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Joe Beament
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Dear Mr Beament

Short inspection of St Saviour's CofE Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 20 June 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 March 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. On taking up your post in September 2016, you recognised that there was a need to further raise the level of pupils' achievement and strengthen school leadership. You have built a team of effective and committed leaders. They have helped you to continue to develop teaching and the quality of the curriculum so that pupils consistently make the progress of which they are capable. Governors are skilled and effective. They ensure that you have the support, the challenge and the resources you need to bring about improvements quickly.

Pupils show a high level of commitment to learning. A popular song heard in the school says, 'I won't give up and I won't give in' and pupils could be seen demonstrating that attitude in lessons. Pupils' diligence and pride in their work is evident in their well-presented workbooks and in the way they discuss their achievements and the improvements they need to make. Also, they say learning is fun and enjoy visits, clubs and opportunities to take part in sport.

Parents are particularly positive about the school's community feel. As one parent said, reflecting the opinions of many, 'This is a good, local, community school run on strong values.' A minority of parents feel that some changes, for instance the changes to the homework policy, have taken place too quickly. However, the

findings from this inspection show that the actions to improve pupils' achievement have been necessary, prompt and effective.

At the previous inspection, the school was asked to improve teaching so that all pupils' needs were met with work set at the right level. You are now doing this more effectively. You have implemented a new system for tracking pupils' progress. By holding regular meetings with teachers, you can check that pupils are having support and teaching at the right level. Teachers now regularly observe and work alongside their colleagues so that the best practice is shared across all classes and pupils' progress is consistently good.

Other key priorities identified at the previous inspection were to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and to involve other leaders more effectively in school improvement. These areas have been tackled robustly this year but, rightly, both remain as ongoing priorities in your school development plan.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders, staff and governors take safeguarding seriously. Policies and procedures are effective and fit for purpose, including those that secure safer recruitment of staff and volunteers. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained in safeguarding. They have strengthened systems for recording concerns about pupils who may be at risk of harm. Records show staff promptly report their concerns and leaders quickly seek support from other professionals for vulnerable pupils and families.

Governors regularly monitor the effectiveness of school procedures. Leaders maintain the quality and consistency of safeguarding by issuing regular bulletins to staff with reminders about national priorities for safeguarding and updates on the school's own procedures.

Pupils feel safe and say that while there has been some bullying in the past, there is none now. Pupils have learned how to stay safe through, for example, the 'speak out and stay safe' campaign by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Pupils I spoke to knew how to protect themselves when using the internet. The overwhelming majority of parents say that their children feel happy and safe in school and many referred to the school's strong commitment to supporting their children's well-being.

Inspection findings

- In this inspection, I looked firstly at the progress pupils make in writing. Since the previous inspection, assessment information shows that pupils had, over their time in school, made weaker progress than could be expected in writing. Assessments showed that pupils had good language skills and could write expressively, but that they lacked the skills to punctuate their work accurately. Pupils' spelling was also not at the expected level for their age.
- You have changed the way spelling is taught and ensure that pupils regularly practise spelling skills as part of homework. By working with a local project on

best practice in teaching writing, your leaders have revised the ways grammar and punctuation are taught. Teachers now build pupils' grammar skills systematically and give pupils guidance on what a good model of writing should look like. Pupils use this guidance effectively to edit and improve their work.

- Pupils have risen to teachers' higher expectations. Those I spoke to could explain the strongest features of their 'best' piece of writing. Pupils have continued to deepen their ability to express ideas. For example, when writing about a balloon trip, pupils added interest by explaining feelings of fear, excitement and exhilaration. Pupils use joined handwriting in all their work and almost all do so fluently. Progress has now accelerated and an increased number of pupils across the school are reaching both expected and higher standards for their age.
- My second line of enquiry was to determine whether actions taken to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils have been successful. Governors recently undertook a review of how the additional pupil premium funding is used. As a result, you ensure that your skilled teaching assistants are now used more effectively to support pupils' learning in the classrooms. Your latest assessment information and pupils' workbooks show that disadvantaged pupils are making faster progress.
- Additionally, a parent support adviser has been appointed and is working with disadvantaged pupils and their families. Your new plan for using the pupil premium is effective and a greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils are reaching expected standards for their age. However, sharper evaluation is now needed to identify which strategies are having the greatest impact.
- I also explored the school's work to promote the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The recent appointment of a skilled leader has ensured that the school's statutory responsibilities for these pupils are met. Governors have recently agreed additional resources for this aspect of the school's work.
- From seeing pupils working in lessons and reviewing their workbooks, it is evident that recent initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' progress. All staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers adapt learning well and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have full access to the whole curriculum with their peers in line with the school's policies.
- I next looked at the school's work to strengthen the curriculum for mathematics so that pupils made faster progress. Your subject leader has re-designed the structure of lessons so that pupils are able to start work at the level which best matches their next steps in learning. Mathematics lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Those pupils I spoke to, particularly the most able pupils, said that the chance to 'spot check' their work and move on quickly meant that their time was not wasted on practising what they already knew.
- You give pupils opportunities to practise mathematical skills in real contexts. For example, when developing skills of scientific enquiry, pupils take and re-check precise measurements. They record and explain their findings in graphs and charts. This degree of challenge is not as strong in examples of pupils' work in mathematics lessons. Pupils are making good progress now and the proportion of

pupils at the expected level for their age is increasing. However, there is more to do to ensure that those with the potential to do so reach the higher standards.

- Finally, we explored the impact of work to improve attendance. You and governors have had concerns that too many pupils were late for school or had repeated absence. This affected their achievement and well-being. You firstly strengthened checks to ensure that pupils who are not in school are safe. You also increased the challenge to parents whose children do not attend well or who are repeatedly late. As a result, persistent absence has now significantly reduced. Punctuality has improved, and you are continuing to address this.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- more pupils achieve the higher standards in mathematics
- governors and leaders build a deeper and more detailed understanding of the impact of additional funding
- leaders maintain the confidence of parents by more clearly explaining the rationale behind changes to school policy and practice.

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

Yours sincerely

Wendy Marriott
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I had meetings with you and other leaders. Together we visited all classrooms and spoke to pupils as they were working. I also spoke to pupils in a discussion group where they read their work to me and talked about their achievements. I visited the playground and talked to pupils at lunchtime. I made a short visit to an act of worship.

We discussed the current assessments of pupils across the school and looked at examples of their work in English, mathematics and science. I met with a group of governors and with a representative of the local authority. With them and with you, I discussed the school's plans for improvement. Over the day, I discussed safeguarding with you, your business manager and several members of staff. I met with parents in the playground and took account of the 85 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also took account of the views of the staff who responded to the online staff questionnaire.