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Mrs Vicki Holmes  
Crich Carr Church of England Primary School  
Main Road  
Whatstandwell  
Matlock  
Derbyshire  
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Dear Mrs Holmes

### **Short inspection of Crich Carr Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 9 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 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 in April 2016, you have embraced the role of headteacher with energy and enthusiasm. You have maintained the positive ethos found at the previous inspection. You have the support of the staff, who all say they enjoy working at the school and that it is led and managed well. The school has a warm and friendly atmosphere, where all pupils' well-being is nurtured. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of school life. You and the staff know the pupils and their families well. Parents particularly highlighted the breadth of the curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities offered to all pupils. One parent summed this up by saying, 'For a very small school it packs a punch!'

Experienced subject leaders ensure that the recently introduced mathematics and English initiatives have been implemented effectively and consistently. Pupils in key stage 2 made slower progress in English last year. In response, leaders have introduced a more focused and practical approach to the teaching of grammar. Work in pupils' books shows this is helping them to understand better the different elements needed in their writing.

At the last inspection, the inspector asked leaders to improve teaching and learning in the Reception class. Since then, the early years provision has been extended with

the addition of a Nursery. All adults in the early years are focused effectively on children's learning. The children in the early years enjoy a variety of interesting activities that develop their skills and understanding, both indoors and outside.

The school's plans for improvement are well matched to the needs of the school. The small amounts of additional funding for physical education and sport, and for disadvantaged pupils, are well spent. The governing body plays an active and valuable part in supporting leaders and holding them to account for improvements. Plans, however, lack the precision and attention to detail needed to ensure that actions and responsibilities are absolutely clear. Consequently, governors rely too heavily on you and other key staff to identify issues and check that actions have been effective in dealing with them.

Leaders and other teachers know each pupil well. This is because of the frequent and accurate assessment of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers focus well on pupils who may be falling behind. Consequently, these pupils receive the help they need to catch up. Work in books shows that the most able pupils are not consistently challenged to reach the high standards of which they are capable. You agreed that this should be a next step for the school.

Governors are skilled and knowledgeable. They recognise the many and varied demands that are required of a teaching head in a small school. The governing body actively seeks creative ways to ensure the well-being of staff. It has promoted the sharing of best practice with other local schools. This is helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Pupils' polite, welcoming and respectful behaviour reflects the positive ethos of the school. Many parents told me of the growing confidence their children have developed since being at the school. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and work hard, in lessons and throughout their wider school life. They enjoy the extra responsibility of being school councillors and sports leaders. They spoke enthusiastically about residential trips they have attended and the wide variety of visits and visitors that they experience.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The safeguarding of pupils is a high priority. All necessary checks are made on adults before they are allowed to work or volunteer at the school. Staff and governors receive regular training, covering aspects of safeguarding such as extremism and children missing from education. This ensures that everyone knows what to do should they have any concern about a pupil's welfare. You ensure that any pupil or family that requires extra support from outside agencies receives it promptly.

Parents believe their children are happy and safe. Pupils were unanimous in saying that behaviour is good and that bullying is extremely rare. They are confident that all staff will deal with any disagreements quickly and fairly. Pupils are benefiting from the recent improvements and extensions to the outdoor space around the

school. Pupils of all ages play together and move around the playground safely, showing consideration for each other.

Pupils told me that they love coming to school. Consequently, attendance is above the average of primary schools nationally. There have been no persistent absentees in recent years. You check attendance rigorously and work actively with families where absence has increased.

## **Inspection findings**

- Pupils work diligently in their mixed-age classes. Pupils of all ages work well without direct adult supervision when the class teacher or other adults are focusing on a different year group. Pupils have a mature and conscientious attitude to their learning. They take pride in their work and respond well to consistent expectations for neat presentation across the curriculum.
- There is a clear and effective system for tracking pupils' progress. Pupils show awareness of their targets and are actively involved in assessing whether they have met the teacher's expectations for each lesson or series of lessons. This leads to the majority of pupils making at least the expected progress across the curriculum. Nevertheless, few pupils attain at greater depth because the work set for them does not deepen and extend their learning as well as it should.
- Leaders responded quickly to the outcomes of the national key stage 2 tests in 2017. The progress pupils made in reading and mathematics fell below that seen in writing. In response, the school has changed teaching strategies in reading and introduced a new scheme of work in mathematics to improve achievement. Although in their early stages of implementation, there is positive feedback from staff and pupils on these changes. Pupils read competently and with expression. They showed knowledge and enthusiasm about reading and about their favourite authors.
- Inspection evidence and current assessment information provided by the school show that disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress from their starting points. The pupil premium funding is allocated and monitored appropriately.
- Pupils play key roles in the life of their school. They stand for election to roles of responsibility, such as on the school council and sports council. Pupils take these responsibilities very seriously and show commendable maturity when supporting younger pupils throughout all of school life. Such initiatives help prepare individuals for life in modern Britain. Pupils speak warmly of the Friday Forum, when any issues are discussed and solutions developed. All pupils and staff in the school are present at the Forum. This inclusive ethos permeates all of school life.
- The local authority has provided effective support. Its representative has helped to validate your judgements about pupils' assessment and the quality of teaching and learning at the school.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should:

- ensure that teachers plan work that is consistently well matched to pupils' learning needs, particularly for the most able pupils
- include greater precision and attention to detail in plans for improvement, with a clear delegation of duties spread across the staff and governing body, especially for checking its effectiveness.

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

Yours sincerely

Yvonne Watts  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the subject leaders for English and the early years and the co-chairs and vice-chair of the governing body. I held a telephone conversation with an adviser from the local authority. I visited all classrooms with you and examined pupils' books in a wide range of subjects. I spoke with pupils informally during lessons and at lunchtime, and met the school council. I observed pupils' behaviour around the school, at the start of the school day, during lessons and on the playground. I heard pupils read and spoke with them about their books. I met with parents at the beginning of the school day. I took into account 17 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and five responses to Ofsted's staff survey. I examined a range of documents, including safeguarding documentation, the record of recruitment checks, the latest information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, records of meetings of the governing body and information relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.