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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Elizabeth Grainger
Headteacher
Yarmouth Church of England Aided Primary School
Mill Road
Yarmouth
Isle of Wight
PO41 0RA

Dear Mrs Grainger

Short inspection of Yarmouth Church of England Aided Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 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. You and the leadership team are analytical and precise in your self-evaluation of the school. You identify accurately things that still need to be improved further. You make decisions about what to do based on sound evidence, including information about the pupils' progress and attainment. This helps pupils, including those new to the school, to achieve well.

Leaders, including governors, have been active in promoting and shaping the school's vision and values which have created a culture of high ambition for pupils and staff. Governors are knowledgeable about the school. They hold them and you to account for the quality of teaching and the performance of pupils. Recent appointments to the governing body have strengthened the team and they question and support you well. Together, you have created an environment in which teachers are encouraged to reflect on their practice so that it has a positive impact on pupils' academic achievement and personal qualities. Pupils say that they like school. They value learning and have positive attitudes in lessons.

Your clear plans for improvement accurately identify the areas where more work is needed, and you are tackling these areas effectively. For example, in phonics you have rightly identified that, in the past, too few children achieved the required standard. You have improved the teaching of early reading skills. Your staff are now more confident and, as a result, your 2017 assessments confirm that 87% of

children have reached the standard expected. This represents a significant increase from previous years.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and hold you in high regard. They value the high standards of care, support and guidance which the school provides to pupils and their families. As one parent explained, 'We thought about leaving the island but can't because we don't want to leave this school.'

Areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been effectively tackled. For example, pupils now have more opportunities to take part in stimulating activities in lessons. Teachers use resources well to provide engaging learning activities that help pupils to pick up new ideas quickly.

It became clear during the course of the inspection that some pupils, including the most able pupils, are not being helped sufficiently to move on to the next and higher levels of achievement. This is because assessment information is not always used precisely in order to plan the next steps in pupils' learning and to target questions to pupils of different abilities.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. This is threaded through different aspects of the school's work. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. The single central record indicates that all required checks are made to ensure that staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children. The governing body maintains appropriate oversight of this area of work.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online and when using social media. There are frequent reminders about keeping safe both in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe because of the lessons that they have. Nearly all parents agree.

The staff are given training regularly and kept up to date with the latest government guidance. You ensure that all staff receive the statutory training, including that relating to protecting pupils from extremism and radicalisation. Staff know what to look out for and what to do if they are concerned about anything. The school has simple and effective procedures for reporting concerns and the staff use the systems appropriately.

Inspection findings

- The inspection focused on how quickly pupils are progressing and their attainment rising in mathematics, especially for lower-attaining and disadvantaged pupils. I also looked at how effectively the teaching of phonics is helping children to develop early reading skills. Another aspect of the school's work I focused on was that to tackle writing skills for the lower-attaining pupils, especially girls in key stage 1. The final aspect I focused on was how leaders

have improved the attendance and reduced persistent absence of groups of pupils.

- In mathematics, the work in pupils' books and the school's most recent assessment information show that typically pupils continue to make strong progress. This is because pupils are given good opportunities to develop their numeracy skills across the wider curriculum. Staff also provide effective practical resources that clearly illustrate different mathematical ideas. However, on occasion, some pupils, especially the most able, do not tackle work that challenges them sufficiently, reducing the amount of progress that they make in mathematics. This is because achievement information is not used well enough.
- Disadvantaged and lower-attaining pupils make rapid progress in mathematics. You have established systematic provision and support for different groups of pupils that is effective. You have focused the work of teaching assistants on helping the pupils to understand fully some complex strategies. For example, in the Year 1 and 2 class, pupils adeptly and articulately explained the values of different digits.
- The teaching of early reading skills is effective. Pupils receive well-structured and effective teaching that challenges their understanding and use of phonics. As a result, they accurately tackle unknown words confidently. For example, children in the Reception class excitedly and correctly read unfamiliar words when following 'clues' to get to 'treasure'. Pupils are grouped effectively and interventions have been put in place to support those at risk of not reaching the required standard. This ensures a good level of challenge for pupils in the early years and in key stage 1. Parents appreciate the efforts of staff in the Reception class, with one saying, 'We could not have hoped for a better start to our child's education.'
- Reading has a high profile throughout the school and pupils enjoy many opportunities to become familiar with different types of texts. Reading skills, as pupils move through the school, are tracked carefully. This ensures that any pupil's progress that is not fast enough is quickly picked up and addressed successfully. Pupils who continue to find reading difficult are given bespoke support and guidance to help them to catch up. The strategies the school is using are effective, illustrated by the outcomes in the comprehensive assessment system.
- The writing skills of pupils who need to catch up are improving quickly. Pupils' written work shows that errors are addressed well and that there is an improvement in their spelling. Staff have a good understanding of how to ensure that pupils write pieces of work that are sequenced well and cohesive. Staff also have a good grasp of the expectations of spelling, punctuation and grammar for each year group. Their work is assessed accurately and pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, there are times when teachers do not use these assessments sufficiently well to plan learning opportunities that stretch all pupils, particularly the most able.
- Girls in key stages 1 and 2 make rapid progress in writing and the standards achieved are in line with the national expectation. Writing opportunities are carefully planned. Pupils have time to rehearse their writing and apply their skills

well in different types and styles of writing. There are good links between reading and writing, and teachers use high-quality texts to support pupils' learning in both subjects.

- School leaders have raised overall levels of attendance successfully. They have worked closely with external agencies to support pupils and families so that pupils attend school regularly. This work has had some success and leaders are continuing their efforts to make sure that all pupils attend school. In particular, persistent absence has been tackled rigorously and groups of pupils with previously poor attendance are now attending well.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers use assessment information more rigorously to ensure that learning activities are consistently matched to pupils' abilities, especially the most able.

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

Yours sincerely

Richard Blackmore
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, senior and middle leaders and governors to discuss safeguarding and aspects of school leadership and management. I visited all classes to observe teaching and learning. I spoke to pupils during lessons about their work. I listened to pupils reading as well as hearing pupils read their own work as part of their classroom activities. I reviewed safeguarding documentation and arrangements, including the school's record of checks on staff. I undertook a scrutiny of pupils' writing and mathematics books. I reviewed documentation which included the monitoring of teaching and learning, the school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and the school development plan. I considered 16 responses to the online staff questionnaire. I also took into account 34 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the views expressed by parents at the end of the school day.