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Mr Joshua Chamberlin
Headteacher
St John the Baptist Church of England Junior School
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Dear Mr Chamberlin

Short inspection of St John the Baptist Church of England Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 6 December 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 December 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since you took up the post of headteacher in September 2018, you have galvanised the leadership team and staff. You have a very strong understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have a clear vision for the future. In the short time you have been at the school, you and your team have continued to address the areas identified for improvement from the last inspection. You have also identified further areas for improvement such as writing, and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Since September, you have developed excellent relationships with pupils, staff, and parents and carers. Pupils want to come school, staff enjoy working at the school and parents appreciate the way you lead the school. Attendance has improved significantly and is now significantly above the national average. All staff who responded to the staff survey said that they enjoy working at the school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school, with one describing the school as 'welcoming and inclusive'.

You and your team are ambitious for all pupils. You have created a school environment that is fertile and ripe for learning. Pupils arrive at school ready and keen to learn.

Pupils enjoy the variety of subjects and activities offered to them within the curriculum. A recent Year 5 study of Japan culminated in a trip to a local Japanese restaurant, where pupils were able to make and taste Japanese food. Pupils also enjoy the wide range of enrichment activities offered to them. They particularly enjoyed their recent visit to the House of Commons, where they learned about democracy, and the role of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in setting the national budget.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your team have created a safe and secure school environment. Staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding matters because they receive regular, high-quality training. When appointing new staff, you make the necessary checks to ensure that staff employed at the school are suitable to work with children.

Staff are clear about the warning signs that indicate a pupil may be at risk from harm. They are quick to refer matters on to the relevant members of staff and they understand the school's clear safeguarding procedures. Leaders work very well with other agencies. Leaders are quick to access early help, and tenacious in following up referrals. This ensures that pupils receive the support they need.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe, and how to keep each other safe. They are taught how to stay safe online during computing lessons. Pupils are taught during assemblies where they can get help and support for themselves and others. A recent visit from the NSPCC to introduce its 'speak out, stay safe' programme was positively received by pupils and staff.

The school's Christian ethos plays a key part in ensuring that pupils feel safe. Recent assemblies have been used to promote the values of love, joy, peace, gentleness and kindness. This helps to create a safe and caring environment. One pupil said, 'I feel like I can trust all of the teachers and they will help me.'

The parents, pupils and staff who responded to the Ofsted surveys were also overwhelming positive about leaders' work to keep children safe. One parent commented, 'We love the school with its warm-hearted, friendly, caring atmosphere.' Another said: 'The school embraces the child's whole being.'

Inspection findings

- For the first key line of enquiry, we looked at what leaders are doing to improve outcomes in writing. This is because outcomes in writing have not been as strong as in reading and mathematics for the past three years.
- Senior leaders recognise that progress in writing is not as strong as it could be. They recognise that boys do not do as well as girls. They also recognise that disadvantaged pupils, and those with SEND, do not do as well as their peers.

- Leaders have a plan to improve pupils' writing, with a focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning and incorporating greater opportunities for extended writing.
- More time has been allocated in lessons to developing writing, with extra support given to the pupils who need it most. Where necessary, pupils receive additional one-to-one tuition to help them with their writing.
- Observations of learning and reviews of pupils' work indicate that opportunities for extended writing have increased since half term. However, this has only recently been introduced by the new headteacher and therefore it is too early to determine how successful it has been.
- For the second key line of enquiry, we looked at what leaders are doing to improve outcomes for pupils with SEND. This is because they do not do as well as their peers in reading or writing.
- A new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) was appointed in September 2018. She is supported by a special educational needs assistant. During the past term, they have worked very well together, and alongside senior leaders have constructed a clear plan to raise the profile of SEND and improve outcomes for this group of pupils.
- All teachers now meet with the headteacher termly to discuss the individual progress made by pupils. This is helping with the early identification of pupils' learning needs. This information is stored centrally and can be used by staff to help them plan effectively. Although some staff use this information well, the practice is not yet fully embedded.
- Leaders have introduced training for staff on how to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Observations of learning indicate that teachers are now using a wider range of strategies in the classroom to support pupils. For example, teachers use a blue background for presentations, and resources are printed on cream paper to aid pupils who have dyslexia.
- This new approach to supporting pupils with SEND has changed what teachers do in the classroom. As a result, this group of pupils are now making stronger progress over time. This is most evident in Years 3 and 5.
- For the third key line of enquiry, we looked at what leaders are doing to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. This is because in 2018, disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well as their peers in writing or mathematics.
- School leaders have reviewed how the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils was spent in 2018 and evaluated the impact this had on outcomes. Leaders are aware that not all strategies were successful and have amended their plans for the current year.
- Plans for this year include closer monitoring of pupils and earlier identification of what they need to help them learn. Staff training is also being used to ensure that teachers use this information to help them plan work.
- Observations of learning indicate that this is having a positive impact on pupils. Levels of engagement have improved. Attendance of disadvantaged pupils has

increased from 92.5% last year, to 95.2% this year. Work in books indicates an improving picture, with some pupils making stronger progress over time.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching is more sharply focused on helping pupils with their writing, and ensuring that they are given appropriate opportunities for extended writing
- the systems established to support disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are fully embedded to ensure consistently strong progress over time.

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

Yours sincerely

Niall Gallagher
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, senior leaders and a range of staff, including those at the early stage of their teaching career. I also met governors and representatives from the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the Diocese of London. I reviewed 18 staff questionnaires, 91 pupil questionnaires and 145 parent questionnaires. I made visits to classrooms, jointly with senior leaders. I spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at a range of pupils' work in their books. I met with a group of pupils to talk about their views of the school and I listened to pupils from Years 3 and 4 reading. I evaluated a range of school documentation, including safeguarding information and attendance reports.