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Mr Kerry Stafford-Roberts  
Headteacher  
Hornby St Margaret's Church of England Primary School  
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Dear Mr Stafford-Roberts

### **Short inspection of Hornby St Margaret's Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 22 February 2017, 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 2011.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your ambition for all pupils to feel valued is clearly reflected in the school's mission statement: 'To provide a warm, friendly environment in which each child can feel happy and secure and can develop respect for themselves, for others and for the school.' You, along with your dedicated staff, have created a culture of positive attitudes and relationships at all levels. You pride yourselves on being a small, community school which is known by pupils and parents as a 'family school'.

The parents I met told me that Hornby St Margaret's is a 'lovely school with a family atmosphere' and that 'the teaching staff are very nice and approachable'. They told me how happy their children are at school and that their children feel safe there.

It was a pleasure meeting the pupils, who made it clear that they enjoy being at the school. They said that Hornby St Margaret's is a very happy school and one pupil commented that the school 'is wonderful and has a really good learning environment'.

Pupils are polite and show respect towards their teachers and each other. The pupils I spoke to told me that they feel safe in school, that they know who to go to if they feel upset about anything and that teachers are sensitive to their needs. For

example, one pupil commented that when a teacher wanted to speak to her about an issue this was done in private to avoid embarrassment in front of other pupils. Pupils felt strongly about helping and caring for others, regardless of their background or culture and that any child would be welcome in their school. British values are well embedded. Pupils talked with confidence about respect and tolerance of others.

At the previous inspection a number of issues were raised which you and your team have tackled well. As a result the school has brought in a robust tracking system to monitor the progress of every pupil. Teachers are using assessment information more effectively and this helps them to plan to provide good-quality learning.

You are aware that standards in 2016 were not as high as in previous years, especially in mathematics. However, from school information it was clear that a variety of factors, not least the fact that there was a very small number of pupils, partly accounted for this. Nonetheless, the progress made by pupils in mathematics is not quick enough and you have implemented a number of strategies to address this. The impact of this is modest and you acknowledge that there is still some way to go.

Similarly, you identified that certain groups of pupils, in particular those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, were not performing as well as others in some areas. The actions undertaken so far are extensive and staff responsible are providing effective leadership. This inspection indicated improvements are making a positive difference to these groups of pupils. These improvements need to be further embedded so as to ensure that these pupils achieve as well as they should.

Attendance figures are now above the national average and it was clear to me that the success of this was in no small measure due to your work engaging with families.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding procedures are robust and meet statutory requirements. All policies and procedures are updated regularly and are implemented effectively. All of your staff, including those responsible for safeguarding and staff recruitment, have completed appropriate training. They are aware of risks such as radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. The single central record is compliant and meets current requirements. You have a very effective system of interviewing new staff and this is cross-checked with the local authority to ensure that recruitment procedures are rigorous.

Children are taught about keeping themselves safe. I was particularly impressed by the school council, who spoke confidently about issues such as cyber-bullying and some of the possible dangers of the internet.

## Inspection findings

- You have a very clear understanding of your school's strengths and areas for development. You motivate your staff through your own passion to see progress in the school. This is underpinned by the strong Christian ethos that is clearly evident throughout the school.
- You have a very dedicated and supportive team. Morale in the school is high and the staff I met take great pride in the school. They feel trusted to be creative in their teaching and feel empowered to make decisions. One teacher's comment sums up their views well: 'Everyone is a leader in this school.'
- Governors are very supportive of all staff and have a clear vision for the school. They are relentless in their efforts to drive improvement, and have a hands-on approach to contribute to the school. They know the school and staff very well and are able to make useful contributions to areas of learning for the benefit of all pupils.
- The majority of parents are very supportive of the school and are happy with the progress of their children.
- School assessment information shows that pupils make good progress. Although the 2016 results suggested some pupils did not do as well as others nationally you are working with your team to put in measures to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential. In particular, the leader of special educational needs is providing strategies which closely monitor pupils to help them make good progress.
- The special educational needs coordinator monitors individual pupils rigorously and organises intervention strategies to help them with their learning. You are keen to raise the level of progress of these pupils and one strategy you have used is to employ highly skilled teaching assistants to help pupils with their learning. These assistants play a full and interactive part in lessons.
- Subject leaders work hard to update their skills and knowledge. They appreciate the fact that leaders encourage them to attend courses and this ongoing professional development helps them to improve constantly.
- There is a strong reading culture in the school. When I listened to readers I found that they all enjoyed reading both at school and at home. Pupils mostly read with accuracy and fluency. When they had trouble reading a word they used strategies they had learned to break down words into smaller parts so they could complete the sentence.
- The school enriches pupils' lives with a wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as cooking club, football tournaments, day excursions and residential trips. You have made great efforts to bring in staff and other resources for those pupils who need extra help in various areas. In particular, you are focusing on mathematics, which is a priority in your school improvement plan. The brokering of an external consultant is having a very positive effect on improving teaching skills, but its full impact is yet to be seen.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders monitor closely the progress of mathematics and track the impact of the actions they have recently introduced
- leaders continue to embed the effective practices seen in the special educational needs department with a view to improving outcomes and progress of pupils over time.

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

Yours sincerely

Leon Bernstein  
Ofsted Inspector

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I held meetings with you, your senior team, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, five members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I also had informal discussions with a group of parents, staff and pupils from key stages 1 and 2 to seek the views of the school. I visited a club before the start of morning school and watched part of a keep-fit activity in the school hall.

I listened to pupils read and observed their behaviour during lessons and as they moved around the school. I reviewed a range of documentation including the single central record, the school's self-evaluation, improvement plan and records relating to attendance and progress of pupils. I also took account of the 25 responses to Parent View, the online Ofsted questionnaire.