

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
www.ofsted.gov.uk



3 December 2015

Mr Joseph Rubba  
Headteacher  
Wychwood Church of England Primary School  
Milton Road  
Shipton-under-Wychwood  
Chipping Norton  
Oxfordshire  
OX7 6BD

Dear Mr Rubba

### **Short inspection of Wychwood Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 10 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 March 2011.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your arrival in September, you have promptly reviewed key school policies and procedures. You have quickly established a clear pathway, building on previous success and reinvigorating the school further. Staff, parents, pupils and governors are all highly appreciative of your inclusive approach and rightly hold you in high regard. You have instilled a clarity of purpose seamlessly among the whole team, who heartily embrace the new challenges you have set. Parents are overwhelmingly positive, appreciating your friendly and approachable disposition. They feel confident in your leadership and know that you are readily available – always willing to make time to talk. This is a happy, purposeful school where pupils, parents and staff have a true sense of belonging. As one parent describes, 'there is a lovely feeling of togetherness'.

Since the previous inspection, pupils' progress has accelerated. The majority of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good and sometimes rapid progress, in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, standards are high and many pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve standards above those expected for their age. Standards for disadvantaged pupils have risen considerably. However, in some year groups you have rightly identified that boys sometimes make slower progress than girls do. Similarly, some of the

most-able pupils make slower progress in reading and mathematics than you would like. You are keeping a close eye on these groups and there is evidence that gaps are beginning to close.

You have used your first term intelligently to identify precisely the school's main strengths and those areas that require some improvement. You have gathered first-hand information to inform your judgements, wisely involving other leaders and governors in monitoring activities. As a result, everyone is clear about how the school can improve further and middle leaders are developing their skills well. Using the information gathered, you have implemented new ways of working to address weaker aspects. For example, you found that some pupils could not always articulate their learning goals as freely as you would like. As a result, you have revised the school's approach and pupils now have appropriate learning targets in mathematics, reading and writing. Pupils are able to express succinctly how they are improving their skills. Parents, too, appreciate this adjustment. Consequently, many describe a sea change in their children's enthusiasm for learning.

Since the last inspection, the curriculum has developed considerably. Pupils respond well to a wide variety of interesting and engaging topics. Notwithstanding the school's creative approach, you have made certain that rigour remains within the teaching and learning of English and mathematics. Pupils enjoy their lessons and make good progress. They particularly enjoy the wide variety of sporting activities on offer, including the inter-house competitions which the school organises. Pupils benefit from a broad range of additional opportunities including residential visits and school trips.

At the last inspection, inspectors identified a need to ensure that everyone is appropriately involved in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's work, and in setting priorities for further improvement. They also required staff to plan opportunities for pupils to learn about, and experience at first hand where possible, faiths, cultures and traditions.

Leaders have addressed all of these aspects effectively so that:

- All staff are involved routinely in evaluating the school's effectiveness, undertaking regular monitoring activities and sharing their findings. Subject leaders, senior leaders and governors are a cohesive team and contribute well to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupils are developing their understanding of other faiths, cultures and traditions. Whole-school events, such as the recent 'international week' contribute extremely well to enhancing pupils' knowledge of the wider world.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding procedures are sound. Staff receive regular training that includes appropriate emphasis on the duty to keep pupils safe from radicalisation. The school

makes appropriate checks on all adults, including volunteers, to confirm their suitability to work with children. School leaders consider pupils' safety particularly thoroughly, such as when planning and organising school trips. Governors also play a lead role in ensuring that the school is a safe place to be. In recent times, they have overseen the development of a safe forest school zone and pond area. You and the governors are making well-judged decisions to adapt the school's perimeter fencing. This work typifies the whole team's conviction that keeping pupils safe is paramount.

You have reaffirmed the school's values resolutely and parents appreciate the nurturing approach the school exemplifies. School leaders work well with partner agencies to ensure that families who may experience difficulties from time to time are well supported. Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school. They are confident that adults will always help them if required. School records show that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour and that on the few occasions they occur, staff act swiftly and appropriately.

### **Inspection findings**

- In a short space of time, you have prioritised getting to know the school well. Your evaluation of the school's strengths and areas that need further development is accurate. You are using your observations wisely to shape well-judged plans for the future. Parents already recognise the positive impact of new developments such as the increasing regularity of communication between home and school.
- You have ensured that you know each teacher's strengths and areas to develop accurately. You are insistent that everyone can learn from each other to develop skills and expertise. Teachers are receiving helpful and timely feedback. Teaching is very effective and pupils make good progress.
- Governors play an active role in evaluating the school's effectiveness and know the school well. They monitor school performance closely, gathering information first hand to inform their discussions and decision-making. They keep a close eye on pupil premium funding, ensuring that disadvantaged pupils make good progress and learn well. They have benefited from local authority training opportunities in order to enhance their skills and expertise further. They are keen to support you in improving the school even more.
- Attendance has risen since the previous inspection and is high. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Parents value your approachability and pupils love attending Wychwood Primary School. They speak highly of their teachers, headteacher, curriculum visits and the variety of extra-curricular activities on offer.
- Pupils benefit from highly effective teaching. Teachers ensure that pupils are clear on the purpose of each activity, identifying helpful 'steps to success'. All

pupils respond well and are encouraged to aim high. For example, in a Year 4 writing session, pupils used embedded clauses and expressive adjectives in their sentence construction, while many also confidently explored the use of prepositional phrases to meet the challenges set.

- Teachers use their subject knowledge well to provide well-considered learning activities. In mathematics, pupils have opportunities to apply their knowledge to solve problems. They say they enjoy these activities. However, you acknowledge the frequency of such activities varies from class to class.
- You and other staff take full advantage of school assembly times to broaden pupils' understanding of the school's Christian values. Following a retelling of *The Legend of Gelert*, Key Stage 2 pupils were able to discuss with maturity the value of 'peace' and describe how they could be peacemakers at school.
- Leaders and teachers keep a close eye on the progress of different groups of pupils and trigger additional support where necessary. The good progress secured by all pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, provides testimony to the success of this approach. Many pupils with specific needs benefit from high-quality support and achieve as well as their peers.
- In the Reception and Nursery classes, children settle well into school life, developing self-assurance quickly. Teachers plan stimulating and appealing activities that capture children's interests. However, in some teacher-led activities, teachers do not always structure tasks sufficiently well. When this is the case, some children, often boys, lose concentration and their progress slows.
- Leaders have revised the school's approach to providing pupils with feedback. Pupils benefit from written feedback on how well they are learning and can describe how they are trying to improve their skills. On occasion, teachers' questioning and verbal feedback is not sufficiently probing. When this is the case, opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding are sometimes overlooked.
- Pupils' understanding of other cultures, religions and faiths is secure. The planned curriculum provides rich opportunities to familiarise themselves with cultural diversity, including through music and art. Pupils recently enjoyed studying a range of different countries in depth. They are rightly proud of their high-quality artwork, produced during the school's 'international week'.
- Standards of presentation are extremely high. Many pupils are masters of penmanship, confidently using cursive script to record their ideas. Lessons are characterised by high levels of concentration and pupils' diligent approach to their tasks.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- they accelerate the progress of the most-able pupils, particularly in reading and mathematics
- teachers make better use of questioning to probe and deepen pupils' understanding
- in the early years, teaching and learning are improved in teacher-led activities, so more pupils, including boys, make good progress from their starting points.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Farr  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, pupils and four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. I spoke to a representative of Oxfordshire local authority by telephone. We visited five lessons and scrutinised pupils' work. I took account of 94 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I observed pupils' behaviour on arrival at school and during the school day. I spoke to a number of parents at the beginning of the school day. I analysed a range of school documentation, including information about pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. We discussed your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness.