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3 April 2019

Mrs Lauren Murrey  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Murrey

### **Short inspection of Tackley Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 21 March 2019, 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in September 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your arrival at the school, as it became an academy in January 2017, you have set about school improvement with determination and focus. You have a clear picture of its strengths and needs, which you have used to generate sharply focused development plans. You check regularly to ensure that these plans are effective in raising pupils' achievement. You have worked alongside other leaders to ensure a more confident analysis of performance information and to secure improvements. Wisely, you have looked outwards across the trust and locality partnerships to provide effective professional development for staff. All staff who responded to the Ofsted survey are proud to work at Tackley and morale is high.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Almost all of those who responded to Ofsted's pupil survey or spoke to me said that they enjoy their learning. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about mathematics and English because their teachers ensure that they know how well they are doing and how to improve. Additional activity days, such as those with a mathematical-games focus and whole-school responses to carefully chosen texts, add to their appreciation of these subjects. Pupils told me that they feel safe at school and added, 'we get along'. If from time to time there are fallings-out, they are confident that staff will help them to resolve things. They told me: 'If it's a tiny thing we sort it out and if it's a big thing they sort it out.' Most pupils feel listened to and think that bullying happens rarely and is swiftly resolved by adults.

Most parents who spoke to me or completed the Ofsted survey value the community feel of the school. They appreciate your strong leadership and the 'happy, warm and safe learning environment' created for their children. One parent, writing on Parent View's free-text, summarised the views of many, saying: 'We are fortunate to have such a wonderful school in our village.' Nevertheless, there were a few parents who expressed concerns, especially about the degree of staffing turbulence. You recognise the importance of continuing to work with stakeholders across the community to further cement strong, mutually supportive relationships wherever possible. You have already done this successfully in a number of ways, including by working with former pupils who come into school to help with reading.

You have maintained the strengths identified at the last inspection of the predecessor school. Governors fulfil their duties effectively. They have a good understanding of the strengths and needs of the school. Along with their analysis of information and regular reports from senior leaders, they visit the school to find out things for themselves and to talk to pupils. Children get off to a good start in the early years foundation stage, including in the recently added Nursery. Staff are skilled in shaping learning and play experiences to interest and engage children's curiosity. For instance, during the inspection, children were exuberantly and joyfully putting together a performance, well supported and prompted by an adult.

You have successfully addressed the areas for improvement from the last inspection. You have introduced carefully planned activities into the curriculum which raise pupils' awareness of cultural diversity effectively. For instance, pupils across the school responded with understanding and insight to a recent whole-school-focus text about the arrival of a refugee. This work led to thoughtful discussions and some community fundraising.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All necessary checks are carried out before staff are appointed. All required safeguarding training is up to date and complete. Processes have been reviewed by governors, who work effectively with leaders to ensure that everything is as it should be.

All staff and most of the parents who completed the Ofsted surveys feel that pupils are safe at school. Pupils told me that they feel safe and trust in adults to keep them safe. They have regular opportunities to learn about keeping safe, for example through e-safety lessons.

### **Inspection findings**

- During the inspection we looked closely at several aspects of the school's work, including how effectively leaders ensure that pupils attend school regularly. Attendance of all groups of pupils is currently good. Bespoke support is in place for the few remaining pupils who find regular attendance a challenge. This is monitored closely by leaders.

- We also looked at the quality of mathematics teaching across the school. Leaders' actions to raise achievement in mathematics have been successful. In all classes, current pupils are making good progress from their starting points. Effective professional development for teachers has helped them to plan and teach in a way which is better matched to pupils' needs. Teachers identify misconceptions accurately and address these swiftly so that pupils progress well. Pupils have a secure grasp of computational skills, which they apply confidently to increasingly complex problems. A recent focus on developing more mathematical problem-solving and reasoning is evident in the work in pupils' books.
- Although there is some evidence of mathematics being used across the wider curriculum, this is not extensively evident in pupils' books. As a result, pupils have limited opportunities to apply and extend their mathematics in other subjects in a meaningful way.
- We also looked at the quality of pupils' writing, in particular their application of spelling, punctuation and grammatical conventions. Teachers have ensured that spelling, punctuation and grammar are systematically taught. There is a clear focus on pupils applying these skills as they write for different purposes. As a result, standards have risen. Nevertheless, some pupils' spelling choices are still sometimes haphazard. The impact of the new spelling system is not yet apparent in all pupils' work.
- Pupils enjoy writing. They write at length, using adventurous vocabulary and evocative phrases. Pupils' love of reading is fully utilised in the teaching of writing. Teachers use passages from favourite texts as writing prompts. However, writing in other subjects is not consistently well developed. As a result, subject-specific writing, such as the recording of scientific experiments, sometimes lacks depth and development.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- work to increase the accuracy of pupils' spelling is embedded across the school
- the quality of pupils' writing in other subjects is raised
- pupils have more opportunities to apply and extend their mathematical skills across the wider curriculum
- partnership with parents is further strengthened to help leaders, including governors, more fully understand their concerns.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Oxford, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Oxfordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Gordon  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, we met regularly together. I also met with staff, members of the governing body and with representatives of the multi-academy trust. I reviewed documentation, including: the school's own information about pupils' achievement; the school improvement plan; and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures.

Together, we visited classes across the school. In lessons, I observed pupils learning, looked at their books, and spoke to pupils about their work. I had a meeting with pupils to gather their views of the school and considered 49 responses to the pupil survey. I took into account the views of parents I met on the playground, and also considered 41 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 28 free-text comments. I also analysed 12 responses to the Ofsted staff survey.