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Mrs Amanda Townson  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Townson

### **Short inspection of Burton Leonard Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 1 May 2018, 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 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

You have continued to lead the school with passion, determination and commitment. The school's motto: 'Inspire, believe, respect, achieve – together we shine' underpins all of the school's work, keeps everyone focused and results in everyone working exceptionally well together as a team. You have built on the school's many connections within the local community and through other educational networks to support its continual development. This has resulted in a well-established team of leaders and teachers who have developed substantial subject expertise. Consequently, leaders have continued to further enhance the quality and richness of pupils' learning, so that pupils achieve very well across a wide range of subjects. You are now keen to refine the curriculum further by making sure that there are more opportunities for pupils to learn about their cultural heritage and that of others.

Pupils make strong progress from their starting points, and many achieve standards which are above the national average. Reading is a particular strength with a very high, and well above-average, proportion of pupils meeting and exceeding the expectations by the end of each key stage. You have effectively responded to the

area for improvement about furthering pupils' writing development, which was identified at the last inspection. For example, as part of the continually evolving curriculum, pupils now have greater opportunities to use and apply their writing skills across a range of subjects.

Pupils are very proud to come to this school. Likewise, parents and carers are very supportive of the school and feel that their children are making good progress. They have faith in the school's leadership. They appreciate that staff are always approachable and respond quickly to any concerns raised. As one parent said, 'It's like a big family.' Pupils demonstrate good manners and treat each other respectfully. They fully embrace the opportunities you provide for them to take on board responsibilities such as being digital leaders, librarians and members of the sports crew. As a result of the broad experiences pupils receive, they are developing as responsible and caring citizens who are keen to contribute to their school and community. The very high rates of attendance are testament to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Staff have a very secure knowledge and understanding of each pupil, and this is used to plan sequences of learning which precisely meet the needs of individuals. The pupil progress meetings, which are attended by all teachers together, enable you to tap into the subject expertise of staff alongside their knowledge of each individual to identify precise next steps for pupils' development. You quickly identify and remedy any relative weaknesses in pupils' outcomes.

Leaders are never complacent and are always looking to see what they could improve further. They feel well supported and challenged by the local authority and Diocese. You are aware of some inconsistencies in the school's data due to the small cohorts and number of pupils who join in different year groups and throughout the year. However, your inclusive ethos means that all pupils are welcomed and supported to grow and develop. Leaders' self-evaluation has identified emotional well-being as a barrier to some pupils' learning. Consequently, this year you have identified pupils' emotional well-being as a whole-school priority. Staff have received training, and the school is working with a range of partners to further all pupils' understanding and experience of mental health and well-being issues. The school is currently working towards the School Mental Health Gold Award through Leeds Carnegie University. As a result of the actions taken so far, leaders have already noticed a much more settled start to each morning for the identified pupils. Academic outcomes are also improving for these pupils as a result.

The school is supported by highly skilled and proactive governors who are committed to developing the school at the heart of the community. They have made sure that sharp self-evaluation and the development of leadership are successfully securing the school's capacity for further improvement. They use their regular visits and involvement in school life to help them check the impact of leaders' actions and identify where challenge and support are required. One governor described the ambitious and inclusive ethos which leaders and governors have created, saying: 'There is a place for everyone. The bar is set high, but it is different for each pupil.'

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a strong culture of keeping pupils safe. Leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that staff are vigilant in making sure that safeguarding is always a high priority. Staff receive effective training, which helps them to recognise and respond to any signs of concern.

Pupils said that they feel well looked after by staff and that everyone cares for each other. Parents and pupils agree that behaviour is very good. Pupils know the systems for dealing with any rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour and are confident that staff will sort out any issues. The curriculum supports pupils in learning how to stay safe. Consequently, they are able to talk with confidence about how to stay safe when faced with potential risks, such as using the internet, crossing the road or riding a bicycle.

## **Inspection findings**

- Subject leadership has gone from strength to strength since the last inspection. Staff are passionate about their areas of responsibility and work as a team to raise standards and keep improving the curriculum offer which pupils receive. Subject leaders are eager participants in local networks and forums and they regularly moderate pupils' work with other schools. This keeps them up to date with their subject, gives them an accurate view of the standards pupils achieve and keeps their ideas fresh. Additionally, they contribute to the development of subject knowledge for all staff. Subject expertise, such as in the teaching of computing, means that pupils quickly develop their subject-specific skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 were able to confidently explain terms such as algorithm and debugging. As a result of the strength in subject leadership, pupils achieve well across the wider curriculum beyond English and mathematics. As the science leader said, 'A true measure of success is the way in which pupils' interest is sparked and they choose to carry on their learning at home.'
- You are passionate about creating a curriculum which is rich and varied. This helps pupils to discover new interests while developing their resilience and eagerness to learn. Leaders have achieved this very effectively. Pupils are confident and capable and thoroughly value the high-quality opportunities they receive. Visits, visitors and memorable learning opportunities, such as a workshop with a geology society and visits from a community history group, enhance the curriculum experience. The curriculum is carefully designed so that pupils build their knowledge, skills and understanding. Links are made across different subjects and give pupils the chance to use and apply newly acquired skills in different contexts. This helps them to consolidate their understanding. For example, digital literacy taught in computing sessions is supporting pupils' presentation skills. In addition, a recent debating competition tasked pupils with considering whether social media is a danger to children. You are continually looking for ways to enhance the curriculum offer further and have identified the need to deepen pupils' knowledge and appreciation of cultural influences.
- You make sure that reading is a high priority throughout the school. From the library grannies, secret storytellers and books and buns after-school club to the

local bookshop visits, pupils are signposted to high-quality books, which inspire them to read widely and often. You also make sure that pupils develop their understanding of what they read by taking every available opportunity to expand their vocabulary. Teachers make precise use of technical vocabulary as they have such strong knowledge of the subjects they teach. They also encourage pupils to use the most appropriate language choices when they contribute to class discussions. This not only supports pupils' spoken English, but their reading comprehension and written work too. The small number of pupils who are not on track with their phonics knowledge are supported well. Highly skilled teaching of pupils identified to have gaps in their learning or who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities makes sure that pupils catch up quickly.

- The area for improvement about developing pupils' writing, which was identified at the last inspection, has been fully addressed by leaders. Pupils enjoy writing, and their reading contributes very effectively to their success. The two teachers who are also writing moderators for the local authority make sure that all staff have extremely high expectations of what pupils should achieve. By sharing good practice and looking at pupils' books throughout school, leaders support teachers to continually aim high in both the content and presentation of pupils' writing. A focus on handwriting has resulted in this becoming a strength throughout school. In turn, this has also improved pupils' writing stamina. Additionally, the wider curriculum is used very effectively as a vehicle to provide interesting contexts for pupils' writing. As a result of leaders' actions, pupils' attainment has been consistently above the national average by the end of each key stage.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2017, pupils did not achieve quite as well in mathematics as they did in reading and writing. You have been quick to address this relative weakness, and work in pupils' books and lessons confirms that current pupils are making good progress. A recent focus on developing a growth mindset has resulted in pupils being more willing to have a go, persevere and show resilience when approaching tricky problems. Pupils are also becoming increasingly independent. From articulating what they have learned to checking their work, pupils are fully involved in the learning process. They make use of their prior learning to help them when they come across new learning and make good use of the resources available in the classroom. The caring and nurturing approach of staff means that pupils have very positive relationships, which are built on mutual respect. Pupils use this to support each other's learning and to address misconceptions as they discuss and debate their learning in lessons. For example, a discussion about right angles resulted in pupils clarifying their understanding.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the curriculum is developed even further, in order to deepen pupils' knowledge and appreciation of the cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education

for the Diocese of Leeds, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kirsty Godfrey  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and subject leaders. I also met with five members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I evaluated documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, information about pupils' progress, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance records and information about safeguarding. I spoke with several parents at the start of the school day and considered the 38 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. The 12 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and the 71 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire were also taken into account. I observed the lunchtime experience and talked to pupils from a range of year groups, hearing some of them read. You and I visited each classroom together to observe teaching and learning and scrutinise pupils' work in their books.