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Mrs Gill Taylor  
Headteacher  
Christ Church CofE Primary School  
Kielder Terrace  
North Shields  
Tyne and Wear  
NE30 2AD

Dear Mrs Taylor

### **Short inspection of Christ Church CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 4 July 2017, 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 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

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

Since your appointment just after the last inspection, your quiet determination and persistence to provide the very best for the pupils in your community has driven the development of your school. Your perceptive understanding of individual staff talents has created a strong and capable team of staff who are united in their desire to improve the school. You have created a larger and more highly-skilled leadership team whose members have been enabled to drive improvements for their areas of responsibility. Strong partnerships forged with other schools, the local authority and the Church of England's Diocese of Newcastle have helped to support improvements to teaching and learning and the development of middle leaders' skills. The leadership team's accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development has ensured that staff have appropriate support to develop their skills further. You have taken decisive action to address weaknesses in teaching so it continues to be good and improving.

You all work hard to ensure that the school is an inclusive, safe and caring environment. Very positive relationships between staff and pupils are paramount and, as a result, pupils are keen to learn and do well. The vast majority are polite and considerate to each other and welcome visitors warmly. The pupils I spoke to during the inspection commented that they enjoyed school and in particular the wide range of visits they make which make learning more interesting. They are

keen to share their achievements.

The school has largely tackled the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The website meets requirements and is kept up to date so that parents receive a good range of information about school life. A weekly newsletter provides valuable information about events in the local area and shares pupils' achievements. One of the areas for improvement at the last inspection was to provide more opportunities for pupils to work independently to solve problems in mathematics. During our visits to lessons, we observed a number of examples of pupils having ample opportunity to cooperate and solve problems for themselves. For example, in Year 6, pupils used information they knew to work out the value of rods which had different colours and lengths.

Since the last inspection, you have introduced much more rigorous systems to check pupils' progress and intervene where they are in danger of falling behind. As a result, pupils receive well-focused support which helps to boost their achievement and ensures that they catch up. Consequently, all groups of pupils continue to make good progress from their different starting points. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the well-targeted support they receive. Children in the early years are supported by caring staff to develop their communication skills well; they make good progress and above average proportions are suitably prepared for Year 1.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team gives the highest priority to keeping pupils safe and has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Mindful that annual training can be forgotten, you ensure that regular reminders keep staff alert to the procedures they must use to maintain pupils' safety. Posters in the staffroom are a prominent reminder of the procedures that staff should follow if they have concerns.

Leaders carry out appropriate checks on staff, governors and volunteers. Records are detailed and appropriate. You manage referrals to other agencies diligently and persist where you have concerns. You all demonstrate a commitment to working closely with other agencies to support pupils' welfare.

Staff, often with the support of expert visitors, provide pupils with good guidance to keep themselves safe, including when they use the internet. Pupils generally have a good understanding of the different forms bullying can take and you have striven to enhance this understanding through project work on anti-bullying. School records indicate that racist and homophobic name-calling are extremely rare.

During the inspection, the Ofsted online parental survey, Parent View, indicated that a small number of parents believed behaviour to be poor and were concerned about the way the school dealt with bullying. School records indicate that there have been a small number of bullying incidents which have been quickly addressed and pupils confirm this. Where necessary, you work alongside the local community police

officer to address issues which have occurred outside school. The vast majority of pupils behave well, cooperate together and are polite and considerate. They show pride in their work and try hard to do their best, so learning is rarely disrupted.

### **Inspection findings**

- You were disappointed by the standards attained in reading and mathematics in 2016. You acted promptly to address this.
- In reading, leaders identified that pupils struggled to understand the required range of vocabulary and to read for extended periods of time. Leaders found that too few pupils enjoyed reading and that their inference and deduction skills were underdeveloped. The introduction of new approaches to the teaching of reading has motivated pupils to read more widely and frequently, increasing enjoyment and stamina to read longer texts. Consequently, a much higher proportion of pupils are reaching the standard expected of them this year in Year 6. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in Year 2 has also risen. Despite this, you are not complacent; you know that the teaching of reading needs further improvement so that time in reading lessons is used better to fully consolidate the skills pupils have learned.
- In mathematics, leaders knew that pupils had too few opportunities to solve problems and think more deeply about mathematics. The mathematics leader provided training for staff in this area, which resulted in a higher proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard at the end of Years 2 and Year 6. However, you are aware that the most able pupils do not always have tasks which demand enough of them.
- The need to improve attendance was identified at the last inspection. The introduction of more stringent procedures to track pupils' attendance has resulted in attendance improving and, after an increase, there are now fewer pupils who are persistently absent. You recognise that the reason for high levels of absence can often be complex. Where possible, you work closely with other agencies to try to put in place measures which will overcome difficulties and support pupils to attend school. You, governors and other leaders strive to make school life as interesting as possible to motivate pupils to attend and you reward pupils who come to school regularly.
- Governors use their individual expertise to provide you and other leaders with effective support and challenge to help the school improve further. Governors check the progress of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium funding carefully and use this knowledge to target funding appropriately. Anything which may prevent these pupils from learning effectively is promptly addressed.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is accurate. Monitoring and evaluation of the progress pupils make and the quality of teaching in English and mathematics are very thorough and regular. Subject leaders play a full part in this monitoring and are well placed to know how to improve their subject and support staff to teach more effectively. You know that the checking of other subjects to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress is not as well developed and have begun to

address this, but it is at a very early stage of development.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- you build on the improvements to the teaching of reading so that further reading skills can be extended and consolidated
- the most able pupils are effectively challenged in mathematics
- rigorous systems are in place to check that pupils are making at least good progress in subjects other than English and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Susan Waugh  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, the subject leaders for English and mathematics and the special educational needs coordinator. We visited lessons in each key stage. I met with the chair of governors, other members of the governing body and representatives from the Church of England's Diocese of Newcastle and the local authority. I spoke to pupils about their work and their views of the school, including their views of pupils' behaviour. I listened to some pupils read and looked in workbooks when in lessons. I also conducted a work scrutiny with the mathematics subject leader. A range of documents were considered relating to safeguarding, performance management, attendance and external evaluations of the school. I examined the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, the school's monitoring of its own performance and tracking of current pupils' progress. I also scrutinised pupils' recent achievement in statutory assessments and I looked at the school's website.