

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



5 July 2018

Mr Michael Wilson  
Headteacher  
Underwood Church of England Primary School  
Main Road  
Underwood  
Nottingham  
Nottinghamshire  
NG16 5GN

Dear Mr Wilson

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

Following my visit to the school on 19 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 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.

You know the school very well and show strong and purposeful leadership. You and your leadership team have built warm and effective relationships with staff, pupils and parents and carers. Underwood Primary is at the heart of the local community. There is a positive culture and ethos permeating the whole school, which is underpinned by the school's religious character. Pupils are very happy to be a part of the school. The school is popular with parents, with many families travelling considerable distances to ensure that their children can attend. A typical parent view was: 'The school is well organised, well run, sets high standards and most of all it is friendly and welcoming for children.'

School leaders and governors are focused on providing the best possible education for the pupils, and you are ambitious for the school's future. You have ensured that the areas identified for improvement at the previous inspection have been addressed. You were asked to make sure that pupils' work was set at appropriate levels and to share the school's best practice with other schools. As a result, you have developed a focused approach to the ongoing monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure that pupils are making greater progress in lessons and over time. In addition, you have supported other schools within Nottinghamshire, on a formal and informal basis, to help them secure more effective provision for their own pupils.

You have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas that you continue to work to improve. The school improvement planning is detailed and evaluative, with all governors and staff being involved in the process. Recently, one of your key priorities has been to improve the teaching, learning and assessment of reading. This was partly due to the weaker progress made at key stage 2 when compared with mathematics and writing. A consideration of whether pupils receive appropriate levels of challenge in their learning of reading was also reflected as a key line of enquiry for this inspection. Actions taken by yourselves have included providing more opportunities for pupils to read aloud and to develop their comprehension skills. Each class also shares a quality novel, and you have introduced book buddies, whereby older pupils help those younger to enjoy books and stories on a regular basis. As a result of these initiatives, the progress and attainment in reading have improved throughout the school in recent times.

Another priority you have identified has been to increase the proportion of key stage 1 pupils who achieve greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics. You have also identified the need to increase the proportion of the youngest children who exceed the expected standards at the end of the early years. The identification of these development areas is appropriate and again was identified as a key line of enquiry for the inspection. The impact of your actions, which include additional resources and focused support for individual pupils, has been positive. However, you acknowledge that there is still some room for further improvement in the outcomes that pupils reach at the end of key stage 1, particularly in reading and writing.

Pupils are polite and welcoming. Their positive behaviour and attitudes to learning are a notable feature in and out of lessons. The school is committed to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are given many opportunities to learn about different cultures and world religions. Pupils enjoy their learning and the many opportunities that are provided to help develop their social, moral and academic values. These include numerous responsibilities being awarded, in classes and in wider school life, which help prepare pupils for being positive citizens in modern Britain. These include proactive school and eco councils and playground buddies who take their roles very seriously, helping to support younger pupils at breaktimes.

Pupils are justly proud of the sporting successes they have achieved. They enjoy competing in, and often winning, many matches and tournaments with other schools in a wide range of sports. There is much evidence in pupils' books and on displays of the broad and rich curriculum that all pupils experience. Often, pupils' writing activities will be taught through a different subject area, which helps to build their key skills in a relevant and purposeful way. For instance, during the inspection, some pupils were using their literacy skills to write about the digestive system, while others had completed detailed historical writing about the Victorian period and then designed and made impressive three-dimensional models of a period house to illustrate features of the era.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and your staff are diligent in ensuring that all safeguarding arrangements are given the highest priority, with a clear focus on keeping pupils safe. Your records are detailed and of a high quality. The school has ensured that all necessary checks are carried out before any adults can work or volunteer at the school. Staff and governors receive appropriate training in safeguarding, including their responsibilities in relation to the 'Prevent' duty. The safeguarding training is reinforced by regular staff briefings, with timely updates and reminders.

Pupils and parents value the nurturing environment engendered by all members of staff. They believe that all of the adults in school can be relied upon to deal effectively with any problems, albeit these are few. Pupils feel safe and they are kept safe. They told me of how they are supported to stay safe when using the internet. Specific lessons, school trips and extensive residential visits at different ages also help to equip pupils to manage their own safety in a variety of situations.

## **Inspection findings**

- School leaders and governors know the school well, and you are ambitious for its ongoing success. You have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and you have established thorough and systematic processes to help secure further improvements.
- The school has developed an accurate and comprehensive assessment system. Pupils' progress and attainment are tracked carefully. Current performance data shows that most pupils are making good or better progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. One of the key lines of enquiry for this inspection was to consider whether pupils were being sufficiently challenged, particularly in their reading. Work in pupils' books, when visiting classes and speaking with individuals reassured me that there is much evidence of pupils rising to the high expectations that are made of them.
- The outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 2 are generally very positive. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who attained the reading, writing and mathematics combined score at the expected level was well above the national average. Mathematics attainment is particularly strong, with the proportion of pupils who attain both the expected standard and the higher level being well above the national average. There was a slight decline in the progress that pupils made in reading in 2017, although the higher priority now being given to the teaching and learning of reading has helped ensure that this weaker outcome is now being redressed.
- In key stage 1, the outcomes for pupils have been just below national averages in reading and writing, in recent years. However, in 2017, a greater proportion of pupils than nationally achieved the expected standard at mathematics. The proportion of pupils who attained a greater depth was also below that achieved nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Current assessments indicate that the attainment of key stage 1 pupils is improving. However, it was agreed that a suitable next step for the school is to secure these improvements and to sustain

more positive outcomes over time.

- The proportion of pupils who meet the phonics standard at the end of Year 1 is consistently above the national average.
- Children enter Reception at levels of development which are broadly average in comparison to those of children nationally. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development is similar to the national average. This suggests that children mostly make expected progress during their time in the early years.
- Teachers and other adults work well to support the individual needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils generally achieve well from their individual starting points.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent well, being mostly used to provide targeted support for individuals or small groups. Disadvantaged pupils generally make at least as good progress as other pupils. Notably, in 2017, all key stage 2 disadvantaged pupils attained the expected standard for the reading, writing and mathematics combined score, which was well above the standard achieved by other pupils nationally.
- The positive behaviour of pupils, in and out of lessons, is commendable. They collaborate well with each other, and relationships between adults and pupils are strong. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and the support that their children receive, pastorally and academically.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the improvements made to teaching, learning and assessment in key stage 1 are secured so that pupils in key stage 1 consistently achieve well, particularly in reading and writing, when considering their individual starting points.

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

Yours sincerely

Yvonne Watts  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and the senior leaders on several occasions. I shared my key lines of enquiry with you. I also met with the chair of governors and other members of the governing body. I met with a group of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6, and spoke with many other pupils informally. I considered the 42 responses received on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and 17 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Together with yourself, I visited all of the classes to see the learning that was taking place. I looked at a sample of pupils' books from all year groups and across the curriculum. I observed the behaviour of pupils in and out of lessons, on the playground and in the dining hall. I looked at a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation summary, improvement planning and documentation relating to safeguarding.