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Mr Jonathan Hills
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Dear Mr Hills

Short inspection of Holy Trinity CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 8 November 2016, 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 December 2011.

This school continues to be good.

You have led with determination and have inspired staff and parents to be ambitious for pupils in your school. You have galvanised staff to share your vision because you empower them to contribute effectively to school improvement. They share your determination to improve the education that pupils receive. Subsequently, staff take ownership of areas they are responsible for and feel emboldened to effect change. You have moulded a united team who work enthusiastically and always in the best interest of the pupils in their care. Several parents openly declared how proud they are that their children attend your school. A parent summarised the views of many by simply stating that Holy Trinity is 'a great school with great leadership'. Commendably, you are ambitious for pupils to grow and blossom both academically and personally, and therefore pupils develop into well-rounded individuals who are well prepared for their next steps in education and for life outside of school. Thus, the leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Most pupils enter the school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are broadly typical for children of their age. By the time they leave the school, pupils' achievement is typically higher than the national average. More pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics than the national average in 2016. This is commendable given the increased expectations of the new primary curriculum. Uncharacteristically, a small number of prior middle-attaining pupils at the end of key stage 1 did not make enough progress to reach expected standards

by the end of key stage 2, despite the additional help they received throughout the year. Attainment is good because the vast majority of pupils make at least expected progress from their different starting points and some pupils make accelerated progress to reach the highest levels of achievement, known as 'greater depth', in reading, writing and mathematics.

You and your staff have worked creditably to meet the recommendations from the previous inspection. The effectiveness of leadership has been strengthened because responsibilities for steering subjects, key stages and areas for improvement, such as the introduction of mathematics mastery, have been delegated to middle leaders. Middle leaders support you unreservedly and competently. They have assisted you in raising the quality of teaching because they are involved effectively in monitoring and evaluating the performance of colleagues and are excellent role models to others. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved to become consistently good across the school. This in turn has had an impact on the progress that pupils make.

Learning is mostly well matched to the needs of pupils, including in early years and for the most able pupils. Occasionally, middle-attaining pupils spend too long repeating work that they can already do, especially in mathematics, rather than forging learning forward and applying what they know in a range of ways to deepen their understanding. Nonetheless, most pupils feel that teachers encourage them to do their best in lessons and many pupils feel that work challenges them.

You know the strengths of the school and what needs to be accomplished to make the school even better. For instance, leaders from all key stages understand that more pupils need to make greater than expected progress to raise the proportion of pupils who achieve greater depth by the time they leave the school. Leaders should continue to stretch the most able pupils and challenge middle-attaining pupils to think more deeply and apply their knowledge in a range of ways, so that they too can reach the highest levels of attainment.

You are supported well by senior leaders and by a positive staff team who are single-minded in their drive to provide a high standard of education for pupils. For example, a focus on boys' writing in early years has resulted in significant improvement in boys' achievement. In 2016 assessments, boys outperformed the girls in writing by the end of early years.

A strong sense of respect and equality of opportunity pervades the school. Leaders have worked tremendously hard to improve pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) since the last inspection. The school's endeavours have been recognised through the achievement of the Rights Respecting Award. Pupils have opportunities to learn about, and communicate with, international schools. SMSC is woven seamlessly through the curriculum, underpinned by the school's own values which are firmly founded on British values. Many parents express that the school nurtures their children to become 'well-rounded, responsible individuals'. Pupils universally say that the school encourages them to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone with respect.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. This is reinforced by a deeply embedded, caring and nurturing environment which focuses on the well-being and safety of pupils. Leaders are acutely aware of their responsibilities to protect pupils and ensure that their practice is in line with current legislation and consistently applied by staff. Leaders ensure that adults are well trained and understand their responsibility to protect pupils, including in relation to radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. Pupils who are at risk are supported very well, and leaders diligently pursue positive outcomes for the most vulnerable pupils in their care.

Pupils feel safe at the school. They know how to keep themselves safe and have a clear understanding of how to use the internet safely. Nearly all pupils feel strongly that there is an adult in the school that they can talk to if something is worrying them. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and participate in exercise.

Leaders are exploring strategies to promote and nurture pupils' mental health and well-being. This is to enable them to develop positive feelings about themselves and others, and be able to face life's challenges with confidence.

Inspection findings

- You have engendered a culture of high expectations that has permeated through the essence of the school's culture and has a positive impact on the academic and emotional needs of pupils. Parents too recognise this area of the school's strengths. One claimed, 'Holy Trinity is a fantastic school. It is a vibrant, happy and caring community with a strong Christian ethos.'
- The vast majority of staff have a clear understanding of the goals the school aims to achieve and participate fully in identifying how the school can improve further. Nearly all staff believe that the school is aspirational for pupils.
- You have ensured that effective systems are in place to track pupils' attainment and progress. Leaders use this to assess how well groups of pupils are achieving, including disadvantaged pupils. You are acutely aware of how well the achievement and progress of your pupils compare to schools in the local area and to schools nationally. You hold teachers and additional adults to account for the progress that pupils make. However, leaders do not use pupils' performance information highly effectively to hone in on whole-school issues for improvement, such as targeting middle-attaining pupils to make greater than expected progress. This is mainly due to the transition from national curriculum levels to assessment without levels.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive tremendous support. Their needs are very well met because interventions are well planned and evaluated to make sure that they are making a difference. Leaders know the needs of pupils exceptionally well and expect all staff to share that knowledge. They ensure that staff receive appropriate training to help them undertake their

role effectively. Consequently, pupils make strong progress from their various starting points. Parents are very appreciative of the help and encouragement their children receive.

- The proportion of pupils in the school who are disadvantaged is very low compared to the national average. It is therefore difficult to compare the achievement of this group of pupils from one year to the next. Pupil premium funding is carefully allocated and evaluated to measure the difference it is making to the outcomes of this vulnerable group. Leaders target pupils' individual needs. This bespoke approach ensures that pupils make good progress from their starting points. Additional support has a positive impact on their outcomes so that their achievement reflects, or is diminishing differences rapidly with, the national average for reading, writing and mathematics. The most able disadvantaged pupils exceed expected standards, especially in early years.
- The most able pupils are challenged because work is closely matched to their needs. Evidence in pupils' work shows that learning is tailored to help them think more deeply and apply what they know in a range of ways. Work in books and observations in lessons evidence the good progress they make in reading, writing and mathematics and in a wide range of subjects. For instance, the most able pupils write at length and use a range of complex sentences enhanced by rich vocabulary and precise punctuation.
- Early years is well led, and consequently there have been improvements to the overall quality of provision. There is a strong emphasis on children leading their own learning because the environment is well structured to allow them to do so. Children told me how much they enjoy coming to school. Children are engaged and motivated in all areas of learning.
- During this visit, children excitedly formed letters and numbers to show me how much they had learned. They strengthened their gross motor skills by making towers out of rubber tyres and climbed inside them. Children danced expressively to music and created culinary delights in the mud kitchen. Adults skilfully asked questions to draw out what children know and understand. Even more dialogue between adults and children would deepen children's understanding and pull together all aspects of their learning so that more children exceed early years expectations.
- Children in early years are effective communicators and are able to explain clearly what they are doing and why. A group of children explained how the seeds in the apples they were eating grow into apple trees, making even more apples.
- Children receive a very good start to their education and are well prepared for Year 1. One parent eagerly shared that their child had 'learned so much in a short space of time. I am quite amazed.' The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of early years is above the national average consistently. However, leaders are ambitious to increase the number of pupils who reach the expected standard and exceed it. This in turn will help pupils to achieve more highly as they journey through the school.

- Pupils are taught the sounds that letters make, known as phonics, highly effectively. Pupils in Year 1 are able to spell words, such as 'flash' and 'zoom', confidently and accurately. Pupils in the early stages of reading can identify phonemes and digraphs, such as 'sh' in words. They persist in blending the sounds that letters make to form words. Pupils enjoy reading and know that it helps them to improve their vocabulary. The most able pupils read fluently and grasp meaning and inference swiftly. They enjoy fiction and non-fiction text. Consequently, the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in phonics at the end of Year 1 is above the national average. This underpins pupils' continued high achievement in reading.
- Work in books shows the wide range of vocabulary used by pupils in their writing. Pupils have secure grammatical knowledge because it is taught very well across the school. For example, Year 3 pupils know that a bossy verb, such as 'sit' or 'stop', is more accurately known as an imperative verb.
- Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are working towards mastery in mathematics. There are many opportunities for pupils to apply what they have learned and select mathematical problems that challenge them. Pupils reason and investigate the most efficient strategies to tackle complex calculations. Sometimes, learning is not pitched at quite the right level and activities are too repetitive to ensure that pupils make as much progress as they could, particularly for middle-attaining pupils.
- The curriculum engages pupils and provides them with a wealth of opportunities to practise and apply their English and mathematics skills. The curriculum is balanced and enriched by a wide range of additional activities, such as the 'Run to Rio' and evening visits to the school to study nocturnal animals. In addition, pupils' learning is enhanced by after-school clubs and by a range of trips. During this visit, Year 2 pupils welcomed the 'bat man' and a gentleman bearing two owls, to help them learn more about nocturnal animals. As a result, learning is fun and pupils make good progress across a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils have praiseworthy attitudes to learning. There is a buzz of engagement and participation in every classroom which contributes positively to the progress that pupils make. Most pupils flourish because they are resilient and persevere in their learning. Leaders continue to aspire for all pupils to be actively involved in their own learning and develop positive ambitions for their futures. Leaders know that this will increase the progress that pupils make so that they reach the outcomes of which they are capable.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average for primary schools and has been for many years. Nearly all pupils say that they enjoy coming to school. The number of pupils that have too many days off school is very low. Leaders work hard to support families when attendance is not as good as it should be. Leaders work closely with the education welfare officer who helps them in their quest to seek solutions.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They particularly value the approachability and accessibility of yourself and your staff. They express how

strongly the school's values shine in all aspects of the school's work. A parent expressed the view of many by saying, 'There is no hierarchy in the organisation. Parents are encouraged to come forward with any issues.' The vast majority of parents are delighted that their children attend your school and 'would fully and wholeheartedly recommend this school to others'.

- Governors add to the capacity of leaders to improve the school further. Governors are outward-looking, thoughtful and skilled. They share your ambitions for pupils. They ask searching questions about how the work of the school could be improved. They provide challenge and support because they clearly understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is because leaders are transparent and acknowledge the importance of being held to account. Admirably, governors recognise the importance of staff well-being, including that of the headteacher. Governors take their responsibility to safeguard pupils very seriously and discharge their strategic duties well.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should:

- increase the proportion of pupils who make more than expected progress, especially middle-attaining pupils, so that even more pupils achieve greater depth by the end of each key stage
- fine tune the analysis of how well pupils are achieving to precisely hone in on whole-school areas for improvement
- continue to promote pupils' positive attitudes towards themselves and their learning, so that they aspire and feel empowered to take ownership of their own progress and attainment.

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

Yours sincerely

Abigail Birch
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the deputy headteacher and other leaders, those responsible for safeguarding, including the school business manager and members of the governing body. I also spoke to a representative of the local authority. I visited classes across early years and key stages 1 and 2 with yourself and the deputy headteacher. I spoke to pupils during lessons, and pupils were spoken to formally to gather their views. I took account of the 117 responses made by pupils to Ofsted's online questionnaire. I looked at their work in a range of subjects alongside middle

leaders. I took account of 95 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 48 written contributions by parents. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day. I took into account the views of staff by considering the 19 responses they made through the voluntary staff survey. I analysed a range of the school's documentation, including information about the achievement of pupils, school policies and safeguarding procedures.

I also discussed with you the evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I focused on how effectively leaders, including governors, have continued to improve the school's effectiveness and addressed the areas for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection. I examined the progress pupils have made from their variable starting points, including the most able pupils, those who are disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. I also explored the use and impact of pupil premium funding on raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. I focused on early years provision to make certain that children are making a positive start to their education. In addition, I evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding, how well the school supports families of pupils who have too many days off school and I considered how well pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain.