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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Miss Helen Sowden
Headteacher
Ann Edwards Church of England Primary School
Berkeley Close
South Cerney
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 5UW

Dear Miss Sowden

Short inspection of Ann Edwards Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 January 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 February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment, you have built upon this popular school's previous success so that it meets the needs of the diverse community it serves. A greater proportion of pupils than the national average achieved the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 in 2017. You give your staff clear guidance and monitor their work closely. As such, you can be assured that all that can be done is being done to provide a good education for the pupils at Ann Edwards.

You have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. The school development plan is effective in attending to weaker aspects of the school's work. Decisive action by you and your deputy has been successful in initiating valuable improvements. For example, more precise teachers' assessments in English and mathematics ensure that most teachers are using all the information about what pupils know, can do and understand to accelerate pupils' progress.

Many changes in the membership of the governing body have provided considerable challenge for the leadership of the school. However, governors have been proactive in seeking advice to improve their effectiveness. As a result, they are increasingly successful in providing challenge and support and in helping set the strategic direction of the school.

Leaders at Ann Edwards keep a watchful eye on pupils' learning and welfare needs. They use this information to deploy resources effectively. Staff provide timely and tailored extra help both academically and emotionally. For example, leaders' effective deployment of additional funding has supported strong progress for disadvantaged pupils. Your innovative approach to support service children is particularly effective in ensuring that they achieve well.

At the time of the last inspection, leaders were asked to ensure that teachers pitch work correctly for the most able pupils in particular. In 2017, the proportion of pupils making good progress to reach the highest standards in reading by the end of Year 6 was in line with the national average. More pupils made good progress to achieve the highest standards in writing than nationally. A similar picture is reflected in current pupils' work. However, you recognise that there is still more to be done to ensure that more pupils reach the highest standards in mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your team are passionate about the need to safeguard pupils. You initiated a review by the local authority to ensure that you are fully compliant in your statutory duties. Although records and confidential information are maintained safely, you recognise that there is a need for improvements in the administration of records and chronologies of concerns.

Staff are clear that keeping children safe is a key priority for all. The regularly updated training provided for all staff ensures that they are knowledgeable about what to do in the event of an incident occurring. You follow up any concerns raised with timely intervention and active engagement with multi-agency support.

Pupils I spoke to were clear about how the school keeps them safe. The curriculum includes a strong focus on keeping pupils safe in their community. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe outside school, particularly when using social media and the internet. They have a good understanding of the difference between someone being unkind and someone being a bully. They told me that there is 'no bullying' in the school, but that if someone was unkind, playground buddies or an adult would help them to sort it out.

Inspection findings

- Children get off to a good start when they join the school. They are well prepared for Year 1 by the time they leave the Reception Year. Previously published results of phonics screening checks in Year 1 show that the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics is below the national average. Staff training is effective and phonics teaching is good. Many pupils read fluently and spell well in key stage 1. However, a number of pupils join your school after the Reception Year and have to 'catch up' with their classmates. Staff training has equipped staff with good subject knowledge. Pupils who have specific special educational needs are well supported. In addition, your work with families has further supported improvements in pupils' phonic acquisition. Pupils make good use of

their phonic knowledge in their reading and writing. Without exception, all pupils who had a late start to school or those who struggled to grasp phonics in Year 1 catch up in Year 2.

- You are focusing on ensuring that pupils receive appropriate challenge in mathematics. Training for staff and a new approach to developing pupils' mathematics skills are starting to take effect across most year groups. Some pupils are starting to think more deeply and explain their mathematical reasoning. More pupils across the school are on track to achieve at the highest standards than previously. This is because teachers make good use of what they know pupils can do and understand to set activities that help to deepen pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts. However, weaknesses still exist in Year 1 where the pitch of work is not sufficiently well matched to help the most able pupils in particular to deepen their mathematical understanding.
- The previous inspection identified attendance as a weakness. Your fervent drive to improve attendance has been effective. Your close work with families and the educational welfare officer is paying dividends. Pupils' absence has dropped over the last three years and is currently in line with the national average. Although reducing, the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school remains too high.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the attendance of those who are persistently absent improves to be at least in line with the national average
- teaching in Year 1 leads to middle-attaining and most-able pupils making good progress to achieve at the highest standard.

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

Yours sincerely

Tracy Hannon
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection I met with you and your deputy. I held meetings with your designated safeguarding lead, pupils and members of the governing body, as well as a representative from the local authority. I also met informally with parents and carers before school started. I took into account views expressed in parents'

comments made by text and on Ofsted's Parent View. I also took into account the views expressed by 29 members of staff and 57 pupils in Ofsted's online surveys.

You and members of your leadership team accompanied me as we observed learning in classrooms across the school. We looked at pupils' work in books. I also scrutinised a range of safeguarding and other documents relating to pupils' attainment, progress and attendance.