

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



9 October 2017

Ms Deborah Secull
North Leigh Church of England (Controlled) School
Park Road
North Leigh
Witney
Oxfordshire
OX29 6SS

Dear Ms Secull

Short inspection of North Leigh Church of England (Controlled) School

Following my visit to the school on 27 September 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in July 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the predecessor school was last inspected.

Since the inspection in 2011, there has been a period of significant change and instability. In July 2015, the school became an academy as part of the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust. You were appointed in June 2015 and focused on developing the capacity and effectiveness of your senior leaders, who now play a pivotal role in the management of the school.

You have quickly established a culture of high ambition for pupils' academic and personal development. You provide a clear focus on achieving the highest quality of teaching and learning. This is recognised and greatly valued by staff, pupils and parents. One parent commented, 'I can't speak highly enough about North Leigh School. It always has the interests of our children at heart.'

The school is a positive and welcoming place. Staff and pupils are friendly, polite and demonstrate respect for each other.

You have built on the strengths of the school and tackled the areas that needed to improve well. At the last inspection, the school was asked to improve the quality and presentation of written work. Writing in pupils' books confirms that pupils are becoming increasingly skilled at editing and improving their writing. Pupils take pride in their work and present it neatly. You have strengthened the leadership of

the school by spreading responsibility more widely. Staff said they are proud to be part of the team working at the school. They said you support them well and are clear about what the school is trying to achieve.

You and your leaders are good at identifying how to improve pupils' progress. Pupils make good progress overall in reading, writing and mathematics, but there are inconsistencies in the quality of challenge in some classes, particularly for the most able. You have rightly identified that teaching needs to be more challenging so that pupils make more progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. Staff have a good understanding of how to identify and protect pupils who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism. Members of the governing body attend training to make sure that they are well informed about current safeguarding training. There are effective relationships with other agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and well looked after.

You and your team have created a strong sense of community, based on British values. Safeguarding is at the heart of this nurturing and caring environment. Pupils say they feel safe in school because 'everyone helps each other'. As a result, the vast majority of parents who completed the online questionnaire stated that their children feel happy and safe.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection we agreed to look at the effectiveness of safeguarding; the progress of pupils, including the most able, in writing and phonics (letters and the sounds they represent); and how effectively you have improved the teaching of writing.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils who were making expected progress and better than expected progress in writing had fallen significantly from previous years and was below the national average. The school's reorganised writing curriculum now meets the higher expectations that are required. The school recognises that the focus on writing must be continued to ensure sustained progress over time, so that pupils fulfil their potential.
- Pupils are making good progress in writing. Following the drop in results in 2016, you introduced procedures to improve the teaching of writing. Where these changes have been effectively implemented, the most able pupils are making better progress. However, these changes are not yet consistent across the school. Consequently, not all of the most able pupils in the school make as much progress as they could.
- The teaching of phonics is good. As a result, pupils develop into fluent, confident and expressive readers. Improvements to the teaching of phonics mean that staff have higher expectations when teaching. Leaders make sure that any pupils

making slower progress receive prompt and effective support. Therefore, in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 more pupils than the national average achieve the expected standard.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the teaching of writing is consistent across the school
- more of the most able pupils achieve greater depth in writing.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Oxford, the regional schools commissioner and the Chief Executive Officer of ODST. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

David Harris
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, your English leader and your staff. We talked about the improvements which have been made since the last inspection. You and I undertook observations of learning in lessons. I examined pupils' work, focusing on writing and the most able pupils' progress in writing. I also held discussions with three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and talked informally to pupils in lessons. A meeting was held with two representatives from the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust. Before the inspection, I examined a variety of documents including the school's website, published performance data and a summary of your school's self-evaluation document. I took into account the views of 70 parents who responded to Parent View and 23 staff questionnaires. A range of documentary evidence was evaluated, including documents relating to safeguarding and governance.