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Mr Paul Hollidge
Headteacher
Longfields Primary and Nursery School
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Dear Mr Hollidge

Short inspection of Longfields Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 22 February 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 November 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You rightly set high expectations for your staff and pupils. You demonstrate a clear desire for all staff and pupils to achieve their best. You have developed an effective leadership team, using delegation successfully to ensure that team members have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. You have recently overseen significant building work, resulting in improved facilities for pupils. The open, supportive culture of the school enables pupils and staff to succeed.

The school is a calm and orderly environment. You develop pupils' positive attitudes to learning effectively. High-quality teaching enables the majority of pupils to make rapid progress. During lessons, pupils settle well and focus on their work. They talk with enthusiasm and clarity about their learning. Staff and pupils demonstrate positive relationships with each other. As a result, pupils are safe and happy, and have the confidence to ask questions and take risks. Your school's values promote respect and inclusion. This is reflected in the consistently good behaviour demonstrated by pupils. Pupils speak with clarity about the importance of ensuring that everyone feels valued and welcome, and how they have learned to treat others with respect.

At the time of the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve the teaching of phonics. Leaders were also asked to ensure that the teaching of phonics supported rapid progress in writing. You have provided appropriate training for teachers and teaching assistants in the teaching of phonics. It is taught well in the early years and in Year 1. As a result, the majority of pupils make rapid progress. You have ensured that effective teaching of phonics in Year 2 enables the few pupils who have not reached a high enough standard to catch up.

Leaders were also asked to ensure that responsibility for checking pupils' progress was more widely shared so that teachers could adapt teaching appropriately. You have ensured that effective monitoring procedures are in place. Teachers demonstrate a good understanding of individual pupils' needs. As a result, they adapt most of their teaching appropriately, although some of the teaching of mathematics in key stage 2 still does not always meet the needs of the most able. Teachers take responsibility for swiftly identifying pupils who are not making enough progress and ensure that appropriate additional support is provided to help these pupils to catch up. Members of your leadership team take responsibility for monitoring pupils' attainment during each key stage. As a result, leaders have an accurate understanding of pupils' current rates of progress.

Rates of pupils' attendance during the previous academic year were below the national average and were particularly low for disadvantaged pupils, girls and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. You have identified the urgent need to improve rates of pupils' attendance and are taking effective action to do so. While improvements have been made, the rates of attendance of some pupils are still not high enough.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of high quality. Staff training is up to date. Staff demonstrate an awareness of how to identify and report concerns about pupils' welfare. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including online. Leaders have taken steps to ensure that internet access is filtered appropriately.

The school is a safe and secure environment. Pupils are looked after well by the adults who care for them. When concerns do arise, leaders work effectively with external agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Leaders understand the additional needs of children who are looked after, and work effectively to support and protect them.

Inspection findings

- I investigated how effectively leaders are addressing high rates of pupils' absence and how well leaders promote positive behaviour. The school community is warm and welcoming, promoting positive staff and pupil relationships. Pupils and staff work well together. Your clear vision of an inclusive community where everyone can succeed is well communicated and this vision is shared by staff and pupils. As a result, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning throughout the school and they discuss respect, tolerance and inclusivity well. Pupils work well with each other in lessons to share ideas and develop understanding. Incidents of poor behaviour are infrequent and pupils say that if incidents do occur, they are dealt with effectively. The use of exclusion is rare.
- You rightly act to improve poor attendance. Pupils with high rates of absence are rapidly identified and you accurately recognise the reasons why these pupils do not attend school regularly enough. As a result, appropriate support is provided to improve some pupils' rates of attendance. You make good use of pupil premium funding to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. You build positive relationships with parents and carers, developing a shared responsibility for improving pupils' rates of attendance. There is still further work to be done to ensure that all pupils attend regularly enough.
- I investigated how effectively leaders are improving the quality of teaching. You place a clear emphasis on maintaining high-quality teaching. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching in the school. As a result, they swiftly identify areas that need further improvement, and you provide training for staff that is appropriate to their needs. You have created a culture in which staff welcome challenge and are keen to share best practice. As a result, staff work well together to improve outcomes for pupils. You correctly allocate time for teachers to undertake further development of their skills and knowledge.
- Your work to improve the teaching of phonics and writing has been successful. The majority of pupils reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check by the end of Year 1, and almost all pupils who do not, catch up by the end of Year 2. Children in the early years are provided with many opportunities to develop their writing. You place a strong emphasis on developing enjoyment of writing from an early age. The majority of pupils in the school understand how to review and improve their written work. As a result, the majority of pupils make rapid progress in writing.
- I investigated how well leaders ensure that teaching meets the needs of the most able pupils. Leaders ensure that the teaching of reading and writing provides consistent challenge for all pupils. Pupils' work and your information about current pupils' attainment show rapid progress in reading and writing for most pupils, including the most able. While many pupils also make rapid progress in mathematics, you have accurately identified that some of the most able pupils still do not make enough progress in key stage 2.

- You have provided appropriate training for staff, to ensure that more teaching of mathematics meets the needs of the most able pupils. You have deployed staff effectively, giving the most able pupils additional opportunities to deepen their understanding. However, some teaching of mathematics in key stage 2 is not yet sufficiently challenging for them. As a result, too few of the most able pupils make the rapid progress of which they are capable.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching of mathematics is further improved so that more of the most able pupils make rapid progress during key stage 2
- attendance rates for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities continue to improve.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Corr
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I checked safeguarding arrangements, including the records of recruitment checks, policies and procedures. I reviewed a range of published information, including the school's website. I reviewed the school's self-evaluation and raising achievement plan. I visited classes in all key stages with the headteacher, where I looked at pupils' work, spoke to pupils and talked to their teachers. In meetings with senior leaders, we discussed attendance, behaviour, the use of the pupil premium, progress information for current pupils, development of the curriculum, monitoring of teaching, and staff training. I observed pupils during breaktime. I spoke with a group of teachers and a group of pupils. I met with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I considered 111 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, 35 responses to the pupil survey, 31 responses to the staff survey and two letters received from parents.