how to stay safe. For example, they are knowledgeable about how to stay safe online and how to stay safe when out walking or on their bikes.

They have listened to members of the fire service talking about fire safety, and they are aware of the danger that strangers can pose.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed that the first key line of enquiry would be to find out what leaders are doing to ensure that pupils are making the best possible progress in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 2. This is because published data shows that there was a decline in the rate of progress at the end of 2017 and that boys made less progress than girls.
- You have ensured that teachers know how to assess pupils' work accurately. They have regular opportunities to moderate their judgements, both internally and externally. Leaders track the progress made by all pupils very carefully and identify if there are any differences in the rates of progress between boys and girls. All teachers know their pupils' starting points in reading, writing and mathematics, and they plan tasks that build upon prior learning. As a result, increasing numbers of pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups. There are no significant differences in the rates of progress made by boys and girls.
- Progress is particularly strong in reading. Pupils enjoy reading and they do so often. School assessment information shows that in almost all year groups the proportion of pupils working at both the standard expected for their age and at the higher standard is at least in line with standards nationally.
- You have ensured that teachers have a strong subject knowledge of what they are teaching. This is very evident in mathematics. Pupils experience a broad curriculum where they have many opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge in a wide range of problem-solving and reasoning activities. Sometimes, the most able pupils have to complete easier tasks before they move onto harder work. This means that some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers have a high expectation of the vocabulary and language features that pupils will use in their writing. Pupils gain experience of different types of writing and understand the difference in style between fiction and non-fiction. Pupils' books show that there are some opportunities for them to produce extended pieces of writing. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge and skills in a range of contexts across a variety of curriculum areas. School assessment information shows that, while rates of progress are improving, not enough pupils in key stage 2 are reaching the higher standard.
- My second key line of enquiry looked at how well teachers challenge pupils, particularly boys, to reach the standards of which they are capable in key stage 1. We looked at a selection of boys' books together. Teachers plan work that meets the needs of the majority of pupils and, as a result, most pupils, including boys, make good progress from their starting points. The proportion of pupils who are working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics is close to or above those seen nationally in both year groups. Occasionally, teachers do not move pupils on quickly enough, because the planned next steps do not build

sufficiently on what they can already do. For example, some pupils repeat similar tasks in mathematics that they completed easily the first time.

- My final key line of enquiry was about the quality of teaching in phonics. This is because for the last two years the proportion of pupils who achieved the required standard in the phonics screening check was significantly lower than the national average. Phonics is taught well. Teachers have a high expectation of all pupils, particularly the most able. Pupils were happy to share their books with me and applied their knowledge successfully to read new and unfamiliar words. School assessment information shows that the proportion of pupils working at the standard expected for their age in Year 1 is at least in line with those seen nationally.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils have more opportunities to practise and refine their writing skills in a wide range of subjects
- teachers provide more challenging tasks for the most able pupils in mathematics so that they reach the standards of which they are capable.

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

Yours sincerely

Jo Evans
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and middle leaders, parents, governors and a representative of the local authority. We visited classrooms and looked at pupils' work together. I also met with a group of pupils. I reviewed the school's website and documents, including the single central record, child protection systems, the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, monitoring information and pupil progress and assessment information. I took account of the 14 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View and eight responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.