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Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Jackaman

### **Short inspection of Maiden Newton, Greenford Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 10 May 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. As headteacher, you lead the school with an unyielding determination to raise standards and ensure that all pupils make the progress they are capable of. You have high expectations for staff and pupils and these underpin the school's improvement journey. You are supported by an effective leadership team. Your work to develop the expertise of subject leaders has led to greater levels of distributed leadership. As a result, these leaders are now making a significant contribution to whole-school improvement.

On arrival at the school in September 2016, you quickly identified how historical weaknesses in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment had led to underachievement for pupils, especially in key stage 2. You wasted no time in making the required changes and, during my visit, you were able to demonstrate the impact of your actions. As a result of your strong leadership, outcomes for current pupils are now good across the school.

Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas that require further improvement. You ensure that they receive regular information about the progress pupils are making which is tailored to aid their understanding. Governors are beginning to visit the school more frequently in order to check the accuracy of the information they are given. However, governors' minutes do not evidence that governors are routinely and consistently holding leaders to account for pupils' outcomes or

providing them with sufficient levels of challenge.

Pupils are proud of the school and talk positively about their learning. All of the pupils who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire said they would recommend the school to other pupils. Similarly, parents and carers who I spoke with during the inspection all spoke highly of the school, particularly its caring, nurturing ethos. One parent, summing up the view of many, stated: 'My children are very happy at Greenford School and we have been very pleased with their progress ... their teachers have gone out of their way to make them feel safe, happy and able to learn. They are well cared for from a pastoral sense, as well as academically.' The majority of parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, said they would recommend the school to other parents.

At the previous inspection, leaders were asked firstly to improve the quality of phonics teaching so that all pupils, especially the most able, develop their understanding quicker. Since then, you have introduced a more consistent, systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. Teachers and teaching assistants display good subject knowledge and pupils have a secure understanding of the sounds that letters and groups of letters make. As a result of this, attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been at least in line with the national average for the past three years. In 2017, nearly all pupils had achieved the standard by the end of Year 2.

Secondly, leaders were asked to ensure that pupils are consistently given time to improve their work in response to teachers' feedback. You have reviewed the school's policy for feeding back to pupils and, through your monitoring, are ensuring that this is being applied consistently by teachers.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

As the designated safeguarding lead, you ensure that pupils' safety and welfare is a high priority throughout the school. You are supported and challenged in this by a knowledgeable and proactive safeguarding governor. Training is up to date and reviewed regularly. As a result, staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The school's records are thorough, as are the checks to ensure the suitability of staff, governors and volunteers.

Pupils say they feel safe in school. They told me that bullying sometimes happens but those spoken with were confident that they could talk to any adult in school and their concerns would be dealt with effectively. A few parents who completed the online survey expressed concerns about the school's approach to bullying but this view was not supported by inspection evidence. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of how to stay safe when working online. They know not to share personal information and to talk to a trusted adult at home or at school if they have any concerns.

A strength of your work is in supporting pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. In-school support, including the employment of a counsellor, is helping to remove barriers to pupils' learning and raising their self-esteem. You have established effective partnerships with parents and a wide range of external agencies. You are a strong advocate for pupils' welfare and are tenacious in following up your concerns when the

support provided by these agencies falls short of your high expectations.

## **Inspection findings**

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed the key lines of enquiry that we would follow during the day. First, we decided to evaluate the effectiveness of leaders' actions to raise outcomes for pupils in key stage 2, especially in writing. This was because published assessment data for 2017 showed that rates of progress for pupils at the end of Year 6 were lower than in previous years. Additionally, pupils' writing progress was significantly below that of other pupils nationally with similar key stage 1 starting points.
- The evidence that you presented shows that when you joined the school in September 2016, a large number of pupils were working below the levels expected for their age and prior attainment. You immediately put in place systems to raise the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and, consequently, rates of progress. Pupils' work shows that the 2017 Year 6 cohort made rapid progress across Years 5 and 6. However, this progress was not sufficient to address weaker progress over time.
- Our scrutiny of current pupils' writing and mathematics books showed that they are making good progress. In the majority of cases, this is leading to greater proportions of pupils now working within the expectations for their age. In writing, teachers plan activities which provide pupils with a purpose for their writing. This is engaging pupils and making them want to write.
- We agreed that, although improving, there is still more work to be done in embedding spelling across the school. In both key stage 1 and key stage 2, there are inconsistencies in how teachers are correcting spellings and you recognised the importance of teachers holding pupils to account when they incorrectly spell words that they have previously been taught. Additionally, some pupils are over-reliant on their phonics knowledge; for example, they write 'rowd' instead of 'road'. In Years 5 and 6, there are still some pupils with a weak understanding of key spelling patterns, for example 'comeing' and 'writting'.
- Assessment information for 2017 shows that in key stage 2, the most able pupils made less progress than other pupils. Additionally, the proportions of early years children who were assessed as exceeding the reading, writing and mathematics early learning goals were lower than in previous years. Therefore, our next trail was to consider how teachers are challenging the most able pupils to reach the higher standards.
- Teachers across the school have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. They have a secure understanding of the expectations for their particular year group, both for the expected standards and for greater depth. This is leading to teachers routinely planning activities which enable the most able pupils to demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding above that expected for their age.
- In mathematics, teachers provide pupils of all abilities with regular opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills across different contexts. Pupils show good levels of reasoning. They are able to explain what they are doing, justifying the method they have chosen. In writing, teachers have good subject knowledge. Pupils can talk clearly about their grammar and punctuation choices. The work in their books shows that

pupils are developing their ability to manipulate language and write for a range of purpose and audiences. Teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to practise and apply their writing skills in extended pieces covering a range of curriculum subjects, for example in explanation texts about the process of mummification. In the early years, children are challenged to work above the early learning goals, both in teacher-led activities and in child-initiated play. This is resulting in children making good progress, with some children, especially in writing, working within the expectations for Year 1.

- Finally, we agreed to look at how effectively leaders and teachers are using assessment information to ensure that all pupils make strong progress from their starting points. This was because, in 2017, although the attainment of pupils in key stage 1 was above the national average, it represented only expected levels of progress from pupils' equally high outcomes at the end of the Reception Year.
- You have added greater rigour to the school's tracking system. Robust moderation has led to a greater accuracy of assessment information and teachers now take ownership of the information for their class. You regularly meet with teachers to discuss the progress of individual pupils, as well as the barriers they may be facing in their learning. Pupils' progress is tracked across each academic year, and from their starting points. This is ensuring that pupils at risk of falling behind are quickly identified.
- This greater rigour has led to pupils making good progress. We agreed that the next step is to increase the number of pupils making accelerated progress. This will lead to higher proportions of pupils working at the higher standards and greater depth.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- raised expectations for the quality of pupils' spelling are embedded across the school, so pupils routinely apply their knowledge of phonics and spelling patterns in their independent writing
- governors hold leaders to account with greater rigour and that this challenge is recorded in their minutes
- in all phases of the school, greater proportions of pupils are working at the higher standards and at greater depth.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Dyer  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you to discuss the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress and improvements made since the previous inspection. Together, we observed pupils in classrooms and spoke with them about their learning. We analysed work in pupils' writing and mathematics books.

I had meetings with members of staff and four governors, including the chair of governors. I also spoke with a representative from the local authority. I looked at a range of written evidence, including documents relating to safeguarding. I observed pupils at lunchtime and gathered their views on various aspects of the school. I also spoke with parents at the end of the school day. I took account of the views expressed by 44 parents who completed the online survey, as well as their written comments. I also considered the views of staff and pupils who returned their questionnaires.