

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



7 September 2018

Miss Lucy Edwards
Headteacher
Whitewater Church of England Primary School
The Street
Rotherwick
Hook
Hampshire
RG27 9BG

Dear Miss Edwards

Short inspection of Whitewater Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 5 July 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 2014.

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.**

The school has gone through an unsettled period since the last inspection, with many changes of staff. There have been two deputy headteachers, with the current deputy joining Whitewater in September 2017. There has also been significant change in the teaching staff at the school. Leaders and governors are fully aware of what needs to be done to bring about the necessary improvement across the school.

Whitewater is a friendly, welcoming school where pupils feel at home. Staff are committed to delivering the school's core values of fellowship, courage and creativity. Parents and carers speak highly of the headteacher. They value the happy, 'family atmosphere' that staff have created. As one parent commented: 'Whitewater is a lovely little school and the staff clearly care for the children.'

Pupils enjoy coming to the school. They say teachers are kind, fun and help them if they find their work difficult. They appreciate the many things the school has to offer, including educational visits and the outdoor play space. They especially like being able to make friends with pupils in other year groups. They say that other pupils in the school are friendly.

The areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have only been

partially addressed. The initial area for improvement, to increase pupils' achievement in writing, needs further work. Expectations of what pupils can achieve in writing, including their handwriting, are not high enough in all classes. As a result, in 2017, a lower proportion of Year 2 pupils than seen nationally reached the expected standard in writing and the picture is likely to be similar this year.

Leaders were also asked to ensure that work set for pupils was suitably challenging for the most able in all lessons. You have had some success here. In 2017, the proportion of Year 6 pupils who attained the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics was above that seen nationally. However, leaders are aware that the school's assessment information is not always accurate and, as a result, lessons are not consistently pitched correctly for pupils, especially for the most able.

There is a lack of clarity in the current school improvement plan. For example, targets to measure success are not defined, and clear timescales in which to complete actions are not in place. This limits leaders' ability to evaluate whether actions have had the intended impact, and to ensure that improvements occur swiftly. Similarly, the information that governors receive does not provide the detail they need to monitor the progress made by different groups of pupils. This limits governors' ability to hold leaders to account effectively.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have clear policies and procedures in place to keep pupils safe, and governors are fully committed to ensuring that all statutory requirements are met. Leaders acknowledge, however, that aspects of these procedures could be more rigorously followed. As a result, I am recommending that the school requests an external review of safeguarding.

Leaders ensure that the school is welcoming and has a nurturing ethos. Staff know pupils very well and, as a result, their individual needs are quickly identified. Training is regular, so staff understand their roles and responsibilities to safeguard pupils well. The single central record of checks on adults' suitability to work and volunteer at the school is maintained diligently.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know who to talk to if they have any worries. Older pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe when online.

Inspection findings

- At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed that we would focus on: the effectiveness of the teaching of writing; how well leaders promote good behaviour and equality; and the teaching of reading in key stage 1 and early years, including phonics.
- The teaching of writing is inconsistent across the school. In 2017, the proportion of Year 6 pupils who reached the higher standard in writing was above that seen nationally. However, not all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Where this is the case, they sometimes set work that is not

matched appropriately to pupils' different needs. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils, who are too often set work that does not challenge them. Additionally, teachers' expectations for the presentation of pupils' work and their handwriting are not high enough.

- Pupils are helpful, polite and show respect for adults and each other. I was impressed with pupils' good manners and their enthusiasm for school. They understand well the school's newly introduced behaviour steps, which provide them with clear expectations and consequences. These help pupils to regulate their own behaviour well. As a result, disruption to lessons is rare.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is. They told me that, although there has been bullying in the past, it is now rare. However, pupils did say that sometimes teachers were too busy to deal with problems but that 'teachers will eventually sort it out'. A small minority of parents are also concerned with the school's effectiveness in dealing with bullying. Leaders are aware of this and have recently reviewed their practice, rewriting the anti-bullying policy. They also know that there is still work to be done to ensure that parents and pupils are better informed of leaders' actions in response to incidents.
- The school's website was missing a required document about its equality objectives. I was satisfied, however, that on-site practice regarding the promotion of equality is secure. For example, pupils were keen to tell me about a recent collective worship that had focused on the life of Malala Yousafzai. They spoke with great respect about Malala's campaign for the education of all girls.
- Leaders are aware that the teaching of reading and phonics in key stage 1 and early years is not strong enough. For example, staff do not take enough account of pupils' different starting points when planning reading tasks to challenge and move pupils' learning on. Leaders have ensured that the assessment of phonics, including a specific gap analysis of pupils' knowledge, has improved. However, it is not yet suitably accurate or rigorous.
- Leaders have put in place appropriate plans to improve the school further. However, they do not set clear criteria by which to monitor and evaluate the impact of their actions, to see if these are improving teaching and outcomes for pupils. Leaders know they need to ensure the school improvement plan includes all development priorities, and that targets are specific, timed, measurable and regularly reviewed.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they request an external review of the school's safeguarding practice
- all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in writing, especially the most able, so that more reach expectations for their age, and a higher proportion achieve at the highest standards
- accurate assessment of pupils' attainment, particularly in reading in key stage 1,

helps teachers plan suitably challenging learning

- school improvement planning is sharply focused so that the pace of improvement quickens, and governors can hold leaders firmly to account for the impact of their actions.

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

Yours sincerely

Lea Hannam
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and your deputy headteacher to discuss the school's effectiveness. We visited lessons to observe pupils learning, talk to them and look at their work. Together, we looked at the quality of pupils' work in their books. I considered 53 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 33 free-text comments. I spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day. Responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire were considered. In addition, I had telephone conversations with representatives of the local authority and the diocese. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.

I met with four governors, with the chair of the governing body joining us on a conference call. I had a formal meeting with a group of pupils to discuss their views about the school. Pupils' behaviour on the playground was also observed. I evaluated the school's safeguarding arrangements. A wide range of documents was examined, including: the school's self-evaluation; school improvement planning; information about pupils' progress; and various policies. I also examined the school's website.