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Philip Percival  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Percival

### **Short inspection of Middleton Cheney Primary Academy**

Following my visit to the academy on 9 February 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in May 2011.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leaders have continued to develop a friendly, inclusive and safe school. You have also developed the outside environment so that pupils have a variety of opportunities to play with each other. You teach pupils how to stay safe and who to trust if they need help.

Leaders and governors evaluate pupils' achievements regularly and, as a result, they know the school well. They have correctly recognised that pupils' progress in writing at Key Stage 2 was not good enough. You have recognised that this was because too few of the more-able pupils made more than expected progress in writing. You have taken effective action to address this including:

- tracking pupils carefully to ensure more pupils, and particularly the more able, are making accelerated progress
- challenging and supporting teachers to ensure pupils make as much progress as possible
- providing training, support and guidance to staff on how to teach writing more effectively
- moderating teachers' assessments and raising expectations of pupils
- revising the curriculum to provide more opportunities for writing in English lessons and across the curriculum

- purchasing additional resources to support the teaching and learning of writing.

As a result, pupils are now making good progress.

Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have improved the resources available to teach computing and for computing to support learning across the curriculum. The computing suite has had new computers, every classroom has an interactive whiteboard and there is a set of tablets that can be used in classrooms. The computing lesson, which you and I observed, exemplified how much the pupils enjoy computing and how they are clearly motivated to use it to support their learning. You are also piloting the use of dual interactive whiteboards that can be used by more than one person at a time and the use of e-readers to promote reading.

Leaders and managers have also revised the computing curriculum to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities to learn computing and use it in other subjects. More recently leaders and managers reviewed the new curriculum and identified an area of relatively poor provision: coding. You have addressed this by revising the curriculum, buying software and providing associated training so that teachers are better able to teach coding to the pupils. The computing curriculum now needs to be formalised in a curriculum map and clearly represented in each year group's curriculum summary.

Following the previous inspection, leaders were set the challenge of providing pupils with more opportunities to improve their knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity in Great Britain. Leaders and managers have successfully met the challenge; pupils were able to talk confidently about what they have learned about different cultures and faiths, in class and in assemblies. You achieved this by:

- raising the awareness and expectations of staff and providing them with training
- auditing resources and seeking out more culturally diverse resources
- reviewing and revising the curriculum to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities to learn about cultural diversity and British values.

The curriculum provision now needs to be summarised and included on the academy website. In addition, year group curriculum summaries should all have common features including the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and British values.

You have also developed opportunities to extend pupils' understanding of diversity within their own extended community by developing links with the Frank Wise School. This was exemplified by the computing lesson in Year 6, where pupils from Middleton Cheney Primary Academy learnt how to use an app to animate a familiar story, alongside pupils with disabilities and special educational needs from the Frank Wise School.

In addition, you have revised your annual plan of school assemblies so that it includes all the major faiths. The academy council have acted upon this and instigated class culture days where pupils learn about different cultures; dressing up, eating food and learning about what it is like to be of that culture. This improvement in pupils' understanding of diversity has influenced the charities you support, such as 'Twinning Toilets'.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and the other safeguarding leads are clear about your roles and responsibilities and ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You have ensured that staff know what is expected of them and that pupils know who they can trust and who they can go to if they need help. You and the safeguarding leads have also ensured that all staff are well trained. You update staff regularly and have trained them on the 'Prevent' guidance and protective behaviours.

Pupils and parents report that pupils feel safe and happy at the school. Pupils confidently shared with me how staff teach them to stay safe in the outside world and online.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders and governors know the school well and have a good understanding of pupils' achievements. They evaluate the standards achieved by the school and correctly identify the areas that require improvement. They then plan effectively to bring about the necessary improvements, take action and evaluate the impact of the improvements. In order to build on this effective practice, leaders and governors need to evaluate the impact of their actions in more detail, in terms of improved pupil outcomes.
- Overall, the standards attained by pupils in early years and Key Stage 1 in 2015 were good. They were also good in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 2. However, the value added progress achieved in writing was below the national average. This was because too few of the more-able pupils made more than expected progress. You recognised this and have taken effective action; consequently, pupils are now making good progress in writing. Disadvantaged pupils achieve well and the proportion of disadvantaged pupils making expected or more than expected progress was in line with or above the national average for all pupils.
- Teaching, assessment and learning are good. Teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. They use open and closed questions to check pupils' learning and to develop pupils' thinking. The dialogue observed between teachers and pupils was stimulating and motivating and engaged the vast majority of pupils in their learning. Teachers monitor pupils' learning in lessons and intervene to help pupils to understand misconceptions and make progress. The expectations of staff throughout the school contributed to the calm, caring atmosphere and positive learning behaviours observed. No low-level disruptive behaviour was observed.
- Leaders have recently introduced a new curriculum and ensured that it addresses the areas for improvement in the previous inspection report and

the school's self-evaluation. You have also introduced a new assessment and tracking system to meet the needs of the new curriculum. You are providing teachers with training and support, including moderation, which has enabled them to maintain high expectations of pupils.

- Parents who met with me during the inspection were all positive about the academy and its staff. They said that their children were safe and enjoyed coming to school. They also said that teaching was good, that teachers were very accommodating and that overall communication was good. The views I heard were reflected in the views of those parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, in which the overwhelming majority said that they would recommend the academy to another parent.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good. They behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. Pupils do as adults ask and are clearly motivated by their learning; responding enthusiastically to teachers' questions. They were keen to tell me about their school and explained how the merit system encourages them to do their best and behave well.
- The safeguarding leads make certain that staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities. They provide staff with appropriate training so staff understand their role in safeguarding and the risks faced by pupils. Pupils were clear that they were safe and that staff helped to keep them safe. They shared with me how they were taught to be safe in the outside world, such as through 'Bikeability' and e-safety.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- more-able pupils make more than expected progress in writing
- they evaluate the impact of improvements in more detail and in terms of improved pupil outcomes
- the computing curriculum, the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and British values are formalised in an overarching curriculum plan or map and included on the school website.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Chair of the multi-academy trust, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Northamptonshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Derek Myers  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, the assistant headteacher who leads English, the ICT leader and the Chair of the Governing Body. We discussed your current school self-evaluation and your development plan. I reviewed both of them. We also reviewed your provision for science and for cultural diversity and British values. You and I visited classrooms and learning areas to observe teaching, talk to pupils and look at their work. I evaluated information about pupils' progress, attendance and exclusion. I observed and talked with pupils in their classes and met with eight pupils. I met with you and one of the safeguarding leads and reviewed your systems, processes and records relating to safeguarding. The assistant headteacher and I undertook a scrutiny of work from a sample of pupils. I met with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day and considered their views alongside the responses from Parent View. I also considered staff views. I spoke with the Chairman of the multi-academy trust. I also reviewed the academy website and how effectively PE sport funding and the pupil premium grant were used.