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Mr N Gardner
Headteacher
Winford Church of England Primary School
Felton Lane
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Dear Mr Gardner

Short inspection of Winford Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on the 26 January 2016, 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

Despite the inevitable upheaval of moving into a new building, appointing a new headteacher and various staffing changes, the school has maintained a good quality of education since the previous inspection.

- The most striking feature of this school is its vision. Pupils, staff, parents and members of the local community 'are valued, nurtured and encouraged as individuals to fulfil their potential within a Christian environment'. This has enabled pupils to flourish because they are happy and feel secure.
- You have successfully galvanised the school community, while dealing sensitively with a variety of different challenges, including a complete reorganisation of staff roles and responsibilities. You have developed a strong team of teaching staff who are passionate about making sure the pupils are well equipped for the next stage of their education. You have also restored the confidence of parents, which was raised as a concern at the time of the previous inspection. You have enabled parents to become much more involved in their children's education. One parent reported that the headteacher is 'approachable and deals with any issues effectively'.
- You have successfully tackled an area identified for improvement at the previous inspection by developing a marking policy, which is used well in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils use teachers' feedback effectively to improve

their work. You have correctly identified that the youngest children need to have their progress recorded in a more transparent way. You also know that more could be done to make sure that they are clear about the next steps that they need to take in their learning.

- You and your teachers are making good use of recent training to improve pupils' problem-solving skills, which is raising standards in mathematics. By encouraging pupils to make choices about extending their learning and working unaided, you ensure that they are developing greater stamina in their lessons. The success of this approach is reflected in the significant improvement in the 2015 Year 6 national test results, which were much higher than the national average.
- At the time of the previous inspection it was noted that teaching assistants were not used to best effect. You have made effective staff changes, the impact of which was clearly evident during my visit. Teaching assistants were observed effectively supporting individual, group or class sessions. However, when resources were insufficient or the space allocated for the session was inappropriate, the support was less successful.

Safeguarding is effective.

- Leaders and managers, including governors, ensure that all safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and are fully understood by all staff. The well-being of your pupils is paramount and is deeply rooted in the foundation of all your work in school. Pupils report that they feel very safe in school and talk in detail about the precautions that are taken to keep them safe when they use the internet. They explain that they would not hesitate to go to an adult if they had any worries or concerns.
- You and your governors undertake robust recruitment procedures when appointing staff. Staff are able to keep close checks on individuals by carefully recording incidents of concern, however minor. You rigorously follow up issues to ensure that there are no threats to the personal well-being of any pupil.
- Parents comment that the school 'feels warm and safe'. The vast majority report that the school enables their children 'to flourish, to feel secure and be confident'.
- You have recently attended 'Prevent' training, which is a government initiative to promote an awareness of all forms of extremism. This will shortly be passed on to your staff. Your 'Prevent' policy clearly sets out the school's approach to enforcing tolerant and respectful views towards diversity. Pupils know that 'respect' is the mantra of school life. This ensures that they are respectful in school and as citizens in the wider world.

Inspection findings

- Governors have been very impressed with your achievements since you joined the school. They know that you do not avoid making difficult decisions and always work with the best interests of the pupils and the community in mind. They appreciate the detailed information you provide, which helps them support the work of the school. They provide informed challenge, which helps determine the school's future direction.
- Parents are also delighted with the impact of your leadership on the school. As one parent explained, 'the headteacher is second to none and we feel very fortunate to have him as head'.
- You work well between two different local school clusters to share best practice. Now that you have a more permanent team, you have started to engage more with the training and development that is available within the wider context of the local authority. You are taking steps to measure whether staff training results in improved progress for pupils but do not, as yet, have a clear picture of its effectiveness.
- The high turnover of temporary teaching staff, covering a long-term absence, had a detrimental impact on the outcomes of the 2014/15 Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) screening check and the Year 2 test results. Support from a local school and additional training, coupled with improved staff stability, has resulted in a more consistent and confident approach to provision in Years 1 and 2. Since the beginning of this academic year, pupils in Year 2 have made accelerated progress in their knowledge and use of letters and sounds. They are now working at a level appropriate for their age and using their skills to read widely and develop a love of books. Additional support in the current Year 3 class is being used well to close gaps in their learning and support those pupils who need extra help with their work.
- The increased focus on ensuring that boys and girls make equally good progress is evident in their engagement and enthusiasm with the different topics they are learning about. A theme about 'Space', which has been introduced in all classes, has ignited pupils' interest and encouraged them to seek out information on their own to share with others. Other topics, such as 'The World at War' and 'Shipshape and Bristol Fashion', have been skilfully designed to motivate the boys to develop their writing skills further. Your collection of historical artefacts provides a stimulating talking point for pupils, which brings history alive across the school community.
- Pupils report that they are very happy at school and enjoy their lessons. They are particularly pleased with their outdoor play equipment, which has been funded from educational grants. The pupils are very clear about the rewards they receive for good behaviour and high-quality work. They are equally clear about the sanctions they receive if they misbehave or do not work as hard as they should. Central to the work of the school is the promotion of British values. This is clear in the pupils' democratic approach to the school council and the way in which each class writes its own set of class rules, which all pupils are expected to adhere to.

- Fernie, the school dog, is used exceptionally well to support the work of the school. Fernie is a helpful resource in calming and soothing pupils who may be experiencing social or emotional difficulties. He plays an important part in helping those pupils who have complex special educational needs and those entitled to extra government funding grow in confidence. For example, by giving pupils a responsibility for feeding Fernie daily, they develop a sense of routine and responsibility. As a professionally trained dog, he is a great encouragement for reluctant readers who agree to 'snuggle into Fernie' and share a book with him. As one parent explained, 'the school dog is brilliant and has an extremely positive effect on the children that really benefits the school as a whole'.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- they evaluate the impact that professional development for staff has on improving pupils' progress
- the progress made by the youngest children is recorded in a transparent way so that they know what they need to do next to improve their learning.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Brackstone

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and we discussed improvements since the previous inspection and the progress pupils were making. We also discussed the school's self-evaluation and the initiatives you are taking to further school improvement. I held discussions with your middle leaders and four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. I also had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. We visited all the classes together and sampled some phonics lessons. I met with a group of pupils and reviewed the comments made by staff on the online questionnaire. I looked at the survey results from Parent View and considered the comments that I received from parents.