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Mrs Janet Davies
Headteacher
Lister Infant and Nursery School
Green Lane
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Dear Mrs Davies

Short inspection of Lister Infant and Nursery School.

Following my visit to the school on 2 November 2016, 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 September 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are a clear sighted and effective leader. Under your leadership the school provides a nurturing, caring and family-orientated environment for all pupils. Each child is recognised as a unique individual and their safety, welfare and academic achievement are high on your list of priorities. As a result, pupils move on to the junior school well prepared for the next stage of their education and the challenges that lie ahead.

You never stand still and immediate action is put in place to deal with and address any underachievement. For example, you have employed a specialist teacher, on a part-time basis, to help develop children's speech and language skills. This intuitive appointment has had a positive impact on improving children's communication skills. As your local authority adviser told me, you 'are a visionary leader and are continually looking for ways to improve the school'.

You have the full backing of your staff who are obviously proud to work at your school. They work well as a team and morale is high. Through your encouragement, support and mentoring, staff are inspired to develop their roles in education.

Your school is recognised by others as an exemplar of good practice. For example, the teaching of French is a strength and your school provides demonstration lessons for other schools in the locality. The tracking system which

you have devised has been shared with others, as has your approach to ensure that the pupil premium money is used to good effect.

You have recently introduced a new behaviour management system which is consistently applied across the school. As a result, standards of behaviour around the school have significantly improved and relationships, at all levels, are respectful. As a visitor to your school I was made to feel very welcome. Touring the school with you, I observed confident, happy children who feel safe and enjoy coming to school.

You have created an atmosphere of excitement for learning in your pupils. Those I spoke to during a group discussion were keen and enthusiastic to learn. They took great delight in telling me about the exciting range of trips that you and your staff arrange to inspire their learning and arouse their curiosity. Your staff give generously of their time to provide a varied range of clubs after school, which children clearly enjoy. Pupils enjoy the responsibilities you give them, for example as members of the school council. Being part of the 'enterprise club', where pupils design, make and sell things for a profit, teaches them valuable life skills. Learning to play the recorder and speaking French are opportunities which pupils relish. Indeed, at the end of our discussion they sang a song to me eloquently in French.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of all aspects of the school's work. They describe the transition arrangements, both into the school and onwards to the juniors, as 'seamless'. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities spoke of the 'best possible support and education' being given to their children. Parents feel involved in their children's education and would have no hesitation in recommending the school to others.

At the last inspection, you were asked to ensure that during lessons pupils had access to more targeted support to accelerate their progress. In addition, teachers were asked to check pupils' understanding throughout the lessons to ensure that they were making the best possible progress. These issues have been addressed. During lesson observations, I observed teachers making good use of questioning to assess pupils' understanding. In addition, I observed targeted support being given to pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure that they made the best possible progress. The school also now has a dedicated member of staff to support those pupils who are gifted and talented. This ensures that the needs of the most able, including those who are disadvantaged, are met.

As a further area for development at the last inspection the school was asked to enhance teachers' skills to bring creative, innovative elements into their lessons. You and your staff embraced this challenge with vigour and have brought the curriculum to life. For example, you now celebrate a wider range of local and national events such as the royal wedding, the Olympics and the World Cup. You became one of the first schools in the locality to achieve a nationally recognised award for reading. You also were awarded a grant to create 'communication

sacks'. These are lent out to parents of nursery children to support parents in developing their children's language skills at home. Finally, you have also been involved in a music project with the local authority to use singing as a tool to support learning across the curriculum. You have found that this has been particularly effective in the teaching of mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

Procedures to safeguard pupils are well embedded and there is a culture of vigilance throughout the school. Entry to the school is secure and visitors' credentials are meticulously checked. A coded entry system is in place in each of the foundation stage classrooms which further ensures pupils' safety. Staff are knowledgeable about all safeguarding procedures including the latest national concerns of radicalisation, female genital mutilation and sexual exploitation. All staff have read part one of 'Keeping children safe in education' and safeguarding issues are always at the top of the list at staff meetings. Staff are aware that anyone can make a safeguarding referral. Those with responsibility for safeguarding and safer recruitment have completed training at the appropriate level. All documentation which I examined relating to safeguarding contained the required detail and is fit for purpose. Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe when online and a filtering system is in place.

Inspection findings

- You and your deputy work well as a team. Your self-evaluation is accurate, clearly demonstrating that you both have a good overview of what the school does particularly well and what further improvements are needed. When reflecting on the school's performance you also take into consideration the views of staff, parents and governors.
- The school development plan is sharply focused in bringing about improvements in a timely manner. Targets are measurable, which allows senior leaders and governors to effectively monitor the progress the school is making towards achieving their goals.
- Teachers have embraced the new systems that you have put in place which have further improved the quality of teaching. The monitoring of teaching is rigorous and is done through formal observations, learning walks, reviews of planning and scrutiny of pupils' work. Teachers appreciate the written feedback that you give them after formal lesson observations, which is very detailed. However, we are both in agreement that it does not focus succinctly enough on the progress that different groups of pupils are making.
- From their starting points in early years, children from all groups, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able, make strong gains in their learning. Published data in 2015 shows that in recent years the number of children achieving a good level of development is above the national average. The progress and attainment for pupils at the end of key stage 1, over the last few years, has been high and significantly above the national average.
- For a number of justifiable reasons, including high mobility and some new

arrivals to the country starting in the summer term, the unvalidated test results for 2016 are skewed. From looking at the school's detailed tracking system and examining individual case studies it is clear that, overall, all groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and the most able, make good progress from their starting points. However, from observing lessons and looking in pupils' books, we both agree that, at times, the most able are not being consistently challenged to reach the higher standards and achieve greater depth in their learning.

- Pupils are keen writers and examples of their work are displayed around the school. For example, in conjunction with a history topic, they compiled an information booklet about what happened the night the Titanic sank. As part of a science topic, pupils wrote about the life cycle of a butterfly. Pupils also show a love of reading and make good use of their phonic knowledge to sound out unknown words. Some of the most able pupils are able to predict what might happen next in the plot and talk about the type of books they particularly like reading.
- Mathematics is taught well. From an early age, mathematical concepts are woven into the daily routine. For example, very young children are encouraged to identify colours and count in sequence as they play. The most able pupils in key stage 1 enjoyed creating mathematics challenges for their friends to solve as part of a 'maths day'.
- The roles of the English and mathematics subject leaders are well embedded. However, we both agree that more could be done to strengthen further the role of the leaders of other subjects. This would enable them to have a greater impact on the teaching, learning and assessment in their subject area of responsibility.
- Careful consideration is given to ensure the pupil premium money is well spent to break down barriers to learning. Published data in 2015 highlighted that attendance was an issue for some disadvantaged pupils. To address this, the school has employed a learning mentor who works with families. As a result, attendance is rising. However, there is more work to be done as there are still a small minority of pupils who are persistently absent from school.
- Your website is impressive and provides parents with a wealth of information in relation to their child's education. It is bright, colourful and easy to navigate.
- You are a great advocate of working collaboratively with other schools to support and challenge each other. For example, you work closely with other schools to ensure that baseline assessments are accurate and that your assessment procedures are consistent with other schools. Tuebrook Children's Centre has provided you and your staff with effective support in setting up the two-year-olds provision in your school. Pupils also have valuable opportunities to develop their artistic skills by working with Holly Lodge Girls' School to create prints and sculptures.
- Governors know the school well and are aware of their responsibilities. They share your vision and are clear about the school's priorities. Although very supportive of you they are not afraid to challenge you when necessary. As a

governing body they are strong.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils are consistently challenged in all aspects of their learning
- written feedback to teachers after formal lesson observations is more sharply focused on the progress that different groups of pupils make
- the roles of middle leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics are strengthened so that they have a greater impact on teaching, learning and assessment
- well-targeted support is given to the small group of pupils who are persistently absent from school.

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

Sheila Iwaskow
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, your deputy and members of the governing body. I also had informal discussions with a group of parents and staff. I spoke to a representative of the local authority on the phone. I went on a tour of the school to see the learning that was taking place. I listened to children read and observed behaviour at different times of the day. I reviewed a range of documentation including the single central record, the school's self-evaluation and development plan. I also took account of the responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire completed by parents and staff.

During the inspection I considered how well the school has responded to the areas for improvement raised at the last inspection. I also considered how well reading, writing and mathematics were being taught and the progress that pupils were making in other subjects, such as history and geography. I looked at how well the pupil premium money was being used to support disadvantaged pupils and what was being done to improve attendance. Finally, I considered whether the governing body offered sufficient challenge to the school and whether safeguarding arrangements were effective.