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Mrs Clare Berryman
Headteacher
Salesbury Church of England Primary School
Lovely Hall Lane
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Dear Mrs Berryman

Short inspection of Salesbury Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 25 April 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 May 2012.

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 your leadership team have created an ambitious culture which is embraced by all members of the school community. One classroom door, for example, is adorned with a display that informs pupils, 'If you can dream it you can do it'. This simple but profound sentiment sums up the school's empowering ethos. Adults are keen for pupils to develop a thirst for learning and they are eager that pupils leave Salesbury hungry to learn more.

Your team work hard to ensure that the school's work to promote pupils' personal development is given high priority and benefits all. Pupils told me about the exceptional range of leadership opportunities made available to them. They benefit from being a member of the school or eco council and value opportunities to represent the school as an ambassador, digital leader or peer mentor. All pupils assume responsibilities that deepen their commitment to making a difference to the lives of others. Pupils also spoke with pride about their achievements in extra-curricular activities. The school's football team recently won the national final at Wembley stadium for the second time. The school deserves its affectionate reputation as 'the singing school' and the choir regularly perform at renowned venues, such as Blackburn Cathedral and Blackpool Tower. Your team ensure that there is an extra-curricular activity that will fire the enthusiasm of all pupils. Two children were particularly proud to tell me about what they had achieved in their Latin and sewing clubs.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They feel that their children are happy, well looked after and make good progress. Your staff greatly enjoy working at the school and they share the confidence of parents in your leadership. One member of staff summed up the sentiments of many when she told me that 'we have an amazing headteacher and it is a privilege and honour to work with her and follow her guidance'.

You became headteacher in September 2014 and have worked tirelessly to continue the modernisation of the school that started under your predecessor. You have embarked upon an ambitious journey to develop the breadth and creativity of the curriculum. Capably supported by the newly appointed assistant headteacher, your approach to improve this aspect has been innovative and is greatly commended by the local authority. Your effective leadership enables staff to plan collaboratively in curriculum teams. They are encouraged to teach topics they are knowledgeable about and capture their interest. You have supported staff to ensure that this approach is combined with a sharp focus on developing pupils' important subject-specific skills. Pupils throughout the school, for example, have recently studied a unit called 'one world', which was used successfully as a vehicle for developing pupils' skills and understanding in science and the humanities.

You have consciously sought to make the school more outward-looking and you have ensured that the school is active within a number of collaborative networks. You have led on a project to support other schools in the local authority to redesign their curriculum. Your effective leadership has also instigated the creation of a local cluster of church schools that has a focus on enhancing different aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Your efforts to improve the school have been capably supported by the governing body. Governors have become increasingly involved in different aspects of the school's work. Governors have provided stability and challenge to ensure that pupils continue to make good progress. They use their considerable knowledge and expertise from their own professional lives to support you in your efforts to drive improvements.

Under your leadership, pupils have continued to make good progress throughout the school and across subjects. However, you are ambitious for all pupils and you will not be satisfied until all pupils are making consistently rapid progress in their learning. You and your governors recognise that your plans to improve the school could focus even more sharply on further quickening the rate of progress made by pupils. Furthermore, you feel that your plans would benefit from clear measurable targets that will help leaders and governors to evaluate more precisely the progress that is being made in different areas. Your tracking of pupils' progress is very detailed and the school goes to great lengths to support all pupils to make rapid gains in their learning. Despite this, you see the need to further reduce variability in the quality of teaching at the school and embed recent improvements to the teaching of pupils with low prior attainment and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding is a strength of the school. Safeguarding policies and procedures are fit for purpose and well established. All appropriate checks are carried out on prospective members of staff, as well as on temporary staff, volunteers and governors. You have built capacity among the safeguarding team and ensure that a core group of staff receive appropriate enhanced training. You are capably supported by the local authority in your endeavours to keep pupils safe. For example, a representative from the local authority has delivered sessions to parents about online safety. Training for staff and governors is up to date and staff are well versed on safeguarding procedures, including what to do if they have concerns about an adult at the school. Although serious safeguarding incidents are rare at the school, staff remain vigilant and alert to any potential signs of neglect or abuse.

Your work to provide pupils with the knowledge to make informed choices about their own safety is particularly strong. Pupils are provided with regular information that helps them to develop an age-appropriate understanding of different risks. For example, the school's work on e-safety is thorough, as is the attention given to road safety. The school council has also been instrumental in ensuring that parents are mindful of pupils' safety when they drive to and from school.

Inspection findings

- The inspection was focused on a number of key lines of enquiry. You have taken effective action to tackle the area for improvement identified at the last inspection. You have engaged your staff in a meaningful debate about what constitutes effective teaching and learning and you have empowered staff to take risks with their teaching in order to develop their practice. You have ensured that staff receive training that supports their professional development. For example, recent training on incorporating more problem-solving in mathematics is clearly having an impact on improving teaching in this area. Despite this, you recognise that not all teachers have embraced new methods of teaching to the same extent. Consequently, you are keen to reduce further the variabilities in the quality of teaching that still remain.
- I asked you why there was an unusual increase in the number of pupils who were regularly absent from school last academic year. You showed me that the increase was due to the temporary arrival of a group of pupils with poor attendance. These pupils have now left the school and rates of pupil attendance are once again excellent. Impressively, there are currently no pupils at the school who are regularly absent. You attribute the school's continued success in this area to the commitment of pupils and their families to good attendance. You also effectively promote the virtues of regular attendance and pupils value the rewards they receive for excellent attendance. It is also apparent from pupils' attitudes to learning and responses to the pupil questionnaire that pupils enjoy coming to school and are reluctant to be absent.
- You have prioritised improvements to the teaching of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. You have appointed an experienced special educational needs coordinator to accelerate developments in this area and to

ensure that identified pupils receive the level of personalised support needed to flourish. You have also rationalised the deployment of non-teaching staff to ensure that the efforts of all teaching assistants are sharply focused on accelerating the progress made by pupils. You provided me with information that indicates that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making progress that is as fast as that of other pupils.

- You have also prioritised improvements to the teaching of pupils with low prior attainment. In the lessons I observed, these pupils were well supported and completed activities that were matched closely to their needs and ability. You have greatly expanded the range of intervention strategies that low prior attaining pupils receive to support them to make fast progress. The 'learning lounge' is used as a focal point for a range of personalised interventions from help with fine motor control to support with times tables. Your school improvement partner is positive about developments in this area. However, you are keen to guard against complacency and recognise that there is still more to be done to consolidate improvements to the teaching of pupils with both low prior attainment and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- You have a clear understanding of the barriers to achievement faced by disadvantaged pupils at the school. Your spending of the pupil premium is sharply focused on removing barriers to learning and ensuring that disadvantaged pupils make fast progress. From the evidence I gathered, it is apparent that the progress made by disadvantaged pupils is at least similar to others at the school.
- You have focused on improving the attainment of boys in the early years to good effect. Boys' attainment was higher than the girls in the last academic year with a higher proportion of boys achieving a good level of development in Reception. You have ensured that teaching throughout the school utilises strategies that engage and enthuse boys. Partly as a result of these actions, the achievement of boys is broadly similar to the achievement of girls.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- an even greater focus is maintained on ensuring that pupils make fast progress across the curriculum and throughout the school by:
 - ensuring that the school development plan contains measurable targets and is sharply focused on further improving rates of progress
 - further reducing variability in the quality of teaching
 - embedding improvements to the teaching of pupils with low prior attainment and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities so that these pupils consistently make progress that is at least as quick as that of others.

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

Yours sincerely

Will Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

- The inspector undertook a learning walk with you to observe teaching and learning.
- Meetings took place with you, members of staff, a group of pupils and members of the governing body. The inspector also spoke with the school's improvement partner from the local authority.
- Informal discussions were held with pupils to gather their views on behaviour and learning.
- The inspector worked with the school's assistant headteacher to scrutinise the work in pupils' books.
- The inspector examined a range of supporting documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and development plan and information about safeguarding.
- The inspector considered 19 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 19 responses to the staff questionnaire. Forty-seven comments made by parents through Ofsted's free-text service and 49 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online parental survey, were also considered.
- The inspector looked closely at the school's website.