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Miss Tabitha White
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Dear Miss White

Short inspection of Christ Church New Malden C of E Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 8 June 2017 with Kanwaljit Singh, Ofsted Inspector, 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 team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your effective leadership has successfully steered the school through a period of significant change, including the construction of a new building for key stage 2 pupils. Together with your leadership team, you have created a strong sense of community, overcoming the challenges presented by the school's location on two separate sites. You ensure that leaders and teachers work together cohesively to share good practice and raise standards for pupils.

You have nurtured a calm and purposeful environment for learning, characterised by caring relationships between pupils and staff. Teachers' high-quality guidance helps pupils to develop into articulate and confident learners. They are keen to share their views and listen respectfully to the ideas of others. Pupils' enjoyment of their learning was tangible during visits to lessons. As one pupil put it: 'I love coming to school because my work keeps getting better and better.'

Improving pupils' writing outcomes was identified as an area for improvement at the previous inspection. In 2014 and 2015, Year 6 pupils attained above-average standards in writing because they made strong progress from their starting points. However, pupils' achievement dipped sharply in 2016. The reasons for this decline were explored as one of the key lines of enquiry during the inspection. I found that leaders have wasted no time in improving the teaching of writing. As a result, the majority of pupils currently at the school are making the good progress needed to achieve age-expected standards. Nevertheless, pupils with low prior attainment, including those from disadvantaged

backgrounds, have considerable ground to make up in order to achieve the expected standard.

Together with governors, you have restructured the leadership team so that leaders have the right balance of skills and experience to drive improvement at a rapid pace. The new leadership team knows the school well, and as result, plans for development are focused on the right priorities. Equally, governors use their skills to good effect to support and challenge you and the leadership team in order to strengthen the quality of education. They visit the school frequently and check what works well and where improvement is necessary. However, senior leaders do not use assessment information precisely to help them check whether all groups of pupils make similarly strong progress from their starting points.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. Systems for keeping pupils safe are managed effectively across the two sites. Procedures for reporting concerns are displayed in every classroom so staff and visitors are clear about what they should do if they are worried about the welfare of any pupil. Regular training and discussions about safeguarding during staff meetings ensure that staff are aware of a wide range of risks to pupils' safety, including the dangers of being drawn into radical or extreme activity. The school's records show that staff report concerns promptly. Leaders act quickly to safeguard the welfare of vulnerable pupils, drawing on support from external agencies including those from the local authority's 'early help' service. Close partnerships with parents contribute effectively to leaders' work to safeguard pupils.

Leaders ensure that any potential risks to pupils' safety are assessed thoroughly, both on the school site and during trips. Arrangements for meeting pupils' first aid and medical needs are well planned so pupils receive support when it is needed. Pupils told inspectors they feel safe at school. They know that adults will help them sort out any issues which may occur. The curriculum develops pupils' awareness of how they can keep themselves safe, for example when crossing the road or using the internet. Responses to Ofsted's online surveys show that the majority of parents and pupils are confident that the school is a safe and happy place to learn.

Inspection findings

- The first line of enquiry focused on pupils' achievement in writing. In 2016, assessments showed that pupils' progress from their different starting points was slower than average, both in key stages 1 and 2. You and the leadership team were disappointed with the 2016 outcomes. Together, you have analysed carefully why pupils' achievement in writing declined compared with previous years and have acted decisively to address the weaknesses identified.
- Leaders have raised teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' writing. Staff meet regularly to discuss and assess pupils' work. Partnerships with local schools are helping teachers to measure the standard of pupils' work with greater accuracy than in the past. As a result, teachers are clear about what they need to teach so that

pupils write to a high standard in a range of genres. Displays around the school, including photographs of successful writers on classroom doors, reinforce leaders' and teachers' higher expectations. Pupils are keen to do their best and are proud of their work. One pupil told inspectors: 'We are working really hard on our writing. My teacher wants me to do my best.' This accurately summarises pupils' positive attitudes to writing.

- You have introduced 'non-negotiables' guidance in each year group to provide pupils with clear advice on how to record their ideas using English grammar and punctuation accurately. Pupils told inspectors that the 'non-negotiables' guidance helps them edit their work and to make improvements, as work in pupils' books clearly shows.
- Leaders identified that the variable quality of pupils' handwriting and spelling skills hindered pupils from producing writing at age-expected standards. In response, you have changed the way spelling is taught across the school. Well-planned daily spelling tasks strengthen pupils' understanding of spelling rules and patterns. Teachers intervene quickly to identify pupils' errors and help them correct their mistakes.
- The standard of pupils' spelling and handwriting skills is improving quickly. This is having a positive impact on the overall quality of their writing. Work in books and the school's assessment information indicate that a greater proportion of pupils are working at or exceeding age-expected standards. However, these improvements are not as consistently evident for pupils with low starting points. Leaders recognise that for this group of pupils, weaknesses in handwriting and spelling remain key barriers to their faster progress.
- The second line of enquiry focused on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. In 2016, the progress of disadvantaged pupils was not sufficiently rapid to ensure that they did as well as other pupils nationally, both at key stages 1 and 2.
- You ensure that any barriers to individual pupils' learning are identified thoroughly so that extra support is tailored to their needs. The impact of additional support is continuously reviewed to ensure that it is making the necessary difference. You ensure that disadvantaged pupils who do not reach the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check receive the help they need to catch up by the end of Year 2.
- Wisely, leaders have sought external guidance to help them sharpen the impact of the pupil premium funding. Governors regularly challenge leaders about whether their actions are improving pupils' academic outcomes. Through regular progress meetings and robust performance management arrangements, you ensure that leaders hold teachers closely to account for the impact of their work to raise standards for disadvantaged pupils.
- As a result of leaders' actions, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress. School assessment information suggests that differences in how well disadvantaged pupils achieve compared to other pupils nationally are diminishing quickly. However, work in books shows that disadvantaged pupils with low starting points are not making the rapid progress needed to help them catch up and achieve age-expected standards.
- My third line of enquiry explored pupils' achievement in key stage 1. In 2016, a lower proportion of girls achieved the expected standards in writing and mathematics when compared to their peers nationally.

- Visits to lessons and work in pupils' books show that leaders have acted quickly to diminish any differences in the achievement of boys and girls in key stage 1. Pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts is strengthened through frequent problem-solving activities. In writing, the impact of teachers' higher expectations of pupils' handwriting and spelling is evident in the quality and neatness of pupils' written work. Pupils' phonics skills are well developed. A higher than average proportion of pupils, both boys and girls, met the required standard in the national phonics check in Year 1 in 2016.
- School assessment information suggests that pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to achieve higher standards than the previous cohort. In Year 3, pupils who have fallen behind in their learning are catching up quickly, particularly in writing. However, leaders are aware that lower-attaining pupils require more intensive support to help them overcome their previous underachievement fully.
- The final line of enquiry focused on pupils' attendance, particularly of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. In 2016, absence rates for this group were significantly above the national average.
- Rigorous monitoring ensures that leaders identify quickly any pupils who are not attending school as often as they should. You work in close partnership with families and external agencies to tailor additional support to pupils' particular circumstances. As a result, this year attendance rates for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are improving quickly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- disadvantaged pupils with low prior attainment make the most rapid progress possible and reach age-expected standards
- pupils with low starting points make swift progress in the development of their handwriting and spelling skills
- assessment information is used strategically to pinpoint where additional support is needed so that all groups of pupils make excellent progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Sarah Murphy-Dutton
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Together with leaders, inspectors visited classes in key stages 1 and 2. Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons and around the school. An inspector met with a group of

pupils to discuss their experiences at the school and to hear them read. Meetings were held with leaders, including members of the governing body. Documentation related to safeguarding was reviewed, including records of pre-employment checks on staff, child protection information and risk assessments. Inspectors reviewed work in pupils' books as well as information on the progress and attainment of current pupils in the school. An inspector met with a representative from the local authority and held a telephone discussion with an adviser from the Diocese of Southwark. Responses to Ofsted's online surveys were considered, including 96 responses from parents, 121 from pupils and 23 from staff.