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Mrs Heidi Daughtry
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Daughtry

Short inspection of Clifton CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 8 March 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 March 2011.

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 team are very dedicated and eager to improve the standard of education further. As a result, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 has been on an upward trend since the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy school and the older pupils take good care of the younger ones.

In lessons, pupils work enthusiastically and are keen to succeed. In class 3, pupils were enjoying writing limericks and spoke clearly when reading their work out loud to the rest of the class. In class 1, pupils were engrossed making coleslaw as part of the 'farm to fork' project. The pupils were chopping and grating vegetables to make a delicious salad.

The school is at the heart of the village and Year 6 pupils regularly lead services at the local church. Recently, the school took part in the 'Clean for the Queen' project to pick up litter from around the school and the village. The school participates in a range of sporting tournaments against other schools and has achieved well. Pupils are also well aware of environmental issues and plant crops in their planting boxes in the school grounds.

At the previous inspection, inspectors praised leaders for managing the school well and for the good standards achieved by pupils. Inspectors also identified, however,

that leaders needed to have a more detailed overview of how well pupils were progressing. In addition, inspectors asked leaders to improve the opportunities for children to learn outside in Reception and to strengthen the effectiveness of the governing body so that their checks on the school's performance were more effective.

In response to these areas for improvement, you now carefully track the progress that the pupils are making through the school. You have introduced a new assessment system to measure pupils' progress against the new curriculum and have moderated work with other schools in the local cluster to ensure your judgements are accurate. However, you have recognised that you need to moderate pupils' work from all year groups to ensure the assessments are reliable throughout the school.

There is now easy access for children in class 1 to learn outside and well as indoors. All areas for learning are catered for outside. Children were observed making green soup and thinking of all the green vegetables that could make the colour green. Every Friday the children have the opportunity to participate in outdoor learning around the school grounds. Activities have included orienteering, looking at the different habitats of animals and listening to bird songs. Outcomes have risen in the early years over recent years and are now just above the national average.

The governors have completed an extensive audit of their skills to ensure that they have a broad range of expertise. Governors are very committed to the school. They have a good understanding of the progress that children make and compare the school's outcomes to those achieved nationally. In addition, they use the local authority adviser's report to ensure that they are receiving an external view of how well the school is doing. Governors regularly visit the school to check the school's progress and as a result, the school continues to provide a good standard of education.

You and your team have correctly recognised the need to improve pupils' achievement in phonics (the sounds that letters represent) in Year 1 and pupils' spelling in Key Stage 2. In addition, teachers have started to develop pupils' reasoning skills in mathematics, but this is not yet secure. I have asked you to also increase the challenge for the most-able pupils in mathematics in Key Stage 1 to raise standards even higher.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and governors ensure safeguarding procedures meet requirements. You work closely with a range of external agencies and parents to meet the needs of pupils. As a result, pupils benefit from the support that is given to them. Governors complete an annual safeguarding audit with you, to ensure the school is meeting the latest requirements. All staff have completed 'Prevent' training to help them understand how to protect pupils from the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Governors also attend safeguarding training. The leadership team has ensured that

all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that record-keeping is detailed.

Pupils' behaviour around the school is good. Analysis of behaviour logs shows very few incidents of poor behaviour in the current academic year. Pupils told me that bullying is rare. Pupils are well aware of the potential dangers on the internet and know not to share personal details. Pupils' attendance is consistently high and above the national average.

Inspection findings

- You continue to lead the school well. You have developed a positive climate for learning where pupils and staff feel valued. Subject leaders are committed to raising standards even further by attending training and working with other schools. As a result, the school continues to improve and standards at the end of Year 6 have risen since the previous inspection.
- Governors are well informed about the school's priorities and are eager that the staff work with other schools to share good practice to raise standards even further. Governors ask good questions about the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Governors oversee the performance management process of staff very well, ensuring that the school's priorities are being met.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics by the end of Year 6. In class 4, pupils were calculating the volume of cuboids and then challenged to calculate the volume of cylinders and triangular prisms. Pupils from Key Stage 2 told me that the work usually challenges them. Teachers are currently giving more opportunities for pupils to reason mathematically to solve problems, but this is not yet embedded into the curriculum. In Key Stage 1 there is insufficient challenge for the most-able pupils. As a result, they do not achieve as highly as they could.
- Leaders recognise that writing needs to improve in the early years to increase the number of children who achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception. Pupils have made good progress in their writing since September. Pupils' letter formation and ability to write in sentences have progressed well. Pupils are using their phonics knowledge to spell simple words. The most-able pupils are writing stories at length. As a result, outcomes in writing are expected to rise this year, as well as the number of children attaining a good level of development.
- Leaders have also prioritised improving pupils' outcomes in the Year 1 phonics check. For the past two years, results have been below the national average. As a result of training, staff have changed the way they teach phonics and this has increased pupils' engagement. Pupils were observed singing rhymes and completing actions to sounds they have learned. Pupils

in Year 1 were challenged by split-digraphs. The pupils rose to the challenge and were eager to read and spell new words. Some younger pupils did require more support than they were given when they were learning a new sound in order for them to achieve. More pupils in Year 1 are expected to pass the phonics check this year.

- Improving pupils' writing at Key Stage 1 has also been a focus for the school. Pupils are being given many opportunities to write at length in class 2. As a consequence, pupils are building their stamina to write extended pieces of writing and are achieving well. However, not enough opportunities are being given to pupils in Key Stage 2 to write at length. As a result, pupils are not developing their writing composition well enough. In addition, pupils' spelling in Key Stage 2 is weaker than it should be, particularly for the most-able pupils.
- The school enjoys good links with parents. Of those parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's parental questionnaire, all said they would recommend the school to another parent. Governors have also recently conducted a parent survey which had 59 responses. This showed that the very large majority of parents feel the school responds effectively to any concerns that they raise. A recent mathematics' evening to show parents how the school teaches the subject was well received by parents.
- Pupils are motivated to learn and strive to earn house points and have their name in the 'gold book'. In addition, pupils are keen to add 10p to the 'pay it forward' jar to raise money for pupils in their link school in India. Members of the school council have decided they want the fund to buy snacks for the children in India, because they have learned that the pupils can be hungry. A teacher from the school recently visited India and the pupils have been very interested to learn new facts. Pupils in class 3 have researched the Bengal Tiger and learned about Indian block printing. As a consequence, pupils' knowledge of another culture is expanding. Last year pupils from the school visited a gurdwara, a mosque and the local church to compare different places of worship. This improved pupils' knowledge and understanding of different religions.
- The school promotes British values well. Pupils visited a polling station last year to learn more about democracy. The local police come into school to inform pupils about the rule of law. Recently, class 3 visited the National Arboretum to place decorated stones in memory of those who have lost lives. Pupils also respect other individuals who may have different backgrounds to their own. One pupil said, 'Treat others as you want to be treated yourself.'
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity well. Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are supported well. The school monitors the performance of girls and boys. Last year, girls attained higher than boys in

all end-of-key-stage assessments. This year, boys are expected to achieve higher than girls in Key Stage 1.

- Pupils are very proud of the sporting ethos of the school. Pupils participate in a range of tournaments and festivals with other local schools. These have included football and gymnastics. Leaders' monitoring shows the majority of pupils participate in the tournaments or in the extra-curricular clubs. Last year, the school reached the national finals for swimming – coming eighth. More recently the school has reached the county finals for tag rugby. In addition, the older pupils enjoy leading lunchtime sporting clubs for the younger children. As a result, relationships between pupils of all ages are good.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- standards in writing improve, particularly in Key Stage 2, by giving pupils more opportunities to write at length
- there are more opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical reasoning skills
- the most-able pupils are challenged in mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 1.

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

Yours sincerely

Martin Finch
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met you; a senior teacher; subject leaders for English and mathematics; four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body; and a representative from the local authority. We carried out joint observations in every classroom and scrutinised pupils' work. I spoke to parents, observed pupils at break time and ate lunch with the pupils. I met with a group of pupils from Years 2 to 6. We viewed records about keeping children safe. I considered the 12 responses from

Parent View and the six responses from the staff survey. I also looked at your self-evaluation, the school development plan, your teaching and learning monitoring file, pupils' current assessments, governors' minutes, performance management documentation, attendance data and behaviour logs.