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Mrs Heather Wareing  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Wareing

### **Short inspection of Carleton St Hilda's Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 7 February 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 October 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school is a calm, friendly and happy place where you teach pupils to develop as confident and polite children who care for others. Staff and pupils are proud to be part of the school family.

You and your deputy headteacher lead an enthusiastic and reflective team of staff who are keen to do their best for every pupil. The school is a hive of activity. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely to make sure that no learning time is lost. Leaders have made sure that staff training has improved teaching across the school. As a result, standards have risen since the last inspection and the school is going from strength to strength. Pupils achieve well in mathematics and English and their attainment is above the national average at the end of key stage 2. However, you are not complacent and are putting in place actions to improve the progress of middle-ability pupils.

Governors provide a good balance of support and challenge for leaders. They are frequent visitors and know the school well. Governors use their professional skills to keep a close watch on pupils' progress and to ensure that leaders maintain improvements in standards. As a result of their effective monitoring, governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, including your plans to improve the teaching of mathematics skills.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good. Those pupils who spoke to me during the inspection said that they feel safe. They said that bullying doesn't happen and that teachers deal effectively with any misbehaviour. Pupils told me that they relish the leadership opportunities that you give them. For example, pupils appointed as 'digital leaders' enjoy teaching other pupils about online safety. Pupils on the school council are proud of their involvement in school decisions such as choosing the smart new school uniform.

The vast majority of parents and carers share pupils' very positive view of the school. Those who spoke to me at the start of the day or who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, said that the school strongly promotes learning. They were keen to share how communication between school and parents has improved. Parents and grandparents enjoy coming into school and value opportunities to see how pupils learn.

You have responded well to the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. You have made sure that pupils' achievements across different areas of the curriculum match their achievements in English and mathematics. For example, in art, pupils develop their drawing and painting skills over time. They reflect on their work and identify how they can improve. You have also taken steps to ensure that subject leadership is effective. Leaders have improved assessment systems in different subject areas. As a result, teachers check how pupils learn across all areas of the curriculum, measuring pupils' progress carefully. Leaders use their skills and knowledge to provide effective support for their colleagues. This has led to improvements in teaching across the curriculum.

In response to the previous inspection, you have also developed pupils' understanding of cultural and ethical issues. You have done this by planning an engaging and interesting curriculum. You give pupils plenty of opportunities to learn about other cultures and about thought-provoking issues. For example, in religious education, pupils learn about world religions including Buddhism, Islam and Judaism. Leaders plan visits and visitors to bring pupils' learning to life. Pupils recently visited a synagogue and spoke to me with enthusiasm about what they had learned. Teachers encourage pupils to be thoughtful and inquisitive. Year 6 pupils recently took part in Holocaust Memorial Day activities. Pupils' work showed that they display empathy and thoughtfulness when learning about ethical issues.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders have made sure that safeguarding arrangements are thorough and of high quality. They carry out statutory checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils. Leaders have taken effective actions to ensure that the school is a safe and secure place in which pupils can learn. Staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the wider community. You give parents helpful information about internet safety.

Through regular training, staff and governors have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding. They are vigilant about the potential risks that pupils may face.

Records relating to pupils' welfare are appropriate and meticulously kept. Staff work closely with other professionals to make sure that pupils are safe. Leaders and governors have ensured that the appropriate monitoring and filtering arrangements are in place for the school's internet connection.

### **Inspection findings**

- The inspection focused on a number of key lines of enquiry, the first of which was how well pupils learn in mathematics. The quality of teaching in mathematics has improved since the last inspection. The training and support that staff receive are developing them all the time and pupils are benefiting. Attainment of pupils is good. Pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 reaching standards in mathematics at or above the national average. Staff teach pupils to be confident in their understanding of number. Across the school, pupils develop proficiency in carrying out written calculations with accuracy. However, leaders have correctly identified that pupils have too few opportunities to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics. You recognise that pupils need to develop these skills to improve their progress in mathematics.
- During the inspection, I looked at why middle-ability pupils do not always make the same progress as other pupils in mathematics and English. I found that leaders have taken the correct actions to improve progress for this group of pupils, making sure that work closely matches their ability. You and governors are checking teaching carefully to make sure that these actions are having the necessary impact on raising the progress of these pupils.
- My third focus was the progress made by pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. I found that the school provides effective teaching for this group of pupils. Teachers identify individual pupils' barriers to learning very carefully. Leaders work closely with support staff, other professionals and with parents to make sure that these pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Leaders ensure that teachers give pupils additional support, which has a good impact on their learning. Teachers check that extra provision is improving pupils' progress. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities achieve well.
- My final focus for this visit was how well the school teaches diversity and includes all pupils equally. It is clear that staff treat all pupils equally and with respect. You have actively sought out ways to give pupils a range of experiences which develop their understanding of a diverse society. You teach pupils to value and respect differences including gender, race and disability. The pupils that I met during the inspection spoke eloquently about how the curriculum promotes diversity and equality.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- in mathematics, teachers give pupils more opportunities to develop their reasoning skills

- they embed the changes that they have made to support the progress of middle-ability pupils in mathematics and English.

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

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Stevens  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher and a group of teachers, including middle leaders. I also met with five governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. I spoke to a representative of the local authority. I met with eight pupils from key stage 2, and spoke informally with other pupils during lessons. I visited all classes with you, where I observed teaching and learning, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils. I also heard pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.

I took account of 66 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, including free-text responses. I also considered the responses of 10 staff and 30 pupils to Ofsted's online questionnaires. I looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, information about pupils' attainment and progress, behaviour logs, teachers' performance management arrangements and pupils' personal education plans. I also evaluated safeguarding procedures, including policies to keep pupils safe, safeguarding checks and attendance information. I undertook a review of the school's website.