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Mrs Sandy Nickells
Headteacher
Trinity Anglican-Methodist Primary School
Marjoram Way
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Dear Mrs Nickells

Short inspection of Trinity Anglican-Methodist Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 4 October 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in June 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 appointment in November 2017, you have successfully combined the school's longstanding caring ethos with raised expectations of pupil outcomes. The school's values are based on its Christian ethos, and these have been at the heart of the school since it opened 10 years ago. You have built on that, recognising that pupils are capable of more than recent results suggest. You have quickly gained the trust of staff, pupils and parents alike. This has helped you enormously as you set about raising expectations of what pupils can achieve across the whole school.

You have grasped the opportunity to appoint a new senior leadership team. While the team is still relatively new, the immediate impact they have made suggests that senior leaders have the capacity to take forward the improvements in teaching, learning and assessment you have begun.

You have a detailed and accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have developed ambitious but realistic plans to improve further. You have established with teachers a clear set of expectations about how the quality of teaching should improve. Staff appreciate this clarity and are keen to make the improvements you require. A sizeable proportion of teachers have joined the school this year. It is a measure of the success of your leadership that longstanding colleagues and newly appointed teachers are working together in a cohesive and increasingly effective unit so quickly.

Parents and carers also recognise and support the changes you are making. They value the existing ethos but are also keen that their children maximise their potential.

Governors are ambitious for their school. They value the school's Christian ethos and its community values and believe they can build on them to provide the highest quality education for the children of the community. They have a good understanding of the school's current strengths and weaknesses and are both challenging and supporting you to raise standards.

The school is part of a multi-academy trust. The trust has worked closely with the governors and with you to help steer the school on this new phase of its development and improvement. Because of this joint work, the transition to your leadership has been smooth. Trust leaders are active in providing leaders with support. They are also increasingly providing staff with access to networks of teachers so that they can learn from each other.

In recent years, the standards pupils achieved in Year 6 have been broadly in line with those in other schools. They have tended to be better in reading and writing than in mathematics. In 2018, the initial indications from the provisional results indicate that there has been an improvement in all three areas. Standards of those pupils currently in key stage 2 indicate that this improvement has been sustained. Pupils are responding well to teachers' increasing levels of expectation. Standards in key stage 1 have been slower to respond to changes in teaching and learning. They did not improve in the 2018 end of key stage assessments. However, pupils currently in key stage 1 are beginning to respond to the increasing challenge teachers are setting and so standards are starting to rise.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that there is a safe and caring environment across the whole school for all pupils. Pupils feel safe and are comfortable in approaching a member of staff should they have a concern. They say that bullying is rare but that when it does happen, teachers deal with it well.

Leaders work well with external agencies, such as the local authority, to protect vulnerable pupils. Staff are well trained and understand what to do should they feel a pupil is unsafe. All the appropriate recruitment checks are made on staff and other adults who work with pupils. Governors also regularly check that the school's safeguarding systems and records are robust.

Inspection findings

- In this short inspection, we agreed to focus on three areas: the progress that pupils make in mathematics, the standards that the most able pupils reach, and the effectiveness of support for disadvantaged pupils.

- In recent years, pupils have made less progress in mathematics than in reading and writing. You are aware of this issue and have made some initial moves to address it. Teachers in key stage 1 and key stage 2 have changed their approach to teaching mathematics and are focusing on pupils achieving a secure knowledge of key concepts. This emphasis on gaining a deep understanding is beginning to pay off. In many classes, pupils are able to talk confidently about mathematics and to apply their understanding to new and unfamiliar situations. However, this improvement is far from consistent. This is because the recent improvements in teaching are not yet securely embedded in all year groups. At its best, teaching is providing pupils with a variety of challenges that gradually expand pupils' understanding and fluency by applying their knowledge in different contexts. When teaching is weaker, this approach slips into simple repetition and so fails to develop pupils' thinking.
- Teaching overall in mathematics is not yet consistently good at making accurate assessments and quickly diagnosing any misunderstandings. Much of the teaching is good at spotting errors, but there are occasions when opportunities to analyse the underlying causes of misunderstandings are missed. This often relates to weaker subject knowledge in mathematics than in reading and writing. This weakness slows pupils' progress and limits their understanding.
- The most able pupils have been less successful in the last few years in reaching the highest standards that pupils in other schools have achieved. In 2018, the most able Year 6 pupils achieved significantly higher standards in reading and writing than in previous years but mathematics results did not improve. In Year 2, relatively few pupils achieved greater depth in reading, writing or mathematics despite many having exceeded expectations in the early years.
- School leaders have focused on improving the quality of teachers' questioning as the key to raising standards for the most able pupils. Where teachers are asking probing questions, and not settling for a superficial answer, pupils are responding to the challenge well. Pupils are confident and like to explore their ideas. They are naturally curious and respond to teachers' challenges with enthusiasm. As a result of teachers probing pupils' understanding in this way, pupils are becoming more attuned to the higher standards expected of them. Children in the Nursery and in early years are making good progress because of the skilful manner that teachers and teaching assistants encourage them to think about what they are making or doing. However, leaders understand that further work on challenging the most able pupils to reach higher standards is required before it is firmly embedded across all parts of the school.
- Leaders make sure that disadvantaged pupils are given effective support so that they can flourish. This helps them to make similar progress to other pupils in other schools. A designated teacher acts as a champion for these pupils. She liaises with teachers regularly and checks on pupils' progress. She makes sure that if individual pupils need additional support, they get it. School leaders make good use of the pupil premium grant. The plan is detailed, and its effectiveness is reviewed regularly. Leaders are acutely aware that currently few disadvantaged pupils reach the highest standards. While leaders have recently implemented new approaches to raising standards further with this group, the strategies being used

have not yet had enough time to impact positively on higher achievement levels for disadvantaged pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers are given the additional training in teaching techniques they need to develop their skills, particularly in meeting the needs of the most able pupils
- teachers are given opportunities to develop and improve their mathematical subject skills
- teachers can reliably assess pupils and use that knowledge to plan and deliver the most appropriate next steps in pupils' learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Andrew Lovett
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this short inspection, I met with you, senior leaders, governors, staff and pupils. I also met with an officer of the Bath and Wells multi-academy trust. Along with senior leaders, I visited lessons to observe learning and looked at the quality of work in pupils' books. I listened to pupils read. I considered documentary evidence relating to the impact of the school's work including your own self-evaluation and improvement plan. I also looked at safeguarding and behaviour records. I considered 116 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and talked with parents. I also took account of responses to questionnaires completed by staff and by pupils.