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Mrs Helen Jameson  
Headteacher  
Burton Agnes Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School  
Rudston Road  
Burton Agnes  
Driffield  
YO25 4NE

Dear Mrs Jameson

### **Short inspection of Burton Agnes Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 23 February 2016, 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 June 2011.

#### **The school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your expectations of what pupils can achieve are very high and you work tirelessly to ensure that pupils have the best possible education. Pupils and parents who spoke with me during the inspection confirmed that the school has improved rapidly since your appointment. Many of the parents who completed Ofsted's online survey (Parent View) took time to share their positive views. There is a very upbeat climate in the school where all pupils are valued and staff morale is high.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is central to your vision and ensures that pupils behave well and pay attention in lessons. This ensures that pupils enjoy what the school offers. Many pupils told me about the range of activities they are involved in out of lesson time. The displays around the school are evidence of this work. Parents confirm that you and your staff care for and nurture their children very well, enabling them to grow in confidence. Parents also welcome the family atmosphere that has been established within the school. Pupils told me about the special visitors to their school and how this helps them to gain an understanding of faiths and cultures different from their own.

Your school self-evaluation is accurate and you have correctly identified writing to be an area for improvement. Your prompt actions are beginning to show an impact

as we saw when we visited classrooms and looked at pupils' books. Nevertheless, you recognise that there is still more work to be done so that the presentation of their work and the quality of their handwriting improves. Marking and feedback are evident in most books, but are not always as good as they could be.

The support and challenge from members of the governing body has improved. This was an area for improvement at the last inspection. Governors are aware of the quality of teaching and the progress different groups of pupils make throughout the school. Governors keep a close eye on funding so that the additional funding that you receive is used effectively and makes the intended difference for individual pupils. Governors are ambitious for the school, but are less clear how reaching outstanding is to be achieved compared to the vision for this that you described.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

All staff and governors are clear what constitutes risk and understand how to keep pupils safe because of the frequent 'updating sessions'. Pupils who spoke to me during the inspection confirmed that they feel safe and know what to do if they are unsure about anything. Regular risk assessments, including those for school trips and visits, are undertaken. Parents are unanimous in their praise for the work you and your staff do to keep their children safe. Those staff who work with pupils who have particular needs are well trained and link with external agencies if needed. This work ensures that these pupils and their families receive the support they need to keep their children in education.

### **Inspection findings**

- You have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. You have ensured that the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been tackled rigorously and you also correctly acknowledge other emerging priorities. The school development plan therefore clearly identifies the issues to help improve the school further. However, the criteria by which success can be measured, using the information from all your monitoring activities, are not precise enough.
- In 2015, there was a dip in the number of Year 1 pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics check (letters and the sounds they represent). You and the staff reviewed the system for teaching this subject and the reasons for the drop in results. Careful tracking of all pupils and our visits to lessons, suggests that most are well on-track to achieve successfully this year.
- The system for checking regularly, by you and all staff, to make sure that pupils are doing as well as they should has recently been changed. Now all staff are present at these meetings and this enables everyone to see if any patterns are emerging across the school. You can also identify if siblings in different year groups are making different progress. This system is welcomed by staff and adds to the transparency within the school so that everyone knows where, and if, pupils need to do better.
- You regularly check the quality of teaching and learning and provide training for staff to enable them to meet the targets you set in order to improve their

practice. You showed me a high-quality 'book talk' lesson in class 3 where pupils were challenged to report to their classmates the answers to specific questions related to their reading books. Pupils did this very well, speaking with confidence, having read passages of their books with understanding and obvious enjoyment.

- During our visits to lessons and scrutiny of pupils' books, the weaknesses you have identified and which were confirmed by the local authority, are evident. Many pupils write well, at length, and for a number of different purposes. The way they present their work and the quality of their handwriting, however, is very variable. You are working hard to ensure that this situation improves and to improve the comments provided in pupils' books by teachers. We agreed that this situation also needs continued attention to ensure that initial improvements are carried through by all teachers.
- We observed lessons where the most-able pupils, particularly, were challenged well. For example, in a mathematics lesson for pupils in class 2, pupils were able to explain their understanding of symmetry and to give reasons for their answers. In other lessons, I observed pupils helping each other to work out how to use a dictionary correctly and also where they could make improvements to their work.
- Strong leadership in the early years and the arrangements in place when children start in the Nursery class means that they get off to a good start. You make sure that children in the early years, whatever their starting points, make good progress. Classrooms are bright and inviting with equally well-resourced outside areas. You know that ensuring that children learn to write correctly is, however, a priority for improvement.
- Governors know the school well and are more confident and able to challenge you and other leaders successfully. They have received helpful training from the local authority which has broadened their understanding of how to be an effective governor. They share your ambition but their awareness of the exact actions needed to improve the school further is still developing.
- The local authority officer provides good support for the school and has challenged areas where performance is not the best. He works with the governing body to manage your performance and provides an external view of the school's work and the progress of pupils. You told me that you value this support and challenge.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school development plan uses information gained from all the monitoring activities so that precise criteria can be used by which success can be measured
- pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work improves
- comments in pupils' books are consistently of the highest quality.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of York, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for East Riding of Yorkshire Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this one-day inspection, I was able to discuss the work of the school with you, your staff and governors. I also met with a representative of the local authority and a group of parents. We visited all the classrooms to observe teaching and learning and looked at pupils' work to consider the progress they are making and to gather a view of teaching over time. We discussed your current school self-evaluation and your plans for improvement. A number of additional documents relating to policies and assessment information were taken into account. I talked to a number of pupils who told me about their work and things that they like about the school, including the different activities that are provided for them out of lesson time. I considered the 21 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 29 responses from pupils together with 12 responses from staff members.