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Mrs Suzanne Blackburne-Maze
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Blackburne-Maze

Short inspection of Duxford Church of England Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 November 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 January 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Together with other leaders, you have established a caring and nurturing culture within the school. Parents and carers are confident that staff keep pupils safe and that behaviour remains good. This was certainly evident yesterday. Pupils demonstrated a very positive attitude to learning and were polite and respectful to each other and adults.

Leaders and governors demonstrate quite clearly that they have a very good understanding of where the school is successful and also what steps leaders need to take to improve further. They have already demonstrated success in a number of areas. The school has tackled all the areas for improvement recommended at the last inspection. For example, the proportion of most-able pupils that exceed expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 has been above the national average for the past two years.

The curriculum that is in development at the school offers many enriching and interesting opportunities for pupils. For example, the recent 'Lest we forget' week, where pupils were learning about the First World War and the following presentation by pupils for parents have had a lasting impact on the whole school community. Leaders are now working with teachers to ensure that subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics are all taught to a high standard across the school, as the expectations of some teachers are not high enough in subjects such as history, or art and design.

Governance of the school is effective. Since your appointment in April 2018, governors have worked productively with you to forge a transparent, supportive and challenging working relationship. This is working very effectively and is enabling governors to better understand the work of the school and to challenge your decisions and actions where necessary.

Safeguarding is effective.

All procedures to ensure the safe recruitment of staff are secure and checked regularly by leaders and governors. All staff have received the necessary safeguarding training. The welfare and safeguarding of children in the Reception class are secure.

Procedures to safeguard pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are very secure. Productive links have been established with outside agencies to make sure that pupils and their families get the support they need. There are several examples of good practice where the school has helped families to overcome difficulties so that pupils are able to come to school and engage in learning activities. The excellent leadership of the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has been instrumental to this effective work.

Pupils speak knowledgeably about how to stay safe when playing games on their computers. This is because of the effective teaching they receive about how to stay safe when on the internet or on their phones.

There are a few incidents of boisterous behaviour at lunchtimes that are recorded in the behaviour log and have been identified in the school's pupil voice procedures. These incidents are all dealt with appropriately and leaders are acting to further improve the quality of lunchtimes through initiatives such as the training of playground coaches.

Inspection findings

- Over the last few years, the published assessment information for the small number of disadvantaged pupils indicates that they do not achieve as well as other pupils. An examination of the use of the pupil premium funding to overcome barriers to learning showed that it was having a positive impact on helping these pupils to make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Teachers, ably led by the SENCo, carefully identify the barriers to learning experienced by individual pupils and plan additional support pastorally, within lessons, or by implementing additional activities to improve the quality of learning for these pupils. The impact of these activities is checked regularly to ensure that they are having the desired impact. One very effective feature is the trusting relationship established with parents and pupils.
- Published assessment information for the small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) showed a similar picture to that for disadvantaged pupils. Again, teachers, supported by the SENCo, work effectively to identify and overcome barriers to learning both pastorally and academically. It

is evident that pupils make good progress from their different starting points.

- Outcomes for pupils in mathematics over the last two years at the end of Year 6 have been lower than both the national figure and the school's results in reading and writing. You and the governors identified this as an area for improvement a year ago and have embarked on a programme of staff training to improve the teaching and curriculum for mathematics.
- Pupils in key stage 2 are now making much better progress because of improved teaching and learning. There is a consistency of approach from Year 3 to Year 6, by which all pupils get regular opportunities to reason and apply their knowledge in problem-solving activities. These activities are resulting in a greater retention of knowledge and understanding by pupils. For example, pupils were able to fluently and confidently carry out mental calculations that they had been taught earlier in the term.
- In key stage 1, some pupils are taught mathematics in groups. The quality of teaching and learning in these groups varies. In some groups, where lower ability pupils are taught, they do not make the progress that they could because the activities are not well enough planned or delivered.
- Since September, the school has embarked on a themed approach to teaching history, geography and some of the science curriculum within topics across the whole school. These topics include art and design work. Leaders have planned carefully to ensure that the learning goals within the national curriculum are all included in this approach. Literacy skills are applied well across the school.
- In some classes, such as in Year 6, pupils are developing a deep understanding of the First World War and producing work in history and art and design of a high standard. In other classes, the quality of work is not as good. In addition, some of the planned activities demand little in terms of thinking or learning. Careful checks carried out by school leaders have identified these areas of weakness.
- The curriculum plan shows that there are some large gaps in time between the teaching of subjects. Leaders have rightly identified that they must take steps to ensure that pupils retain the knowledge, understanding and skills that they have been taught so that these can be built upon when returning to the subject.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the group teaching in mathematics, particularly for lower ability pupils, results in them making better progress than they are currently
- in subjects that the school includes in topics, teachers have consistently high expectations for the quality of pupils' work and plan activities that result in good-quality learning

- when the curriculum is planned, the time intervals between teaching in subjects such as history and geography are not so long that pupils forget what they have learned.

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

Yours sincerely

Tim Bristow
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I visited all classes to talk to pupils, observe teaching and learning and the behaviour of pupils, and to examine the work in books. A range of school documentation, including safeguarding records, assessment information and the school's self-evaluation, was examined. Meetings were held with you, the SENCo, the deputy headteachers, the member of staff responsible for the administration of safeguarding records, some governors and two group of pupils. I scrutinised the questionnaire responses from 36 parents, 18 staff and 17 pupils.