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Ms Ally Morgan
Headteacher
Charlton-on-Otmoor Church of England Primary School
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Dear Ms Morgan

Short inspection of Charlton-on-Otmoor Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 26 April 2017, 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 June 2013.

This school continues to be good.

Since your appointment to the school in September 2016, you have made many positive changes and improvements to the school. These improvements have ensured that the school continues to provide a good quality of education. You have reinvigorated the school with a renewed vision that has been shaped by everyone in the school's community. The school's vision statement, 'Believe in yourself, aspire to succeed and achieve your goals' is very evident in pupils' positive attitudes to learning. You have brought stability to the school and are determined that the school continues on its journey of further improvement. Parents speak warmly of the changes you have introduced and have confidence in the school. One parent told me, 'My child is thriving, loves coming to school and is challenged every day.'

Children get off to a good start in the early years and make good progress. They are confident, independent learners and show curiosity and interest in their learning. Early reading and writing are developed well and children are able to apply their phonic skills to read unknown words. You have taken effective action to address the slower than expected progress that pupils in key stages 1 and 2 made last year. Current pupils are making good progress and you ensure that any gaps in learning are addressed quickly. The school's new assessment and tracking system enables staff and governors to see at a glance how well pupils are doing.

It was a joy to meet pupils and to hear about the many things they enjoy at school.

There is a delightful atmosphere in classrooms and pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and enjoy being challenged to 'push their limits'. They get on well with each other and with their teachers.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors recognised the many strengths of the school including good leadership and pupils' outstanding behaviour. Inspectors also identified the need to improve the quality of teaching and learning to enable pupils to have a better understanding of teachers' expectations, be clear about what they are learning and know how to make improvements to their work.

Your effective leadership has ensured that pupils are making better progress than in the recent past. Most are on track to achieve good outcomes at the end of this year. However, you recognise that there is still more work to be done to make sure this good progress is maintained. We also agreed that while progress overall is good, it is not as strong in writing at key stage 2.

Governors know the school well and are kept well informed by your regular reports, updated assessment information and their frequent visits to the school. You and the governors have a demonstrable commitment to continued improvement and have used support from the local authority effectively. However, the current school evaluation and development plans are not as sharply focused as they could be.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils feel happy and safe at Charlton-on-Otmoor. You have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and appropriate records of concerns and referrals are kept. Staff understand their responsibilities well and make sure that any concerns are referred promptly to you or the deputy headteacher. Governors visit the school regularly to check safeguarding arrangements. You have made safeguarding a key priority and keep arrangements under constant review. Staff training, briefings and regular updates at staff meetings ensure that safeguarding is always on the agenda.

Pupils know how to keep safe when using the internet and describe with enthusiasm your lessons and assemblies about e-safety. Pupils talk positively about how they can always speak to their teachers because 'Teachers give us time – they make time for you.' Parents are unanimous in their views that children feel safe at school.

Inspection findings

- In 2016, while the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected levels in key stage 1 was broadly average, no pupils achieved greater depth in their learning. In key stage 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have fluctuated in recent years. However, the very small number of pupils and wide range of abilities and needs of pupils in some year groups explain these fluctuations.
- Current pupils are making good progress and are on track to achieve good

outcomes at the end of the year. Improved teaching and learning are leading to good and improving progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In key stage 1, all groups of pupils are making particularly good progress in writing. However, we agreed that while pupils' writing in key stage 2 is improving, not enough pupils are on track to achieve the expected standards or at greater depth.

- In mathematics, teachers provide good challenge for the most able pupils, encouraging them to choose more complex calculations. In our visits to classrooms, we saw how pupils were challenged to choose more difficult multiplication calculations involving decimals and larger numbers. Pupils are equally keen to challenge themselves to extend their own learning. This shift in culture is contributing to pupils' improving progress.
- Teachers explain things well to pupils and use appropriate mathematical equipment to help secure pupils' understanding. Teachers encourage pupils to check their own calculations. In one lesson, we witnessed pupils being asked how they could check their answers. Pupils confidently suggested a range of methods – for example, using inverse operations, trying an alternative method or using a realistic estimate. Pupils enjoy problem-solving activities on their computer tablets and are enthusiastic about the newly introduced online mathematics resource. Parents and pupils are excited and very much looking forward to the new after-school mathematics club.
- Additional funds given to the school to support disadvantaged pupils are used effectively. The deputy headteacher has taken on the mantle of 'pupil premium champion' and keeps a close track on disadvantaged pupils' progress and provision. This means that any who are not making enough progress are identified and given extra support very quickly. This support is also helping pupils to become more confident, assured and independent learners.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- leadership and governance are strengthened through more sharply focused evaluation and improvement planning
- improvements to pupils' outcomes are sustained and teaching ensures that all pupils, including the most able, are challenged effectively
- more pupils in key stage 2 make accelerated progress in writing, so that a greater proportion achieve and exceed the standards expected.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Oxford, the regional schools commissioner and the director of

children's services for Oxfordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sue Cox
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you to discuss the school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement and information about pupils' outcomes. We visited all classes to look at learning, talk with pupils and assess their work. I met with the chair of the governing body and two other members. I also met with the diocese's school improvement leader and held a telephone conversation with the local authority's school improvement partner. I reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation including the central record of recruitment checks, the safeguarding policy and safeguarding records. I met with pupils from the school council, talked to pupils during playtime and considered responses from 51 pupils who completed the online questionnaire. I considered the views of parents through the 25 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the responses from 16 members of staff who completed Ofsted's staff questionnaire. I also met parents on the playground at the start of the school day.