

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Mrs Claire Gaskin  
Executive Headteacher  
Beckbury Church of England Primary School  
Beckbury  
Shifnal  
Shropshire  
TF11 9DQ

Dear Mrs Gaskin

### **Short inspection of Beckbury Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 7 June 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 September 2013.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

You and your senior leaders provide exceptionally strong leadership to the school. When the school became part of The Trinity Federation, you quickly gained a detailed and accurate understanding of all aspects of the school's performance. You then developed and implemented clear and effective action plans to address the significant weaknesses identified. Consequently, you and your leaders have stemmed the decline in the school's performance since it was last inspected. Your swift actions have ensured that pupils' previous underperformance has been addressed through tackling the substantial weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, the large number of pupils who had fallen behind in their learning previously are now starting to catch up with where they should be. However, while your highly effective actions have helped these pupils to close the gaps in their learning, you recognise that some pupils are still not achieving as highly as they should.

Pupils love their school. They particularly like the 'smallness' of the school because, they say, 'You get to know everyone.' Pupils show care and consideration towards one another, for example by helping to set out the dining hall at lunchtimes for their friends. They take great pride in the gardening areas of the school. Pupils also show a high level of confidence when talking to visitors and speak proudly about how all staff care for them. It is clear that pupils are very happy with

their school as there is virtually nothing that they feel would make it better.

Parents and carers are also very supportive of the school. Parents spoken to particularly praised the family atmosphere in the school, typically saying; 'I love the family feel of this small school, yet it is also dynamic and forward thinking.'

At the time of the last inspection, leaders were asked to ensure that the quality of teaching was consistently effective. You have addressed the previous weaknesses in teaching and learning well, leading to some improvements across the school. However, you recognise that there still remain some inconsistencies in teaching and learning. Teachers do not consistently plan work that is matched well to pupils' learning needs. In addition to this, teachers do not consider carefully enough what pupils should be learning in their different age groups in the mixed-age classes. This means that work in English and mathematics is too hard for some pupils and too easy for others and does not help them to develop their learning progressively.

In writing, pupils do not apply their grammar and punctuation skills accurately enough. In some cases, teachers do not address these mistakes, which means pupils continue to repeat them. This limits their progress in writing. Additionally, pupils' presentation of their work is inconsistent and some pupils have poor handwriting and letter-formation skills. You and your leaders are continuing to improve teaching through carefully targeted training, support and a professional development programme. This is already showing signs of improving the overall quality of teaching and learning.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Following the school joining the federation, you quickly identified where safeguarding policies and practices needed to be more robust. You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements, including policies and procedures, are now fit for purpose. Careful checks are made on all staff who work in the school, as well as visitors, to keep pupils safe.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils talk in detail about internet safety and know not to share any personal details online. In addition to this, you provide parents with a range of information about internet safety so they know how to keep an eye on their children's use of the internet. Pupils learn how to ride bikes safely and receive road safety lessons. Pupils say that bullying almost never happens. However, they are confident that if they are worried about something, there would always be someone they could talk to in school.

### **Inspection findings**

- The school's leaders have introduced a new approach to the teaching of mathematics this year, including more opportunities for pupils to use mathematical apparatus to support their learning. This has helped pupils to develop their number and calculation skills. Consequently, pupils now demonstrate more confidence in mathematics and are making better progress

across the school. Gaps in pupils' prior learning are closing as a result of improved teaching. However, you recognise that further progress needs to be made to ensure that all pupils achieve as highly as they are capable of by the end of key stage 2.

- You also recognise that, in the past, pupils' writing skills have not been developed well enough. Pupils now have more opportunities to write, both in English and in a range of other subjects. For example, pupils in class 3 wrote about a science investigation into how sound travels through air, water and solids. Pupils in class 2 designed a leaflet for a geography project, writing about the importance of recycling. However, pupils' work in books shows that there remain some inconsistencies in the progress they make in writing. You have already begun to address the issues in writing, but the impact of these well-planned actions is yet to be fully seen.
- Since the school joined the federation, you and your leaders have provided staff with effective training and professional development that has helped address many of the weaknesses previously seen in teaching. The director of teaching and learning monitors the quality of teaching and learning closely, quickly identifying where further support is needed to help to improve teaching. One-to-one professional development meetings provide staff with focused times to discuss and review areas of their teaching practice. Teachers also have time to reflect on their own skills and where further improvements could be made. As a result of the meetings and reviews, bespoke coaching programmes are put in place to help staff develop their teaching skills. Consequently, the quality of teaching is now more consistent across the school and continues to improve. You have an accurate overview of what further developments are needed, and action plans are in place to address the remaining inconsistencies.
- Staff value the professional development opportunities you and your leaders provide for them. The shared expertise from across the federation has been instrumental in helping staff to improve their practice. Staff appreciate the time they have to meet with other teachers. For example, teachers meet from across the federation to share examples of work to check that they have made accurate assessments and that they have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. All strongly agree that they are proud to be a member of staff at the school.
- Following the school joining the federation, a new governing body was formed. Governors have developed their skills rapidly in a short time. They actively seek guidance, training and support to ensure that their skills in governance continue to develop. Governors have a detailed understanding of the school's performance. They recognise the unique nature of this small school and the demands this places on staff. Governors' monitoring skills have developed particularly well. They are effective in holding leaders to account for all areas of the school's performance. Consequently, they are helping to drive further improvements in the school.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve and insist that pupils produce the best work they can
- teachers plan work in writing and mathematics that is appropriately matched to pupils' ages and previous attainment
- pupils consistently and accurately apply their grammar and punctuation skills in their writing
- pupils improve their handwriting skills and the presentation of their work.

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

Yours sincerely

Ann Pritchard  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, members of the leadership team and members of the governing body. I talked to pupils about their learning, visited lessons across key stages 1 and 2 and looked at examples of pupils' work. I observed pupils' behaviour before school and at lunchtime. I spoke to parents and to pupils informally throughout the day. I also met formally with a group of pupils. I reviewed a range of documentation, including: the school's own evaluation of its performance; the school development plan; documents relating to keeping pupils safe; and the most recent information about pupils' achievement. There were seven responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire. I considered the 10 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.