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Mr P Vine
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Dear Mr Vine

Short inspection of Leamington Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 4 July 2017, 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 2013.

This school continues to be good

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Both you and the executive headteacher have worked tirelessly to provide a good quality of education for the pupils in your care. The vision and passion you share are evident in the nurture and care you provide for the pupils. The uncompromising belief, expressed by the executive headteacher, that 'learning grows from here', is exemplified in the leadership of the school.

Your staff are dedicated and hardworking. Classrooms are 'places of sanctuary'. High-quality display, reading corners and soothing music, add to the ambience in school. Staff make good use of the well-stocked library and the range of intervention and therapy/sensory rooms you have provided. As a consequence, pupils are happy and confident learners and their behaviour is good.

At the previous inspection, the inspector reported on the strength of your governing body and leadership team. The documents I examined, together with the meetings held with leaders, confirm that this strength has been maintained. You have a highly-experienced and committed governing body, which shares your vision and your understanding of the community in which you work. The governors' knowledge and commitment to support parents, carers, staff and pupils, has enhanced the school's provision.

At the time of the previous inspection, leaders were asked to further develop the challenge given to the most able pupils, and to increase the rigour and detail in improvement planning.

You have acted to tackle these issues. The school's self-evaluation and action planning is thorough and detailed. Your curriculum has been further developed to include a greater focus on reading and on mastery and problem-solving. This approach is ensuring that pupils are able to address their learning with greater confidence and with a wider range of skills across the curriculum. The most able pupils are challenged well in most lessons, particularly in key stage 2. However, further time is required to embed strategies in the early years and key stage 1, to ensure that the most able children and pupils are also fully challenged. The learning observed in pupils' books and in lessons throughout the school, shows that pupils are engaged and work well.

In the early years, you have provided additional provision for two-year-olds to address weaknesses identified in the performance of children in the Reception Year. This has successfully supported development in many areas, including in children's gross motor skills, confidence and children's speaking and listening abilities. As a consequence, they are now better prepared for the next stage of their learning.

Results have increased year on year and pupils are making rapid progress from very low starting points on entry. While still below national expectations at Year 2, pupils leave your school at the end of Year 6 with results above those found nationally for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. You are still working to further develop outcomes for the most able younger pupils and this will remain a focus for you.

Safeguarding is effective

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that children are kept safe. Records are detailed and of a high standard.

The school site is safe and secure and the identity of visitors is closely checked. Vigilance is high among staff and pupils. For example, a pupil in Year 3 asked politely to see the identification badge of the inspector before undertaking a conversation with her. The school was quick to replace a damaged finger safeguard in the nursery when it was highlighted. All the appropriate vetting checks are completed before a member of staff or volunteer starts working at the school.

As the designated safeguarding leader, you have ensured that all staff understand the school's safeguarding policy and new legislation. Together with the deputy safeguarding leader, you keep detailed records relating to the safety of pupils. Governors and staff have completed safeguarding training, including training in the 'Prevent' duty. You complete an annual audit of safeguarding arrangements, in which there is full compliance. This ensures that pupils are kept free from harm and risks are minimised.

Parents are unanimous in their view that this is a safe and happy school where their children make good progress. They share your drive for improved attendance, and support the strategies put in place by the attendance officer and learning mentor to ensure that pupils arrive in school on time.

Almost all parents who responded to the survey agree that the school is a safe and happy place where pupils thrive. One parent said, 'The school is a very happy place and there is not a day that goes by when Mr Vine is not standing on the yard or at the gate at the end of the day acknowledging every child and parent...'

Inspection findings

- You, together with your staff and governors, know the school very well. My visit did not uncover anything that you had not already highlighted in your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness. Action was already under way to tackle any relative weaknesses and results were clear to see during the inspection.
- Members of the governing body are aware of their statutory duties and have a clear understanding of the school's performance and how this compares with that of other schools in the country. Governors ask challenging questions, work with leaders to implement changes to teaching and learning, and monitor such changes thoroughly. For example, the governors' focus, alongside other leaders and staff, on developing the teaching of reading and phonics has helped to achieve a substantial increase in the proportion of pupils who passed the phonics screening test this year, especially for disadvantaged pupils. In addition, overall results in reading for pupils in key stage 2 are now well above the national average.
- The attendance officer works effectively with a range of agencies to support pupils and parents. This helps pupils to attend school more regularly. As a result, the current attendance for all groups has risen and is now above the 2016 national average. The number of pupils with persistent absence has also reduced by more than two-thirds since last year. The impact of this improved attendance is clear to see in the recent overall improvement in pupils' outcomes across the school. You and the school community should feel very proud of the progress that you have made in this area.
- Children enter the school with skills that are typically below those expected for their age. From these low starting points, children make good progress. However, the overall proportion who reach the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1 remains below the national average.
- A new curriculum has been introduced which emphasises 'sensory focusing' to address pupils' increasingly complex needs. Leaders told me that 'pupils are not passive participants' and that 'enhancement' is the key to the curriculum. This gives your pupils a broad range of experiences beyond the classroom. As a

result, the outcomes for most groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are improving.

- In key stage 2, most pupils make progress which is in line with, or above, the current national average in reading, writing and mathematics, and their attainment reflects this picture. In 2017, provisional results show that the overall proportion of pupils who achieved the expected levels is higher than the previous year and there was an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics. As a consequence, pupils are well-prepared overall for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' books evidence a broad and balanced curriculum, with many opportunities for practical-learning experiences. However, handwriting is not consistently well taught throughout the school, resulting in pupils' work often being untidy and sometimes difficult to read. Leaders are aware of this issue and plans are in place to ensure full compliance with the school's policy for teaching handwriting.
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is spent wisely. You provide a broad range of interventions, led by well-trained staff, and well-targeted support for pupils with particular needs.
- Provision in the early years is good and the number of disadvantaged children achieving a good level of development has increased from last year. The environment is designed to meet the identified needs of all children, including those who are disadvantaged, and as a consequence, they are focused and happy. You have invested in high-quality outdoor provision for nursery and reception children (also recently extended to include pupils in Year 1), to support and enhance their gross motor skills and confidence, and to encourage speaking and listening. Children have, as part of their extensive provision, a pond, a bridge and a full-sized hand-pump to pump water into a pond. One child told me: 'I like watering the plants; you can get your socks off and put your feet in the pond.'
- While high-quality questioning was evident in indoor teacher-led activities in the reception class, some children were not questioned to further challenge their thinking when taking part in independent learning.
- The behaviour of pupils is very good. They wear their uniform with pride and were keen to tell me that bullying is not a problem in their school. As a consequence, you have very low exclusion rates and fixed-term exclusions have reduced since 2014.
- The leader for the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEN and disabilities) works exceptionally well with outside agencies in proactively driving improvement for this group of pupils. One parent noted, 'The SEN and disabilities [provision] is brilliant here. Lots of strategies are put into place and things are dealt with quickly.' As a consequence of your focus on inclusive practice, your school has recently received the Inclusion Charter Mark.

This reflects leaders' vision and commitment to drive forward outcomes for all pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- strategies already put into place to further develop outcomes for the most able pupils in the early years and in key stage 1 have the desired impact over time and are closely monitored
- staff in the early years enhance the learning for the most able children by more skilfully questioning them when children are exploring independent activities
- the skills of middle leaders are further developed to enable them to better support staff in addressing key priorities for improvement, such as handwriting and challenging the most able in the early years and in key stage 1.

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

Yours sincerely

Gill Pritchard

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the deputy safeguarding leader, the executive headteacher and three members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. I also met with the leader for the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the attendance leader. I had informal discussions with a group of parents and pupils to seek their views of the school. Finally, I met with a representative from the local authority who is your school improvement adviser.

I visited the Nursery and Reception classes, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 6 classrooms, as part of my tour of the school, accompanied by you and the executive headteacher. Examples of pupils' work were scrutinised and I listened to pupils read while in lessons. I observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and as they moved around the school. A number of documents were reviewed, including your record of checks on the suitability of staff, the school's self-evaluation form, the school improvement plan, assessment information, behaviour logs, attendance records, and records relating to the monitoring of teaching and learning. I also took account of 18 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. I considered information posted on the school website.