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Mrs Linda Dupret  
Headteacher  
St Paul's Church of England Primary School and Nursery  
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Dear Mrs Dupret

### **Short inspection of St Paul's Church of England Primary School and Nursery**

Following my visit to the school on 1 November 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 July 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained, and continues to improve, the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leadership is strong, and senior staff act efficiently as a unit. Each member of the senior team knows their individual roles and responsibilities well. They carry out their duties in different ways but with equal effectiveness. As a result, the school has continued to make good progress despite more challenging expectations, reducing resources and increasing needs among pupils.

Leaders ensure that all pupils' needs are met. This includes those of pupils who have high-level special educational needs and/or disabilities for whom the school, as yet, receives no additional funding. Leaders also ensure that all pupils benefit from an imaginative, creative and inspiring curriculum. Uniquely, pupils spend some of their time learning through the medium of Spanish. This helps them to acquire important knowledge of how English as a language is constructed. It also complements their learning about other cultures and civilisations.

The school's work to promote equality and diversity is exemplary. This works well alongside teachers' support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. St Paul's is proud to be a primary school with a strong Christian character. The headteacher is fully committed to underpinning all of the school's work with values that derive from its Church of England foundation. Pupils contribute to the planning and delivering of collective acts of worship, and they

participate enthusiastically. During the assembly marking All Saints Day, pupils sang with gusto, 'Oh, when the saints go marching in'.

Leaders and teachers know each of the pupils extremely well. This is because they take time to get to know families and the wider community. Staff use information about pupils' knowledge, skills, understanding and progress with increasing expertise and sophistication. For example, attainment data is used skilfully to organise groups for learning. This information is also used to identify any pupils at risk of falling behind or needing to catch up. The school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) makes good use of such information to support parents in seeking additional funding when their children have demonstrable needs.

With rare exception, parents are fully supportive of the school and its efforts to keep pupils safe and happy. The following is typical of many responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View: 'A thoughtfully run school with a brilliant team of staff, supported by an engaged community of parents and carers.'

Notably, you showed me information about pupils' rates of attendance, which are very high and have been consistently so over a period of years. Pupils enjoy coming to school and, for the most part, learn well and make strong progress.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders, and those responsible for governance, ensure that pupils are kept safe at all times. Leaders have put in place a reliable system for checking that only those persons who are 'fit and proper' are allowed to work or volunteer at the school. The records of these checks are maintained securely. Leaders and the site team check daily that the premises are safe and well maintained. They are pursuing ways of making even more secure access to the school from St. Nicholas Road.

Governors carry out their statutory duties relating to safeguarding diligently. They check that training is up to date so that all staff are aware of how to keep pupils safe in education. Teachers receive training annually on safeguarding matters and regular updates on issues such as the 'Prevent' duty. There are some particular safeguarding issues in the locality to which staff are sensitive and alert.

Pupils told me that they feel safe at school. They wanted me to know that, 'There is no bullying here.' Pupils were adamant that everyone is treated equally and that no one is made to feel uncomfortable because of who they are or how they look. Teachers have created a pleasant, inclusive atmosphere, which is welcoming to all from a diverse range of backgrounds. The relationships between staff and pupils are good. All members of the community treat each other respectfully, in an atmosphere of trust. Consequently, pupils thrive, growing in self-esteem and confidence. Pupils like the rewards they receive when they have done well or have been particularly kind, caring or helpful. They are clear about the sanctions to avoid. Generally, therefore, their conduct is exceptionally good.

While the school remains good, there are still some aspects of its work that could be

even better. Notably, the proportions of most able pupils who go on to make rapid progress, or attain the highest standards, are not as large as they could be. Further, teachers do not always make the most of opportunities to reinforce basic skills through the rich and varied curriculum.

## **Inspection findings**

- This inspection was conducted to check that the school remains good, that safeguarding is effective and that pupils are doing as well as they can, particularly in mathematics. It was also undertaken to check that pupils are enabled to learn across a broad curriculum.
- Most pupils make strong progress and attain results that are broadly in line with age-related expectations. For example, in 2017, pupils sitting tests in reading at the end of key stage 2 made better progress than most pupils, and achieved a progress score considerably above the national average. This builds on the firm foundations laid in key stage 1 where the school's overall outcome in the phonics check was above the national average.
- Teachers take care of the pupils. They teach them with skill and some expertise. Teachers' planning takes into account potential learning opportunities in science, geography, history, art, food technology and physical education. In addition, teachers arrange many extra-curricular trips to enrich pupils' learning experiences. Pupils recounted excitedly outings to museums, adventure-based holidays, team-building activities and even swimming in the Hove lagoon.
- Leaders also ensure that the wide and varied curriculum is reinforced with learning about and from several world religions and ancient cultures such as the Greeks and Egyptians, and through partnerships with pupils and teachers overseas in countries such as Uganda and Spain.
- All activities are evaluated for their impact on pupils' learning and checked to ensure that they meet leaders' rigorous safeguarding expectations. However, leaders recognise that currently there remains some untapped potential in this impressive curriculum.
- Pupils do not routinely have opportunities, for example, to practise number, shape, space and measurement skills or apply them in lessons other than mathematics. Similarly, in the sample of work seen, there were few occasions when pupils had written in Spanish or produced complex pieces of extended writing outside the core English curriculum.
- Leaders constantly review the quality of teaching. They do this by scrutinising pupils' work frequently, conducting formal lesson observations as part of performance management procedures and dropping into classes informally. Leaders also hold regular 'pupil progress meetings' at which they ask teachers to account for the progress and attainment of each pupil, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders are aware that standards in mathematics are not consistently as high as they could be. They also recognise that some pupils do not make as much progress in writing as they could. Leaders' improvement plans have both these

subjects rightly as priorities for improvement in the 2017–2018 academic year. They are providing training and coaching so that teachers are better able to assist pupils' mastery of mathematics. Work is under way to support pupils' attainment of the higher standards in mathematics so that more exceed age-related expectations, especially the most able.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils, especially those who are most able, make even greater progress
- teachers use all aspects of the imaginative and creative curriculum to support the further development of pupils' core skills in mathematics and writing.

I am copying this letter to the co-chairs of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Chichester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Brighton and Hove. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Hughes  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

You led me on a quick tour of the school and I met eight parents informally before school started. I visited most classes twice, once in the morning and again in the afternoon. I met with a group of five Year 6 pupils. I also met with the co-chairs of the governing body and the school partnership adviser. We spent time, with other leaders, looking at your evaluation of the school's performance. I examined a sample of pupils' work, including some from last year's Reception class and the 2016–2017 cohort of Year 6 pupils. I took into account 76 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's confidential online survey, including free text comments. I considered nine responses to Ofsted's confidential online survey for staff and 12 responses to the pupil survey. I also looked at a range of the school's other information, including rates of attendance.