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Mrs Sasha Howard  
Headteacher  
Meldreth Primary School  
High Street  
Meldreth  
Hertfordshire  
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Dear Mrs Howard

### **Short inspection of Meldreth Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 21 January 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 2010.

You and your leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. Since your appointment in September 2014, you have demonstrated strong leadership and provided a clear vision for the school's improvement. You have shown determination and great commitment to improve the school and build on its previous successes. Ably supported by fellow school leaders, including governors, your leadership has resulted in many improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, pupils achieve well across the school.

The previous inspection report identified the need to improve mathematics teaching. The school was also asked to improve pupils' spelling, their use of grammar and the way in which they present their work. As a result of the actions you have taken the following improvements have been made:

- The teaching of mathematics is now highly effective. Pupils have regular opportunities to use and apply their knowledge and understanding of mathematics to investigate and solve problems. They make excellent progress across the school. In 2015, pupils' attainment in mathematics was well above the national average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The quality of pupils' writing is a strength of the school. Pupils have regular opportunities to write, both within English lessons and in other subjects across the curriculum. Attainment in writing was significantly above the national average at the end of Year 6 in 2015.

You are ambitious for the school to become outstanding at its next inspection, and recognise that further improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment need to be made, in some year groups, if this goal is to be achieved. The plans that you have made, for these and other improvements, are appropriate, detailed and reflect your high aspirations for the school.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a strong culture in the school of keeping pupils safe and secure. School leaders ensure that appropriate safeguarding policies are in place and are regularly reviewed, in accordance with requirements. Procedures and responsibilities are clearly defined and rigorously implemented. School leaders, including governors, ensure that all relevant recruitment procedures are followed; all new members of staff are carefully checked before beginning their work at the school. Training for all members of staff is up to date, including training on the government's 'Prevent' strategy, which has provided staff with a good understanding of how to protect pupils from the risk of exposure to extreme views and opinions.

Staff and governors understand the responsibilities that they have to ensure pupils' safety. Staff follow up concerns thoroughly. Pupils say that they feel safe while in school. They say that if they were to have any concerns, for example about bullying, then they would know which adults to go to. They have full trust in the adults who care for them.

### **Inspection findings**

- This is a school that is improving rapidly. You have high aspirations for the school and the focus you have placed on delivering high-quality education has resulted in significant improvements. The work seen in pupils' books during this inspection was generally of a high standard, particularly in upper Key Stage 2. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015, was well above the national average.
- Staff and governors share your ambition for the school. They are highly supportive of you and are committed to doing as much as they can for all pupils. As one member of staff said, 'The respect, care and well-being afforded to all, children and staff alike, at Meldreth Primary School makes it a very enjoyable and rewarding place to work.'
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to study a wide range of subjects. Pupils are also encouraged to apply and develop their mathematical skills in subjects such as science and computing. Pupils write regularly and often at length, across a variety of subjects, including history and geography. Visits to places such as Sutton Hoo and the annual residential trip to Scarborough, provide exciting opportunities for pupils to learn outside of the classroom. These experiences help pupils to achieve well and ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in upper Key Stage 2 is consistently outstanding. In both classes pupils make rapid progress. Elsewhere in the school, teaching is typically good. Effective action has been taken to address relative weaknesses and plans for further improvements are well focused.
- The systems that you have developed to check on the work of the school are thorough and effective. You make regular and detailed checks on the quality of teaching and the impact it is having on pupils' learning. You involve other leaders fully in this process, using their expertise and developing their leadership skills in the process. As a result, you have a clear understanding of where the school's strengths lie, and recognise those areas that are not yet of a high enough standard to be judged as outstanding. Your plans to further improve the school are detailed and appropriately focused.
- Meldreth Primary School is a nurturing and supportive place. There is a clear and successful focus on pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. In classrooms and corridors, children's work is celebrated in attractive displays, from high-quality poetry to artwork. The school's curriculum helps pupils to understand about different religions and cultures. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and look after one another. Older pupils regularly take on roles such as play leaders and peer mediators. Tolerance and respect are at the heart of the school's work.
- Pupils enjoy learning and want to do well. They read widely and often. During lessons, they engage actively and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They respond well to teachers and other adults working in the classroom, which helps them to learn. They attend regularly and are rightly proud of their school.
- A very large majority of parents who responded to Parent View are supportive of the school. They are extremely positive about the quality of care and the education that their children receive. A typical comment was, 'We are welcomed into school to share so many experiences with the children and the teachers are always available when we have concerns.'
- The governing body is highly effective in both supporting and challenging school leaders. Governors have a good understanding of the school. They know where the strengths are, and they are aware of what needs to improve further. Whenever new governors are required, the governing body ensures that any gaps in expertise are filled wherever possible. As a result the current governing body has an appropriate range of both knowledge and experience.
- The school is constantly looking for ways to improve. It has a positive relationship with the local authority, which provides a good level of challenge and support. Teachers and school leaders also work regularly with the local network of schools, sharing expertise and moderating work. This open approach highlights the school's commitment to continuous improvement.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- further improvements are made to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils in all classes make rapid progress.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Cambridge. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Paul Tomkow  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I met with you and other members of your leadership team. I spoke with four members of the governing body, including the Chair, and also met with a representative of the local authority. I visited each class with you to observe teaching and look at pupils' work. I had conversations with pupils throughout the day and observed their behaviour during lunchtime. I evaluated the accuracy of your self-evaluation, and looked at your plans for improvement. I checked the effectiveness of your safeguarding arrangements and spoke with pupils about their experience of school. I spoke with parents at the start of the day and considered the 30 responses to Parent View. I considered the views of staff who I spoke to during the inspection along with the 12 responses to the staff questionnaire.