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Dear Ms Golden

Short inspection of All Saints CofE (C) Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 13 March 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.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

There have been a number of changes in leadership since the last inspection. Since your appointment as headteacher in April 2017, you have established a system of shared and distributed leadership through the appointment of two assistant headteachers and the development of a middle leadership team with subject responsibilities. These leaders share your ambition to ensure that pupils thrive and succeed in all areas of school life. The changes that have been made in leadership have had a positive impact on pupils' outcomes in both reading and writing. However, there is still work to be done to ensure that pupils make sufficient progress in mathematics. Questioning is not used well enough by all teachers to encourage pupils to think deeply and to explain their thinking. While you have made changes to provision for disadvantaged pupils, you recognise that they are still not making sufficient progress in order to diminish differences in attainment compared with other pupils nationally.

You have taken action to ensure that leaders and teachers make more effective use of the assessment information that the school gathers on pupils. This was identified as an area for improvement at the last inspection. This has led to a clearer understanding that not all groups of pupils are making enough progress in all subjects. You have used this information to formulate plans for improvement. While

these plans are extremely detailed, they do not precisely identify all of the most pressing priorities for the school. They are not fully effective in identifying and implementing the actions that are required to bring about swifter improvement.

A further area for improvement from the last inspection was to ensure that teachers set work at the right level of difficulty for the pupils. There is still work to be done to make sure that all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve, especially the most able pupils. Changes have been made recently to organise an integrated early years unit for both Nursery- and Reception-aged children. However, these are not yet fully successful in ensuring that the activities that teachers plan and set are well matched to the different learning needs and ages of the children.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths, but are also realistic about the need for further improvement. They have been proactive in gathering and listening to the views of pupils. For example, they responded to concerns expressed about a proposal to remove opportunities for instrumental tuition in school and have ensured that funding is available to allow this to continue.

While the curriculum allows pupils opportunities to develop skills and interests in subjects such as music and physical education, some other subjects are not studied in sufficient depth. Pupils' opportunities for investigative work in subjects such as history, geography and science are limited by an over-emphasis on written work.

You place a strong emphasis on ensuring that pupils show positive attitudes to learning and are considerate and caring towards each other. As a result, pupils are well-behaved, courteous and kind. They say that they feel safe and are confident that teachers and other staff will sort out any problems that they have. The very large majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey indicated that they would recommend the school. The comment that 'there is a lovely, calm nurturing feel in school' was typical of the views of many parents.

You are keen for pupils to be aspirational and ambitious about what they can achieve in life. An example of this is the way that you use some of the additional sports funding each year for an inspirational visit to a sporting complex, such as the Manchester Velodrome. This broadens pupils' perception of the opportunities that can be available to them.

Safeguarding is effective.

Systems to ensure that pupils are safe and protected in school are fit for purpose. Leaders have taken positive action to improve health and safety arrangements. The school site is secure and appropriate checks are carried out on visitors. Leaders undertake the necessary background checks on staff employed by the school. Training for staff is regular and helps them to be in a good position to be alert to any child protection or safeguarding concerns. Governors use their expertise to carry out checks on the records that the school holds on vulnerable pupils.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They receive well-planned information on how they can keep themselves safe when online.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have implemented a revised system of gathering, monitoring and evaluating assessment information. This allows them to have a clearer understanding of the outcomes of different groups of pupils. Teachers are now held to account more for the outcomes of the pupils that they teach, through regular pupil performance review meetings at which the progress and attainment of each pupil is discussed with senior leaders.
- Leaders are aware of the need to drive further improvement. However, they are somewhat hampered in their efforts as the school improvement plan does not focus sharply enough on the most important priorities. Too many of the identified actions would occur regardless of whether they were in the plan or not.
- Leaders' analysis of assessment information shows that while there have been improvements to outcomes in reading and writing, pupils in school are still not making strong progress in all subjects. Teachers do not consistently set high enough expectations of pupils. Questioning is not used effectively enough to probe pupils' understanding and to challenge them to explain their understanding.
- Recently introduced changes in the organisation of the early years provision are not yet fully established or effective. Teachers do not consistently ensure that learning activities are sufficiently well matched to the particular needs of Nursery- and Reception-aged children. As a result, children do not make as much progress as they could from their starting points in the early years.
- In 2017, pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 in mathematics was well below that of other pupils nationally. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher levels in mathematics was also well below the national average. This contrasted with the positive outcomes in reading and writing.
- Leaders have taken actions to improve outcomes in mathematics. All teachers have been provided with training to support them in ensuring that pupils are provided with regular opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge in problem-solving using reasoning. Additional resources have been purchased that help teachers set tasks that require pupils to undertake problem-solving activities. However, teachers do not ensure that the tasks they set for pupils are sufficiently well-matched to their abilities, especially those of the most able pupils. Pupils spoken to during the inspection commented that at times they find that the work they undertake is too easy.
- Disadvantaged pupils have, over recent years, made less progress than other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics. This has meant that gaps in attainment, as compared to those of other pupils nationally, have not diminished sufficiently. While leaders have made sure that all staff now have a clear understanding of the barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils in this school, the progress of these pupils is still not strong enough.

- Although there have been changes in the way that the needs of disadvantaged pupils are met, including the provision of before-school small group tuition and access to a member of staff who provides additional support to pupils with emotional and social difficulties, the impact of these actions is not yet clearly evident. Leaders recognise that they need to review further the way that the pupil premium funding is used and are seeking ways of using external expertise in this area.
- Leaders have focused successfully in the past two years on improving the teaching of writing. Pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to write independently and at length. Good use is made of staff with particular subject skills to teach pupils in PE, art and modern foreign languages.
- Opportunities for pupils to make strong progress and engage in exciting and purposeful learning across all subjects are not sufficiently embedded within the curriculum. Pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to undertake investigative work in subjects such as science, history and geography. There is currently some imbalance in the curriculum, with too much emphasis on the core subjects.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the curriculum is further developed to provide pupils with a better balance of learning across subjects
- teachers set learning activities that are sufficiently demanding and challenging for all pupils, especially the most able
- teachers match questions more accurately to the different abilities of pupils and provide more opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking
- teaching and learning in the early years provision is more closely matched to the different interests, needs and abilities of the Nursery- and Reception-aged children
- school improvement planning focuses more sharply on the most important priorities for the school
- further strategies are developed and implemented to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Adam Hewett
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and the assistant headteacher. I met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body. I considered the 64 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and reviewed the 34 freetext comments from parents. Together with you and the assistant headteacher, I visited eight lessons to observe learning. I spoke with pupils in lessons and at lunchtime and observed their behaviour at lunchtime on the playground.

I scrutinised information about pupils' progress during the last academic year. I considered other documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and the school improvement plan. I scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures, including policies and checks on staff employed at the school, and checked the school's website. I also analysed the range of views expressed by the six staff and 62 pupils who responded to Ofsted's questionnaires about the school