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Miss Lesley-Ann Roberts  
Headteacher  
Streatley C.E. Voluntary Controlled School  
The Coombe  
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Berkshire  
RG8 9QL

Dear Miss Roberts

### **Short inspection of Streatley C.E. Voluntary Controlled School**

Following my visit to the school on 15 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 March 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have achieved a great deal since taking up post as headteacher 18 months ago. Important improvements have been made and the capacity of the school to improve further has been strengthened. Staff, parents and carers, and pupils all recognise the improvements and have great confidence in you and in the school's future.

You have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. You set extremely high standards and will only accept the best for pupils. Recognising that not everything can be done at once, you have planned and prioritised improvements carefully over time. This has helped to ensure that changes and improvements are secure and embedded well. You also know your teachers very well, and use this knowledge to provide carefully tailored support and guidance. This has been extremely effective in helping them to develop their practice.

The development plan focuses sharply on the main things that the school needs to do to improve. There is, rightly, a strong emphasis on mathematics. The plan is a useful document, helping everyone to focus on the key priorities. However, it is not always clear from the plan what leaders are hoping to achieve by particular points in the year and who has responsibility for what. This makes it difficult to measure how much progress is being made.

Pupils are confident, friendly and enthusiastic. They are rightly proud of their school and recognise the benefits that growing up in a small village school like this can bring. They appreciate the spacious and beautiful site, and the way in which 'everyone knows everyone'. They feel very safe and nurtured, part of a strong community and are able to form strong friendships with pupils across all year groups.

The achievement of individual pupils is tracked very carefully. You focus very sharply on those who are not doing well, challenging and supporting teachers to accelerate their progress. Pupils achieve well, particularly in English. Their achievement in mathematics is not as strong, but is improving quickly. Staff have a strong commitment to inclusion and to ensuring that all pupils do well. A number of parents of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities told me how well the school has met their children's needs, some contrasting this with their experiences in other schools. Disadvantaged pupils do well, achieving as much as other pupils in the school.

At the last inspection, leaders were asked to ensure that teachers managed behaviour more consistently because pupils were sometimes losing concentration and becoming distracted. A new system was introduced, setting clear expectations for behaviour and clear consequences for pupils who failed to meet them. Behaviour has improved significantly. Pupils are fully absorbed by their work, concentrating and focusing well for extended periods. Leaders were also asked to develop easier access to outside areas to enable children in Reception to work and play more freely. The layout of the area has now been modified, with good access and an improved external environment.

Parents are extremely positive about the school and fulsome in their praise for your leadership. They like the way in which the school communicates and works closely with them. They also appreciate the range of opportunities for pupils after school, such as in sport and music, and recognise that this is unusual in a school of this size.

Governors are highly committed. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and a thorough appreciation of their roles and responsibilities. Some good work has been done recently to strengthen the way in which governors check on the school's work.

The school has been well supported by the local authority, which commissioned a consultant to work closely with you and your staff. His work has been sharply focused on the most important areas and has played an effective role in the school's improvement.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You, as the school's designated safeguarding lead, have a thorough understanding of safeguarding and a strong commitment to supporting pupils and keeping them safe. You follow through individual cases tenaciously where you need to. You rightly

have high expectations of other services, such as children's social care, and are clearly very willing to challenge robustly when pupils are not getting the right help. Good safeguarding procedures are in place and leaders ensure that the necessary checks are made when people join the school.

This is an extremely welcoming school. A number of pupils told me how they had been helped by other children when they joined Streatley from elsewhere. Pupils feel very safe. They say that bullying is extremely rare and that staff would sort out any that did occur. Parents are very confident in the school's ability to keep their children safe. They also recognise the strong and wide-ranging support that the school provides for families, whatever their problems and challenges. One parent summed it up when she described the school as 'my rock'.

### **Inspection findings**

- The headteacher has a thorough grasp of how pupils learn and develop literacy skills. She has made very good use of this to strengthen the way in which staff help pupils to learn to read and write. The school has a very rigorous approach to developing pupils' phonics knowledge. Pupils' progress in phonics is tracked carefully so that individuals can be given targeted support. As a result, the proportion of pupils meeting the Year 1 phonics standard has risen sharply in recent years and is now very high. Pupils' strong grounding in the basics of reading and writing is helping them to access learning in other subjects, leading to higher standards generally.
- Pupils make less progress in mathematics. The headteacher and governors recognise this and have made it the school's top priority. Significant progress has already been made. The mathematics curriculum has been developed to support pupils' learning more effectively. For example, pupils now have many more opportunities than previously to practise mathematical reasoning. Older pupils with gaps in their mathematical knowledge and understanding are being given targeted help to plug those gaps. Work in books shows that pupils are now starting to make rapid progress. Pupils recognise the improvements and say that they are now challenged much more in mathematics lessons.
- Staff recently revamped their approach to assessment and pupils' feedback, focusing on ensuring that feedback to pupils is 'meaningful, manageable and motivating'. There has been very good collaborative work between staff and with pupils to develop the new approach. Although still quite recent, early signs are that it is working well. Teachers provide pupils with regular and very helpful verbal feedback. Pupils have a clear picture of how they are doing and of what they need to work on. Teachers are very positive about the changes. They say that these are giving them a better picture of pupils' progress, but also a much more manageable workload.
- Some very good work has been done this year to strengthen the school's capacity by developing teachers' leadership roles. Each teacher now has a number of carefully tailored responsibilities, linked closely to the school's priorities and to their skills and experience. The headteacher provides excellent support, but also give teachers the freedom to lead and take responsibility. They

talk enthusiastically about this initiative. It is helping them to develop their leadership skills, while supporting a range of developments across the school.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are able to achieve as well in mathematics as they do in English
- the school development plan identifies clearly what should be achieved by particular points in the year, who has responsibility and the amount of progress that is being made.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Oxford and the director of children's services for West Berkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Russell  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, three teachers and three governors, including the chair of the governing body. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I also met with a group of key stage 2 pupils and considered the 26 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. I observed learning in four lessons or parts of lessons, all jointly with you. I took account of seven responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, six of which included a free-text comment, along with a letter written to me by a parent. These were considered alongside the results from the school's own survey. I also took account of the views of the 10 members of staff who responded to the online survey. I analysed a range of documentation. We discussed your evaluation of the school's effectiveness.