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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mr Andrew Stapley
Headteacher
Brabourne Church of England Primary School
School Lane
Brabourne
Ashford
Kent
TN25 5LQ

Dear Mr Stapley

Short inspection of Brabourne Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 June 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 October 2013.

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 a clear vision for the school. Together with governors, you are determined that Brabourne should be a 'whole-child school' where the development and welfare of each pupil is the reference point for everything the school does. You are passionately committed to ensuring that every pupil has something they can be proud of and fantastic in. This vision drives the ethos of the school and creates a happy, harmonious place where pupils thrive.

Staff, parents and carers, and pupils have full confidence and trust in the leadership of you and your senior team. Staff told me that the school is 'cohesive' and 'an exciting environment in which to work'. They feel well supported by leaders, and there is a sense of partnership across the school. Staff value the opportunities for professional development provided by working within the CARE Foundation Trust. Parents appreciate the caring nature of the school and high levels of commitment to pupils and their families. One parent, succinctly summing up the views of many, described the school as 'a total treasure'.

Pupils love their school. They know that their voice is valued and that they are carefully listened to if they have any worries. They told me that bullying is not tolerated at their school. They are encouraged to resolve smaller issues by themselves but know that support from adults is there if they need it. Pupils value the help they get from their teachers. They described their teachers as 'good, experienced and able to make learning fun'. Great care is taken to support pupils in

every aspect of their lives, both in and out of the school. Consequently, they flourish and love coming to the school. Pupils enjoy the rich curriculum opportunities provided, for example in outdoor learning through activities such as building spiders' webs and in learning from well-planned visits and visitors. Pupils benefit from the school's strong connections with the local community and also from wider links with other schools in different settings and different countries. Pupils are self-assured, articulate and happy. They actively contribute to the wider life of the school by being corridor monitors or running assemblies. In this way, they are prepared to move confidently to the next stage of their education.

Governance is strong. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and development needs of the school. They have ensured that within the governing body there is a strong skillset that enables governors to support and challenge school leaders appropriately. Governors use a range of activities to gather views and information about the school. They conduct regular and well-focused visits to see things for themselves and check on aspects of the school's work, such as key safeguarding processes.

Teachers' expectations and pupils' standards are high in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils attain well, both in relation to the age-related expectations and to the higher standards. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points, including for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, you and your leadership team are not complacent. In keeping with your aspirations for the curriculum, you acknowledge that pupils' writing skills are not consistently developed as well in some subjects as they are in English. The standard of pupils' writing across the wider curriculum is also variable. To address these areas for development, the curriculum has been reviewed. A new assessment system has recently been put in place to help track the development of pupils' skills across the wider curriculum.

Leaders have taken effective action to address the improvement areas from the last inspection. Pupils are confident readers who attain well in relation to the age-related expectations. In 2017, in the end of key stage national assessments, the proportions of pupils attaining the expected and higher standards in reading were greater than the national averages at the end of both key stages. The progress measures for the end of key stage 2 have also improved. Pupils who read to me did so with confidence, fluency and understanding. They were able to discuss the texts they enjoy and how these link with their learning at the school. Their reading records show that pupils read widely and regularly.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The school's safeguarding policy is in line with the government's latest guidance. All appropriate recruitment and background checks are completed before adults can work with pupils in the school. Record-keeping is meticulous. Staff receive regular training and are aware of what to do if they have worries about a pupil. Concerns are reported, carefully recorded and acted on in a timely fashion.

Governors complete regular checks on the school's safeguarding practice to ensure that everything is as it should be.

All staff are vigilant and ensure the welfare of pupils. Because you know your pupils so well, any changes that might suggest a concern about a pupil's well-being or safety are quickly noticed and explored. Pupils who occasionally need a little additional support are appreciative of the time and care from staff. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to keep themselves safe. They benefit from involvement in regular curriculum activities focused on safety, such as those on e-safety.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection we looked closely at provision for the most able boys, particularly in writing. This is because, in the end of key stage national assessments in 2017, fewer boys attained at the higher standards than for the national figures.
- Boys currently in key stage 1 are making good progress from their starting points in writing. Their writing books show an appropriate development of sentence starters, punctuation and vocabulary choice. The school's own assessment information shows that some boys in key stage 1 are attaining at, or working towards attainment at, the higher standard.
- We also looked closely at mathematics teaching, particularly in key stage 2. Historically, pupils' progress in mathematics has not been as strong as their progress in English. The school's own assessment information and work in pupils' books show that current pupils are now making stronger progress from their starting points. Pupils across the school demonstrate a good grasp of mathematics. They use appropriate mathematical language and develop a secure understanding of number and strong calculation skills. Their books show opportunities to use and apply these skills across the curriculum, for example through gathering data. The early years outside area is in the process of being developed to reflect a more mathematically supportive environment.
- The new leader for mathematics has developed provision across the school effectively. Recent initiatives have resulted in systematic opportunities for developing pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem solving. As a result, pupils are confident and competent mathematicians.
- Pupils enjoy the learning opportunities provided by the wider curriculum, particularly such engaging topics as 'The Greeks'. The use of a wide range of visits and visitors captures their imagination and develops their understanding well. Some curriculum areas, such as art, offer pupils opportunities to develop specific skills to a high level. However, in some year groups, pupils' recorded work in other subjects, such as science, does not consistently demonstrate the level of care, analysis and reasoning seen in their English and mathematics books.
- The curriculum has been revised for September. The coordinator has visited other schools and trialled new ways of working. He has a clear vision for the

development of the curriculum and shares the aspiration of the headteacher and governors to use the new-look curriculum to help pupils to 'experience life'. A new assessment system has also been put in place to ensure that pupils' acquisition of skills is tracked, evaluated and developed further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of pupils' writing across the curriculum demonstrates the same high standards evident in their English work
- the curriculum offers more opportunities for pupils to apply and further develop their English and mathematical skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Deborah Gordon

Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, members of the governing body, staff, and a representative of the diocese and of the local authority. I reviewed documentation, including: information about pupils' achievement; the school improvement plan; and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. Together, we visited classes across the school. In lessons, I observed pupils learning, looked at their books and spoke to pupils about their work. I had a meeting with pupils to gather their views of the school. I heard some pupils read. I took into account the views of parents I met on the playground and considered 50 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View, including 50 free-text comments. I also considered the school's own survey information.