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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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3 July 2017

Mrs Sarah Bassitt
Headteacher
Killinghall Church of England Primary School
Otley Road
Killinghall
Harrogate
North Yorkshire
HG3 2DW

Dear Mrs Bassitt

Short inspection of Killinghall Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 June 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 October 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have successfully addressed most of the issues from the previous inspection. It is notable that you and your team have successfully widened opportunities for pupils to write and to apply their good basic numeracy skills to solve mathematical investigations and problems in a variety of different contexts. In addition, the development of the curriculum has been impressive to ensure that pupils achieve as well as possible in subjects besides English and mathematics. However, two areas for improvement, though tackled in the past, are currently still evident in school. There are still some inconsistencies in the effectiveness of teaching in each key stage. This slows the progress of most-able pupils in these year groups. Standards in spelling have not improved well enough. You have rightly identified this and are taking effective action to remedy it.

You have gained the respect of the school community and know very well the strengths and weaknesses of the school. You share a strong vision of the school with other staff, governors and pupils and do not accept second best. This can be seen in the ways that you personally hold staff to account.

This is a happy school where pupils learn, play and mix well. Pupils take an active role in the school, for example through the school council, aspiring entrepreneur work and global ambassador's scheme, and their views are valued by staff. You ensure that pupils are respected and trusted. Pupils are proud of the school and

reflect the school's values through their general behaviour and conduct throughout the day.

You, your staff and your governors were understandably devastated by an uncharacteristic dip in standards by the end of Year 6 last year. Following many years where pupils' progress was consistently good and standards were consistently high, this was a major disappointment. You understood why this happened and had taken strong and decisive action to tackle a period of weak teaching in the upper key stage 2 class. However, teaching did not prove to improve quickly enough and the damage had been done. The actions you have taken since have corrected the setback, and the work seen during this inspection shows the progress of most pupils throughout school to be good. You have taken steps to ensure that the problem does not occur again.

You have been well supported by governors, who have helped you to take difficult decisions in the best interests of the school. Governors are highly committed in their support for the school. They take their roles seriously and they are proactive. This is because you also encourage governors to hold school leaders to greater account over teaching and learning, and pupils' outcomes. Governors are correctly involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and asking the right questions of leaders to ensure that high standards are upheld. School improvement plans reflect the right priorities for improvement and are fit for purpose.

With a largely new staff, you are ensuring that professional development and training are closely matched to their needs so that they can develop their skills and improve their practice to meet your expectations. You and other staff have received strong external support from the local authority and the Harrogate and Rural Teaching Alliance, of which the school is a part. It is clear that you have forged an open, trusting relationship with the other headteachers in the organisation. As a result, leaders take a candid, honest view of each school's weaknesses and collectively take the most appropriate action to tackle them.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. Staff and governors have completed relevant and up-to-date training in line with current legislation. They articulate with confidence what to do if they have concerns.

Governors' checks go well beyond checking the single central record and staff vetting checks. Safeguarding systems and procedures are embedded in the working life of the school. As a result, safeguarding is everyone's business and there is a whole-school coordinated response to minimise risk.

Pupils' attendance is above the national average and punctuality is good because pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to attend. You ensure that pupils are taught to keep themselves safe, for example when working online on the computer. In discussions, pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and the child protection and safeguarding policies are up to date and comprehensive.

Inspection findings

- At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on a number of key lines of enquiry to be considered during the day. These included establishing the reasons for the dip in standards at key stage 2 last year, and checking that pupils' progress and standards throughout school are now good. We also agreed to check how well leaders and governors were monitoring the outcomes of pupils throughout the school. We agreed to check the effectiveness of actions taken to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and to ensure that the very few disadvantaged pupils were achieving and attending as well they could. These lines of enquiry are considered below.
- Staffing difficulties in the Year 5 and 6 class created significant difficulties in the last academic year. You identified this early and took immediate steps to replace staff, but this was unsuccessful too. By the time you had been able to provide effective teaching, standards had fallen and pupils' progress had regressed. As a result of the inadequate teaching in this class, standards at the end of key stage 2 in 2016 were very low and progress was poor. You did all you could to prevent this, but to no avail. You are doing all in your power to ensure that this will not happen again.
- Leaders' checks on teaching are comprehensive. Workbooks are scrutinised regularly and actions given to staff to improve the progress of pupils who need to catch up. Governors also visit the school and meet with teachers to review pupils' progress in books. This ongoing dialogue between teachers and governors enables governors to collect evidence for themselves and establish progress against the school improvement plan. Governors' monitoring of the impact of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective and results in these pupils making good progress. Attainment on entry to the Reception class varies year on year, but is broadly typical. From individual starting points, most pupils make good progress in each year group.
- Senior leaders track the progress of specific groups of pupils effectively, for instance boys, girls, disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, leaders show that progress over time is good. The work in upper key stage 2 is particularly strong. It extends pupils' thinking and develops more sophisticated understanding in all subjects.
- Occasionally, teachers' expectations are not high enough. Pupils' work is accepted when it is sometimes too untidy with careless errors, particularly in their spelling. This impedes progress. In addition, there are times, particularly in mathematics, when the most able pupils are given work which is far too easy before being moved on. This too slows the progress of the most able pupils.
- The attendance of pupils overall is currently above average and has been above average over time. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils was below

average last year. Leaders and teachers clearly articulate to parents that good attendance is crucial to good learning and take numerous steps to improve the attendance of a very small number of disadvantaged pupils. You make sure that staff are aware of these pupils and their particular needs so that their work is evaluated constantly to make sure that teachers are having an impact on progress. You have ensured that pupils have the same opportunities in the school as everyone else and benefit from strong support that is helping them to be successful in the future.

- A vibrant curriculum provides a range of high-quality work to enable pupils to achieve well across a wide range of subjects. The school promotes fundamental British values very well. For example, elections to the school council are explicitly linked to developing pupils' understanding of the democratic process. In addition, pupils' interactions with each other are characterised by mutual respect and tolerance. These values are modelled well by staff in the school. As a result of all this work, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers further accelerate the progress of the most able pupils by ensuring that teachers provide more challenging work and refining their teaching to move them on more quickly
- expectations of teachers and aspirations of pupils are raised for correct spelling and the neat presentation of their work.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Leeds (Church of England), the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Bywater
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you to discuss your evaluation of the school and the key lines of enquiry. We visited lessons together and looked at the work in pupils' books, spoke to the pupils about their learning and heard them read. Additionally, I looked at external reports and information about pupils' attainment and progress and I spoke with a group of pupils to discuss their work and gather their views of the school. I spoke with four representatives from the governing body. I also took into account the 38 survey responses from Parent View, the online Ofsted questionnaire for parents, as well as the eight responses to the staff questionnaire and 28 responses to the pupil

questionnaire. I checked the effectiveness of your safeguarding and recruitment arrangements.