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Mr Andy Brettell  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Brettell

### **Short inspection of Bishops Tachbrook CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 7 February 2019, 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. You and the staff work diligently to ensure that Bishops Tachbrook is a caring school where pupils thrive. Pupils enjoy coming to school and overall attendance has been above national averages for the past three years. Parents are positive about the school and many comment on its nurturing and supportive ethos. Almost all parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, said that their children are happy, taught well and make good progress at the school.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. In lessons, pupils listen attentively to teachers' explanations. They respond promptly to adults' instructions because adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils show a thirst for learning and want to do well. They cooperate well in partner and group work and help each other. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 4 worked successfully in pairs and small groups to solve mathematical problems. They took turns and listened carefully to each other's views before agreeing on a shared response. Pupils move around the school calmly and sensibly. They develop high levels of independence and, by the time they are in Year 6, pupils are confident to work with minimal adult direction in subjects such as art and computing.

The curriculum promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well. Pupils learn about different faiths and beliefs and show respect for the views of others. They have a strong understanding of British values and are able to

articulate how each of these are important. For example, one pupil explained that individual liberty means, 'No-one can force you to do anything. You don't have to agree with someone, but you have to respect what they think.'

You have taken steps to address the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Children get off to a strong start in the Reception Year. The indoor and outdoor learning environments are attractive, well-organised and promote children's independence. Teachers plan activities that interest the children and support them to learn well. As a result, children enjoy learning and concentrate on tasks for sustained periods of time. Children make good progress in the development of their phonics skills. During the inspection, children confidently used their phonics skills to spell while writing about your fictional lottery win. Teachers consistently apply the school's agreed marking policy and pupils receive feedback about how to improve their work. In mathematics, there has been a focus on developing pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills. In some classes, this has been effective in extending and deepening the understanding of all pupils, and particularly the most able. However, this is not yet consistent in every class. In writing, teachers do not have high-enough expectations of pupils, which means that middle- and high-attaining pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

You and other senior leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Your unique and engaging approach to feedback motivates teachers to want to improve. However, some of these checks lack precision, which means that leaders' plans do not focus on the aspects of teaching and learning that need to improve the most. For example, the current priority for improving pupils' writing does not take account of weaknesses in the teaching of grammar and punctuation.

Leaders and governors are united in their commitment to provide pupils with a high-quality education that prepares them for the future and enables them to succeed. Governors receive training to equip them with the necessary skills to hold leaders to account for the school's performance. They visit the school regularly to see at first hand the actions leaders are taking to improve the school. However, because improvement plans do not include measurable success criteria, governors' checks do not focus closely enough on the impact of leaders' actions on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. They are knowledgeable about their roles and provide staff and governors with regular training to keep them up to date with safeguarding matters. Records are detailed. They show that staff are vigilant to the signs that might indicate a child is at risk of harm, and report these concerns using the school's agreed procedures. Leaders act promptly on concerns and take effective action to ensure that pupils are safe. They complete thorough checks on staff, governors and volunteers to make sure that they are suitable people to work with children.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They understand what bullying is and say that bullying in their school is rare. Leaders' records support this. Almost all pupils who responded to Ofsted's online survey say that when bullying does happen, adults are good at resolving it. Pupils show care and respect for one another. They consider, 'Is it kind, is it true and is it necessary?' when thinking about how to speak to others. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and when out in the community. For example, junior road safety officers play an important role in reminding pupils about how to stay safe when crossing the road.

## **Inspection findings**

- In 2018, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 fell to below national averages. Leaders have analysed the reasons for this and have taken effective action to build pupils' resilience and improve their attitudes to learning. As a result, pupils apply themselves productively to tasks and are keen to learn. During the inspection, pupils in Year 3 applied themselves diligently to writing a haiku. They persevered, even though some pupils were finding it difficult.
- Leaders know individual pupils' needs well and meet regularly to discuss their progress. Pupils receive tailored support to help address specific gaps in their learning. However, work in books shows that the pupils who underachieved at the end of Year 2 are not catching up quickly enough. Although they are making secure progress, this is not sufficient for them to make up the ground needed after falling behind in key stage 1.
- For the last two years, girls have not made as much progress as boys in mathematics. Leaders have worked with staff to implement strategies to improve girls' confidence in mathematics lessons. Pupils are encouraged to work with partners to rehearse their answers before sharing them with the class. Teachers routinely ask pupils to explain their thinking so that they can identify any misconceptions and address these quickly. All pupils benefit from opportunities to reason and solve problems, as well as working with practical equipment to secure their understanding.
- Work in books and observations in lessons show that there is no difference between girls' and boys' engagement in mathematics lessons or their enjoyment of the subject. Leaders check pupils' progress closely and where gaps remain, individual pupils are provided with the support they need to improve their understanding. The school's current assessment information shows that now girls as well as boys are making good progress in mathematics in most classes.
- For the past three years, pupils' progress in writing has been weaker than in reading and mathematics, particularly for boys and middle-attainers. In 2018, pupils' progress in writing was in the bottom 20% of schools nationally.
- Teachers integrate vocabulary development throughout pupils' learning. Initiatives such as 'word of the week' are successful in broadening pupils' knowledge of unfamiliar vocabulary, which supports their reading and writing. Teachers plan interesting and purposeful writing activities that pupils enjoy.
- However, teachers' expectations of pupils' writing are too low. This is because

they do not have a secure understanding of the standards they should expect of pupils in each year group. Teachers do not plan work that builds on what pupils can already do. They do not develop pupils' grammar and punctuation skills sufficiently well over time. As a result, pupils' progress in text and sentence structure is weak. They do not write with grammar and punctuation appropriate to their age.

- The rich, exciting and highly creative curriculum is a significant strength of the school: '100 things to do at Tachbrook' provides a framework for ensuring that all pupils take part in a core offer of memorable and purposeful learning experiences. For example, pupils across the school grow food in the school garden and use this to create produce to sell at the annual food festival. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, they have all been part of a sports team and represented the school in an inter-school sports competition. Trips and visitors enrich pupils' learning and develop their confidence. Pupils talk enthusiastically about trips to places of interest, such as Coventry Cathedral, and taking part in residential visits to build their resilience and help them to 'face their fears'. The curriculum sparks pupils' interests and motivates them to be successful. As a result, pupils are aspirational for their future. For example, one pupil explained how 'space night' has inspired her to want to become an astronomer.
- The curriculum matches pupils' needs and interests closely and enables them to make strong progress in a wide range of subjects. Pupils enjoy frequent practical activities to support their learning. In art in Year 6, pupils worked with great care and skill to create individual pieces of art inspired by the artist Pieter Bruegel. Examples of high-quality art work adorn the school environment, reflecting the excellent teaching that pupils receive. In science in Year 1, pupils experimented with toys to develop their understanding of push, pull and twist forces. Teachers have high expectations for pupils across the wider curriculum. This is reflected in pupils' enthusiasm for learning and the quality of work they produce. For example, in computing key stage 2 pupils demonstrate exceptional knowledge and understanding of programming packages, which they have used to create fully functioning, light sensitive models.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching enables pupils who have previously underachieved to catch up quickly
- the quality of teaching in writing improves so that boys and middle- and high-attaining pupils make the progress of which they are capable
- plans for improving pupils' writing focus on the aspects that need to improve the most
- improvement plans contain measurable success criteria to enable governors to check the impact of leaders' actions on the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes more closely.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education

for the Diocese of Coventry, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Warwickshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Claire Jones  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, the English and mathematics leaders, the chair of the governing body and two members of the governing body. I observed, with you, pupils' learning in parts of 13 lessons. Together with you and senior leaders, I looked at pupils' work in a range of books. I held a meeting with a group of pupils and talked to pupils in lessons. I also took into account the 119 responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire. I listened to a group of pupils read. I examined a range of documentation, including information relating to current pupils' attainment and progress, the school's learning improvement plan and your evaluation of the school's performance. I also scrutinised a range of safeguarding documents. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day and took into account the 70 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the 66 free-text responses. I considered the 22 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.