

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Mrs Gillian Mitchell  
Headteacher  
East Bergholt Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School  
School Lane  
East Bergholt  
Nr Colchester  
Suffolk  
CO7 6SW

Dear Mrs Mitchell

### **Short inspection of East Bergholt Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 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 the school was judged to be good in March 2015.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You are providing strong and purposeful leadership by raising standards across the school since the last inspection, including in the early years, by establishing a clear ethos for teaching, learning and good behaviour across the school. You have addressed the areas for improvement since the previous inspection effectively, especially in improving the learning and achievement of higher-attaining pupils, and improving pupils' writing across the school. In all classrooms, examples of all pupils' best writing were on display, and you are promoting their writing effectively through a weekly award for the best writer across the curriculum. As a result, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been above average by the end of key stages 1 and 2 for the past three years. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has also been consistently above average for the past three years. Your staff are continuing to ensure that pupils across the school are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

You have implemented a new curriculum and are developing pupils' enjoyment of learning by providing a broad range of subjects and experiences to capture their interests, such as forest schools and 'wow days'. However, you have yet to determine the full impact of the curriculum on the progress pupils are making across the wide range of subjects on offer. Leaders are ensuring that the curriculum is promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including

fundamental British values, well, particularly through a strong Christian ethos and links with the local church. Pupils are developing an appreciation of other cultures and religions through well-chosen topic work. Pupils' behaviour continues to be good and their above-average attendance and good punctuality reflect their enjoyment of school and positive attitudes to learning.

You have strengthened links with parents, who have every confidence in the work of the school. This is reflected in their positive responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and in their free-text responses during the inspection. One parent typically wrote: 'Bergholt primary is a well-managed school; the staff are all very friendly and helpful and it's lovely to see the headteacher and deputy head outside each morning to greet parents and pupils when they arrive at the school.'

You are ably supported by your deputy headteacher in ensuring that there is a strong culture for teaching, learning and good behaviour across the school. Staff share your commitment to continuous improvement, working together as a team. Their morale is good. This is reflected in the very positive responses from staff, all of whom are proud to work in the school, in their online questionnaires. You have developed strong links with local schools to share best practice. Strong links with the local high school enable pupils in Year 6 to transfer smoothly to secondary school when they leave.

Your governors are providing strong support for the school and have a first-hand view of its work through regular visits. They are rigorous in holding leaders to account for the school's work. They make sure that all legal requirements are met and policies are up to date. The work of school leaders, with effective support and challenge from governors, has strengthened the capacity of the school to improve on its journey towards becoming an outstanding school.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders and governors are making sure that the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils are fit for purpose. The school is implementing a strong culture of safeguarding across the school, including in the early years. The well-being and safety of pupils lies at the heart of everything you do and is promoted effectively through the curriculum. Staff work closely with parents and outside agencies to promote the safety and well-being of pupils. You ensure that all training in child protection is up to date, and you carry out thorough checks on the suitability of staff and visitors to work with pupils.

Staff provide good opportunities for pupils to learn how to use equipment, including the internet, safely. As a result, pupils stay safe and guard themselves from the potential dangers of the internet. Staff maintain high levels of supervision throughout the day and are thoroughly assessing all potential risks to pupils' safety. Consequently, pupils play safely in the playground and move in an orderly fashion from one part of the school to another. Parents, staff and pupils agree that bullying is rare. Pupils stay safe and are happy in school.

## Inspection findings

- I wanted to find out if pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were making equally good progress from their different starting points as their peers. This was because there was no information on the school's website about the progress these pupils were making. I found that the school's reliable information about progress showed that pupils with SEND are making good progress over time. This was also seen in our joint visits to lessons where these pupils were actively engaged in learning. Teachers made reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with SEND had full access to learning. Teaching assistants provided good support by carefully breaking tasks down into smaller achievable steps.
- The work seen in their books also showed that pupils with SEND are making good progress over time. A very small number of pupils with physical disabilities were making outstanding progress in physical education (PE), where their team came third in a countywide sports competition. Pupils with speech, language and communication needs and those with hearing impairments make equally good progress towards their individual targets as other pupils.
- I also wanted to determine how much progress pupils were making across subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics within the wider curriculum. This was because there was very little information about the progress pupils were making in the full range of subjects on offer. I found that pupils were benefiting from the wide range of subjects and activities on offer, including clubs, visits to places of interest and visitors to the school but that progress in learning across these subjects was limited.
- Pupils are doing particularly well in PE and making good progress in this subject across the school. They are successfully competing with other schools across the county in a wide range of sporting events. By the end of Year 6, their attainment in swimming is above average. Many pupils are eager to participate in the wide range of sports clubs on offer and they exercise vigorously. The school has achieved the gold Schools Games award in sports for the past two years and is on course this year to achieve this for the third time.
- The school's information about the achievement of pupils in history and geography shows that the majority of pupils are achieving standards expected for their ages, with a few doing better than this. Music is popular with pupils in school and the school choir has also participated in choral events at the O2 arena in London. However, the school does not have enough evidence to show how much progress pupils are making over time in music or in other subjects across the curriculum. In discussion about their topic work, pupils could only remember some of the key facts about their previous learning and in their STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) work, pupils were moving too quickly between topics so that their learning was superficial rather than secure. The school also has limited information about pupils' progress in art.
- Finally, I wanted to know how well leaders at all levels were determining the attainment and progress of pupils throughout the school across the wide range of

subjects and activities on offer. This was because there was little evidence of leaders' evaluation of the impact of the new curriculum on pupils' progress across the wide range of subjects on offer. I found that systems for assessing attainment and progress were limited and at an early stage of development in most subjects. This was because subject leaders were focusing on developing full coverage of the new curriculum across the school before developing systems of assessment. Nevertheless, the subject leaders for PE, history and geography had developed systems to assess pupils' attainment and progress in these subjects. The subject leader for art has also implemented a new system for assessing progress in Year 5, but not yet in other year groups.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they determine the progress pupils are making across the wide range of subjects within the whole curriculum
- the attainment and progress of pupils across the wide range of subjects are reported to governors so that the impact of the wider curriculum on pupils' achievements is clear.

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

Yours sincerely

Declan McCarthy  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I visited all classes, including the early years, with senior leaders to look at the impact of teaching on pupils' learning over time. During these visits, I looked at different pupils' work, including children in the early years and those with SEND, across a wide range of subjects. I met with you, the deputy headteacher, school leaders, five members of the governing body, a group of pupils and eight parents. I took account of the 64 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and their 62 free-text responses. I also looked at the online questionnaire responses from staff and pupils. I scrutinised a range of documentation including: the external review conducted by three local schools that work closely with your school; the local authority review of the school's work; your self-evaluation documentation and school improvement plan; the school's safeguarding and child protection policies; governors' minutes and records of visits; the school's information about the progress pupils make over time; attendance figures; and records of behaviour.