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Helen Brambani  
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WR11 8TL

Dear Mrs Brambani

### **Short inspection of The Littletons CofE First School**

Following my visit to the school on 27 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.

### **This school continues to be good.**

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

- You and your two senior teachers are an effective and productive leadership team. You work well together and have an accurate view of what is working well in the school and what still needs improvement. You have placed these improvements in order of priority accurately and produced detailed and thorough improvement plans.
- You have successfully tackled those areas identified as needing improvement at the last inspection. Attendance has improved and mathematical skills are being applied more widely.
- You provide staff with a range of good quality support and training which enables them to be effective in their teaching.
- As a result of your successful work to secure the five school values across the curriculum, the range of opportunities you provide for pupils during their time at The Littletons, and your high expectations, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very strong.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) is a strength of the school. You have succeeded in developing a consistent approach to teaching that is yielding very positive results.

- You have clear expectations of behaviour. As a result, pupils behave sensibly in and around the school. They show interest in their learning and can talk confidently about what they have learned and how they have improved.
- Pupils feel safe and well looked after. They expressed absolute confidence that adults listen to them and take their concerns seriously. They are happy to come to school and this is shown in their regular attendance.
- You have the support of the staff and parents, who are overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school.
- Your work to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils has been successful in ensuring that these pupils make as much progress, and in many cases faster progress, than their peers.
- You have rightly identified that, in the past, children in the early years have not made enough progress. As a result of the changes you have made, there is evidence that children are progressing more quickly. You are acutely aware that this must continue consistently to enable children to reach their potential by the end of the year.
- You have also correctly identified that some of the most-able pupils could be challenged to take on more difficult work sooner.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Your approach to keeping pupils safe is thorough and systematic. You have ensured that all staff are alert to signs that pupils may be at risk of harm by providing regular training and ensuring that staff understand what to do if they are worried about a pupil. Your records show that you treat concerns appropriately seriously and act quickly. The records you keep are detailed and you are extremely knowledgeable about individual cases.

Pupils are able to explain how to keep safe when they are using computers, when accessing the outdoor play equipment and what they would do if approached by a stranger. This is because they have lessons and assemblies that help them to understand the risks associated with different activities. Pupils feel safe at school and have full confidence that adults will listen to them, take action and care for them.

### **Inspection findings**

- You and your leaders have the support of the staff and the parents, who are overwhelmingly positive about the work you are doing to improve the school. You have maintained the strengths reported at the last inspection.
- Your self-evaluation is accurate in identifying the precise areas that need improvement. In particular, you and your leaders recognise that the progress of children in early years has not been good enough. Evidence from this visit and information from the regular checks you make show that staff are taking effective action to bring about improvements quickly. There are indications that children are making better progress than in the past.

- There have been a number of changes in staff since the last inspection. As a result of effective recruitment, you have developed a strong teaching team. They value the opportunity to develop their skills and share good practice through the three weekly 'professional discussions'. This has led to a high level of consistency between classes in the good progress that pupils make. In addition, you have not been afraid to take action where teaching has been less than good.
- Regular coaching, training and discussions in staff meetings have ensured a high degree of consistency in the way that pupils develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills. For example, the consistent use of 'Mr Prove It' in Key Stage 1 is successful at encouraging pupils to explain their answers in mathematics and science. This allows teachers to assess fully what pupils understand about different concepts.
- Particularly impressive is the way that pupils can talk about the progress that they are making. They are able to articulate clearly using their 'cold and hot tasks' what they have learned over a period of three weeks. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 spoke positively about the 'teacher time' that they receive, stating that it helped them to understand exactly how they could improve their work.
- Pupils appreciate the opportunities they have to make decisions about the school, for example voting on their class name each year and making suggestions for pupils to receive rewards. It helps to build a sense of community. This fulfils part of the school motto of 'Belong, Believe, Achieve'.
- Governors know the school well, and its strengths and its weaknesses. They are not afraid to ask questions to challenge the information that they receive or to visit the school to make checks for themselves.
- Teachers are clear about the expectation to make work appropriately challenging for different groups of pupils, particularly the most able. However, there are times when pupils are not moved quickly enough onto the harder learning that the teacher has planned.

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

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- the improvements evident in the early years are maintained and lead to a higher proportion of pupils achieving or exceeding the expected standard at the end of the year than has been the case in the recent past
- the most-able pupils are consistently challenged to think hard and apply their learning in more demanding contexts, as soon as they are ready.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Worcester, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Worcestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Howie

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

In order to discuss how well pupils are progressing and to verify the improvement work that has taken place since the last inspection, I met with you and your senior leaders and a representative of the governing body. I also spoke to an officer from the local authority on the telephone. Together, you, one of your senior teachers and I visited lessons to observe pupils learning and look at their work. I spoke with parents at the end of the school day and took into consideration a recent parent survey undertaken by the school. There were too few responses on Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View to view. I analysed nine responses to the staff questionnaire. I also evaluated the accuracy of your self-evaluation along with a range of other documents and checked the effectiveness of your safeguarding arrangements.