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Mr John Dodd
Headteacher
Caunton Dean Hole Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mr Dodd

Short inspection of Caunton Dean Hole Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 5 November 2015 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 2012.

This school continues to be good.

You and your leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leaders and governors have sustained a caring, friendly, safe school culture where leaders have high expectations of pupils and adults. Consequently, pupils achieve well. They are proud of their school; they look after each other and work hard in their lessons.

School leaders and governors continually strive to improve and they have a good understanding of their school. You and the teachers use a range of performance information well to ensure pupils make good progress. However, leaders do not make sufficiently effective use of the new assessment and tracking system to enable pupils to make outstanding progress. Overall, leaders and governors know what needs to improve and have put in place effective improvement plans, which they implement well. As a result, there has been a steady, general improvement since the last inspection.

School leaders and governors have worked well to address the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. You have ensured that teachers have reviewed and improved the way they, and support assistants, feed back to pupils about their learning, including the use of success criteria and marking.

Leaders and teachers have revised the marking policy and, as a result, pupils now have the opportunity to respond to teachers' feedback. These improvements enable pupils to make better progress. However, in some cases, feedback is too general and does not help pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.

You and your teachers have reviewed the school curriculum and identified more opportunities for pupils to practise mathematical skills, such as calculation and data handling, in other subjects. Pupils really appreciate this and were keen to tell me about the mathematics activities they do in their topic work. However, leaders do not identify opportunities to use a greater range of mathematics, including problem solving, across the curriculum.

You have worked with the English and mathematics leaders to enable them to monitor standards of teaching and learning in their subjects. This has helped them to improve the support they provide to colleagues and pupils. However, subject leaders do not observe the teaching of their subjects often enough to give them a clear overview of strengths and weaknesses in practice.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your staff take your responsibilities to keep children safe seriously. Policy and procedures are clear and understood by all and you train staff regularly about the range of risks to pupils. As part of their induction, new staff are trained by you, as the safeguarding lead, soon after they join the school.

Teachers know that they must report concerns to you and they approach you for advice on cases, including those that do not warrant referral. Teachers keep records of the cases that do not require referral to you, but you and I agreed that you should also record them.

You have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Pupils told me that they feel safe at Dean Hole. They enthusiastically shared with me all the ways that you and the school staff keep them safe, and teach them how to be safe. Pupils recognise that teachers help them to know about the risks they face, and how to protect themselves from dangers such as the internet, drugs or strangers.

Inspection findings

- The small number of pupils in each cohort makes comparison with national figures difficult because one pupil's results can have a disproportionate effect on the cohort figure. That said, overall, pupils make good progress at Dean Hole Primary School and, as a result, they attain well. In 2015, the proportion of pupils attaining a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was above the national figure. Similarly, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 attained above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. At the

end of Key Stage 2, pupils attained outcomes in line with the national average. All these results represent good progress from pupils' different starting points. However, more-able pupils do not attain highly enough in mathematics. Pupils' books and school tracking indicate that pupils currently at the school make good progress overall.

- Leaders and governors know the school well. The school's self-evaluation is comprehensive and accurate. Leaders have evaluated published information about pupils' performance and their own internal data. They have taken care to compare their results against the national figures to make sure that they maintain appropriate expectations. Leaders also evaluate a range of other information, including the results of monitoring and performance management, to provide a comprehensive review of the school's performance. As a result, they have identified appropriate priorities for improvement.
- Leaders and governors have sustained a culture of high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils. Consequently, they continue to improve steadily. The priorities identified through the self-evaluation process inform the school improvement plan. The plan effectively identifies the intended results of the improvements in terms of pupils' outcomes, and is clear about what needs to be done, when it needs to be done, who needs to be involved and when it should be completed. Leaders ensure that the plan also shows who is responsible for ensuring the improvements take place and, as a result, leaders and governors are able to monitor progress and hold colleagues to account. This effective approach to improvement planning has ensured that leaders have addressed the areas for improvement found in the last inspection.
- You have recently introduced a new curriculum and an assessment and tracking system. You showed me how you use the assessment information to check the pupils' understanding within each year group's curriculum. We agreed that you and your teachers have not yet developed the way you use the system, and the information it contains, in order to track pupils' learning so that you can intervene to ensure pupils make outstanding progress.
- Parents who met with me during the inspection were overwhelmingly positive about the school and its staff. They all said that their children felt safe, that teaching was good and that their children made good progress. They were particularly impressed with the caring ethos of the school, which combines high expectations of learning, confidence, care and preparedness for secondary school. Parents felt that teachers were accessible and supportive. Some parents said that they were disappointed that they now have to share their headteacher with another school but recognise that it is a necessary measure for a small village school. The views I heard were reflected in those parents that responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. This showed that the majority of parents say that the school is well led and all of them would recommend the school to another parent.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and engage in their learning readily and enthusiastically. This is a result of the culture of high expectations, care and fun

that you, governors and school staff have developed at Dean Hole. Consequently, behaviour is excellent, pupils care for each other, they are keen to learn and settle to their lessons promptly and well. The pupils I spoke with during my visit were very friendly, confident, enthusiastic and open. They learn well because teaching is good and staff provide pupils with an attractive, purposeful and stimulating environment in which to learn. Pupils were able to describe how teachers and support assistants help them with their learning, including how learning objectives, teachers' marking and the opportunity to respond to feedback help them to make progress.

- Governors are effective and committed to further improvement. They know the school well and know the areas that need to be improved. They undertake a programme of monitoring in school and their findings inform the school's self-evaluation. They also monitor the implementation of the school improvement plan, holding school leaders to account for its impact. Governors play an appropriate role in performance management and they provide school leaders with effective support and challenge. However, governors and leaders had not ensured that the school has complied with all statutory duties in relation to information on its website.
- You ensure that teachers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and that safeguarding processes, such as safer recruitment, are up to date and effective. You also make sure that adults' understanding of their roles and the risks faced by pupils is current by providing appropriate and timely training. Pupils were very clear that they feel safe and that school staff keep them safe. They talked enthusiastically about how they contribute to the security of the building and why fire drills are so important. They shared with me how they are taught to stay safe in the outside world, such as through drugs education and e-safety.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- teachers and leaders use the assessment and tracking system effectively in order to monitor the learning of pupils and to identify those pupils who are not making outstanding progress
- teachers intervene and provide support to help pupils to make outstanding progress
- teachers improve the attainment of more-able pupils in mathematics by ensuring they make outstanding progress
- they improve the effectiveness of subject leaders by enabling them to observe colleagues teaching their subjects
- they fulfil their duty to meet the statutory requirements for the school website.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Nottinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Derek Myers
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, those teachers responsible for leading the teaching of English and mathematics and three members of the governing body. We discussed your current school self-evaluation and your improvement plan and I reviewed both of them. You and I visited classrooms and learning areas to observe teaching, talk to pupils and look at their work. We evaluated information about pupils' progress, attendance and exclusion. I reviewed the minutes of the governing body and the records of monitoring. I observed and talked with pupils at breaktime and met with 10 pupils. I met with you, as safeguarding lead, and reviewed your systems, processes and records. We undertook a scrutiny of work from a sample of pupils. I met with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day and considered their views alongside the responses from Parent View.

This is a small school and, as a result, the numbers of pupils in the different groups are too small for reporting purposes.