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Mr Mark Dixon  
Headteacher  
Padiham Green Church of England Primary School  
St Anne's Street  
Padiham  
Lancashire  
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Dear Mr Dixon

### **Short inspection of Padiham Green Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 30 January 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 October 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 are reflective in the decisions you make and you focus on ensuring that pupils receive a high standard of education in a caring and supportive environment. Staff and governors share your aspirations. You have developed a team whose passion and love for learning permeate the school.

You and your staff have worked effectively to tackle the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. You ensure that teachers have the knowledge and understanding they need to accurately identify the 'next steps' in pupils' learning, particularly in writing and mathematics. Learning activities meet the pupils' needs and interests and challenge pupils appropriately. Support staff receive the training they need to effectively help pupils to make strong progress. As a result, in 2017 an increasing proportion of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, exceeded the standard expected nationally at the end of key stage 2 in writing and mathematics. You acknowledge that too few pupils made the progress they needed to reach the standard expected in reading. Your decisive actions, however, are improving the progress pupils are making in reading, especially that of disadvantaged pupils.

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. You have established a strong culture of professional dialogue, support and challenge among your staff. They appreciate the opportunities to share skills and knowledge with each other, and with colleagues in other local schools. The strong relationships within the school and pupils' positive attitudes towards learning contribute effectively to the progress that they make. Pupils take pride in their work and understand clearly the 'next

steps' in their learning. One pupil said: 'In mathematics the challenges make you really think and we go back over the work we have covered every few months to refresh our brains.' However, you have accurately identified that you need to continue to focus on identifying the precise gaps in pupils' learning in reading.

Pupils are polite, courteous and confident. The older pupils take their responsibilities very seriously as librarians, sports leaders and as members of committees. They enjoy the opportunities they have to participate in a wide range of sporting activities and cultural events. For example, performing with other schools at King George's Hall. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the way in which teachers make learning fun and interesting. They enjoy challenges, and the broad range of literature they read. One pupil summed it up beautifully and with a single comment: 'I really love learning.' They are proud of their school and feel valued and cared for.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers spoken to during the inspection, and those who accessed Ofsted's online questionnaire, were very positive about the school and, particularly, your leadership. They appreciate the care, guidance and support they receive from you and your staff. Parents of pupils who are new to the school are very pleased with the way their children settle in so quickly and the progress that they make.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership of the school has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements, including online filtering arrangements, are fit for purpose. Staff and governors receive regular training and know what to do if they have any concerns. An effective and efficient system ensures that the most vulnerable pupils are identified quickly and that they receive the help they need. Pupils have a very clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe, particularly online. They feel the school is a safe place to be and they feel valued and cared for. They also said bullying is rare and behaviour is good.

### **Inspection findings**

- During the inspection we focused on several lines of enquiry. The first was attendance. You know your families extremely well. Staff swiftly follow up when pupils are absent. You have been relentless in your drive to improve the attendance of a number of pupils who are persistently absent and attendance rates are improving. When unauthorised absences are due to holidays, then leaders take appropriate action.
- You work closely with other agencies to provide the support that vulnerable families need to improve their children's attendance. Pupils understand the importance of attending school every day and as a result attendance is improving. You have introduced a number of incentives which are having a positive impact. Attendance remains above the national average, including that of disadvantaged pupils. Inspection evidence demonstrates that when pupils attend regularly, this has a direct impact on improving their rates of progress.
- We also discussed how effectively the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils

has been used. Leaders have accurately identified the barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils. Highly trained staff provide effective nurture and guidance for the most vulnerable pupils. This enhances their attitudes to learning and has a positive impact on the progress they make. You work effectively with a range of other professionals to support pupils and families. As a result of the positive relationships you have developed with parents, you are able to help them to develop the skills they need to support their children in their learning.

- Teachers use the assessment information they gather effectively. Learning activities meet the needs of pupils and challenge them appropriately. Teachers use a number of different ways to identify the gaps in pupils' learning. You have ensured that staff have the skills and resources they need to help pupils catch up quickly. The school's own assessment information indicates that the progress of current disadvantaged pupils is improving. You have correctly identified that progress needs to be accelerated to ensure that a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils reach the national standards by the end of key stage 2, particularly in reading.
- We also looked at the actions you have taken to improve outcomes in reading. You have changed the way you consistently teach phonics from Reception to Year 3. Staff have the knowledge, skills and resources they need to teach reading effectively. Opportunities you provide for staff to share their expertise ensures that consistency and high expectations are maintained. Learning activities linked to improving reading accurately meet the needs of the pupils and challenge them appropriately. The books pupils read meet their needs. As a result, pupils are becoming competent, confident readers. Their improving vocabulary is having a positive impact on the quality of their writing.
- Teachers use assessment information efficiently to identify pupils who are falling behind. Highly trained support staff provide the help pupils need to catch up quickly. The school's own assessment information indicates that the vast majority of pupils are making accelerated progress from their starting points. Detailed records show that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are making strong progress. Leaders promote the importance of reading effectively with pupils and their families. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their roles as 'reading buddies' for the younger pupils. They enjoy the opportunities they have to read a wide range of literature. One of the pupils who spoke to me said: 'I like having a book as a starting point for the work because it really helps with ideas for writing.' Workshops for parents on phonics and reading ensure that they have the skills they need to help their children at home.
- Finally we looked at the actions that have been taken by leaders to improve outcomes for children at the end of Reception. The majority of children start school with knowledge and skills below that typical for their age. You have successfully developed links with the several nursery settings the children attend before they start school. Parents commented that their children settle quickly into the routines of school as a result of the well-thought-through activities and events they attend in the summer term. You have accurately identified the barriers to children's learning, particularly the development of language and communication and personal, social and emotional development. Leaders have taken decisive action to ensure that children are given the help they need to

catch up quickly.

- Leaders in the early years swiftly identify what the 'next steps' in children's learning need to be in order to accelerate the progress that they make. They have ensured that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding they need. You work closely with colleagues in other schools to share expertise and to ensure that your assessments are accurate. Regular 'stay and play' sessions are well attended. Workshops for parents about how you teach phonics, reading, writing and mathematics provide them with the opportunity to develop the skills they need to support their children's learning at home. Parents speak highly of how well your staff know the children and how happy they are to come to school each day. You have identified that you need to embed the improvements you have made in Reception to ensure that a higher proportion of children reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception year.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they focus on the precise gaps in the learning of disadvantaged pupils, particularly in reading, so that a higher proportion make the progress they need to reach the standards expected by the end of key stage 2.
- they embed the improvements in Reception so that a higher proportion reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception year in readiness for Year 1.

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

Amanda Stringer  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you, other members of the leadership team and staff. I also met with the chair of the governing body and three other governors. I met with a representative of the local authority. I conducted a learning walk with you and we visited classrooms, where I had the opportunity to speak with pupils and look at their work. I met with a group of pupils, formally, during the day and I spoke with a number of parents at the start of the school day. I also took account of the free-text comments and the 20 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. I scrutinised pupils' assessment information, the school's

self-evaluation document and your school improvement plan. I also scrutinised the single central record, and other documents relating to safeguarding and child-protection procedures and practices.