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Mr Chris Ward
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mr Ward

Short inspection of Pauntley Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 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 March 2014.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

You are held in high regard by staff, pupils and parents of this very small school. Your commitment and drive to raise the standards pupils achieve are respected by all in the school community.

The school's ethos is clearly reflected in the school's values of respect, friendship and courage. Pupils are known and treated as individuals. They know they will be listened to by adults and their views heard. Parents value the school's close-knit community. Pupils and parents who have joined the school from other settings say how welcome they have been made to feel, and that the progress their children make has increased since they joined the school.

You have ensured that the curriculum is diverse and interesting. It is enriched by activities such as visits, after-school clubs and sporting opportunities. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning and want to do well. Parents speak of the growth in confidence that their learning brings to their children, including by sharing their work in public at the regular celebration assemblies.

At the previous inspection, teachers were asked to plan work for pupils that was neither too easy nor too hard, so all could make progress. Inspection evidence shows that, in general, teachers match learning to pupils' needs well, particularly for

pupils who did less well than their peers at the end of key stage 1 and for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. However, the learning planned for some of the most able pupils does not stretch them to their highest abilities.

The school was asked to develop the Reception class outdoor area so that children could practise their new skills. While the Reception class outdoor area is now a spacious and secure place, opportunities are still limited for children to practice their skills. For example, in the 'mud kitchen' area there were pots and pans for children to use, but no mud. Children told me there had not been any for quite some time. There were few activities planned for the outdoor area where children could build on the new skills they are learning.

Since the previous inspection leaders of English and mathematics receive regular leadership time to monitor their subjects through a series of planned activities. This has included lesson observations, work sampling and talking with pupils. As a result, they know the strengths and areas for development in their subjects more clearly. They report their findings to you regularly. You are continuing to develop ways in which middle leaders in this and the partner school can learn effectively from each other.

Pupils can now access information technology and make use of the internet to cover the computing curriculum. Leaders are looking forward to a further increase in broadband speed which will enable pupils to use the internet more effectively to support their learning.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding policies, procedures and training are up to date and well known by staff. As a result, all staff have a clear understanding of what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. In this small school pupils and their families are very well known to staff. Parents speak of the 'excellent' help they have received from school staff that contributes to their children's well-being and safety. Comments such as 'I have no doubt my children are safe at school and well looked after' are typical.

Pupils are clear that they feel safe and enjoy school. They understand what bullying is and almost every child feels it would be dealt with quickly. Their parents agree. Governors monitor the school's safeguarding work through their regular visits, which include activities such as checking that school policies have been followed and meeting with pupils.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection I looked at pupils' learning in mathematics. This was because, over the last two years, pupils' progress in mathematics has been significantly less than that of pupils nationally by the end of Year 6. In particular, pupils who achieved strongly in mathematics at the end of Year 2 have not

achieved as well at the end of Year 6. Very few pupils reach a deeper level of understanding for their age in mathematics at any point in the school.

- Changes that you have introduced to mathematics teaching are beginning to make a difference to pupils' progress. For example, in Year 3 and Year 4, the most able pupils are enjoying challenging themselves to complete more complex problems that stretch their reasoning and understanding. However, the evidence we saw together indicates that this practice is not yet consistent across other year groups. For example, in Year 5 and Year 6, mathematics work does not consistently challenge or deepen the understanding of the most able pupils enough. The teaching of mathematics is not yet ensuring that the most able pupils make the progress that they are capable of.
- I also looked into the quality of pupils' writing. Again, this was because few pupils write at greater depth by the end of Year 6. Evidence showed that pupils' handwriting and presentation are generally good in the school. For their age and stage of development, pupils in the early years and key stage 1 write well. Across the school there is a good volume and range of writing work, much of it interlinked with the curriculum. For example, in a topic on 'water', key stage 2 pupils have labelled diagrams, written about science investigations, written information reports and recounted their visit to the local water works. In key stage 1, as a part of the 'The Gruffalo' topic, pupils have written at length, composing their own stories inspired by the book. Key stage 2 pupils use assessment criteria to evaluate their writing, but are unsure what to do to reach a deeper understanding and therefore improve their work. The school's current assessment system does not easily identify those pupils working at a greater depth in writing.
- I checked on the school's provision for pupils eligible for the pupil premium and on provision for those who have SEN and/or disabilities. There are few pupils in the school from either group. Over time, the school's provision for pupils in these groups enables them to make good progress from their starting points. The work teachers provide is well matched to these pupils' needs.
- Lastly, I looked at pupils' attendance. Pupils' attendance at school has been below that of pupils nationally for some years. Leaders' actions have helped reduce the absence of those pupils who are most persistently absent. However, pupils' overall attendance is still not as good as that of pupils nationally.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils can demonstrate their reasoning and understanding in their mathematics work so that more of them reach the highest standards
- pupils know clearly what they need to do to improve their writing so that more of them write at a greater depth
- pupils' attendance improves to be in line with that of pupils nationally

- teachers' use of the Reception class outdoor classroom enables children to secure and develop the skills they are learning across the different areas of the early years curriculum.

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

Sarah O'Donnell
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, other staff members and four members of the governing body. I spoke with the school's external adviser for school improvement on the telephone. Together we visited lessons in both classes in the school. We talked with pupils about their learning and looked at their work with them. Together we looked at pupils' books, including their work across the curriculum. I listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read, and also asked pupils to read to me from their work. I observed pupils outside at breaktime, met with a group of pupils at lunch time and considered 13 responses to the pupil online questionnaire. I considered six responses to the staff questionnaire. I met parents informally at the start of the day and considered 19 Parent View questionnaire comments. I examined a range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and development planning documents. I talked with staff and governors about their understanding of safeguarding. I scrutinised documents relating to the safer recruitment of staff and other safeguarding documentation.