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Mr Ian Rockey
Headteacher
Westwood-with-Iford Primary School
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Dear Mr Rockey

Short inspection of Westwood-with-Iford Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 15 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 July 2011.

This school continues to be good.

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

Although you were appointed after the previous inspection, you have led the school with the drive and energy needed to ensure its continued development. On appointment, you quickly identified that further improvement was required. Your approach of engaging all those involved with the school has been a key feature of your successful leadership. As a result, staff are very supportive and enjoy working with you. Governors too recognise that they appointed the right person to lead the school and are confident that you will continue to take the school forward. Parents are delighted with how well their children achieve at the school and talk about how you lead the school with real passion and energy.

You have a good understanding of the school's current position and recognise that its development is at an important crossroads. You are being ably supported by staff working at the school as they are fully committed to implementing further changes to ensure that the school goes from strength to strength. Similarly, the governing body is fully behind the current plans for the school's development. Your regular meetings with the chair of the governing body ensure that he is fully aware of the school's progress and the challenges still to be overcome. He and the other members of the governing body are great advocates for the school and give generously of their time to support you and the school.

Since your appointment, the school has enjoyed a sustained period of stability that has helped everyone to focus on the same priorities. During this time, you have concentrated on making the improvements recommended in the previous inspection report. For example, the strong focus on improving standards in mathematics has seen a steady rise over the last three years so that pupils' attainment is now close to or just above the national average.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils' safety is at the heart of all the school's work. Staff are fully committed to ensuring that pupils are well cared for and looked after while at the school. They are fully up to date with current training and have a clear overview of their responsibilities to ensure that pupils are kept safe. They are knowledgeable about the procedures they need to follow should they have any concerns about pupils' safety. As headteacher, you take the lead responsibility for ensuring that there is a strong and appropriate priority on keeping pupils safe. You have recently completed training about the government's 'Prevent' duty, which focuses on the risks faced by extremism. You have shared this information with staff so that they too are aware of the dangers posed to children.

The governors also take a leading role in ensuring pupils' safety. The chair of the governing body brings a high level of expertise to this aspect of the school's work and works closely with you to promote a very safe culture. You work together very well. For example, the regular health and safety reviews that you both carry out ensure that the school is kept secure and that any changes being made help to improve the site's security. All staff have completed first-aid training and appropriate records are maintained of all incidents occurring.

Inspection findings

- One of the stand-out features of this inspection was the exceptionally positive feedback from parents. Although this is a relatively small school, large numbers of parents responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and many also wrote, often at length, to give their views about the school and its leadership. To sum up, they are overwhelming in their praise for the school and how well it is run. All the comments highlight just how pleased they are that their children attend your school. They describe the school as being very friendly with a real community spirit. You, as headteacher, are singled out for particular praise with parents seeing you as being 'the ideal head' because you are 'approachable, enthusiastic and have a really positive, caring manner with the children'. Parents are also appreciative of the good communications between school and home, and they recognise that their views are listened to and acted on.
- Staff also hold very positive views about the school, describing it as like belonging to a large family. There is a clear sense of purpose and a positive 'can do' attitude from staff working at the school.

- You work closely with the governing body to plan the school's development. The school's current improvement priorities focus on relevant areas that target raising standards, improving the quality of teaching, strengthening leadership and management, and promoting high standards of behaviour and safety. The plan highlights the actions being implemented to bring about the intended outcomes. However, some of the performance indicators, used to evaluate the impact of each initiative, are not always sufficiently challenging and, in one or two cases, represent a backwards step from the school's current position.
- Leaders' previous actions have had a positive impact on the school's performance. The whole-school focus on strengthening the teaching of phonics, sounds that letters make, has helped to dramatically improve pupils' ability to sound out unfamiliar words. Consequently, the proportion of Year 1 pupils meeting the expected standard increased last year to be well above the national average. This work, along with the overall focus on generating a love of books, has also helped to strengthen pupils' interest in reading. As a result, reading standards at the end of key stage 1 have risen over the last three years. A similar picture also exists across key stage 2 with pupils' reading standards at a higher level than the national average.
- Leaders are vigilant in monitoring how well different groups of pupils are performing. They have focused on closing the gap between girls' and boys' achievement by introducing a stimulating curriculum that involves pupils in using their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, during the inspection, Years 5 and 6 pupils enjoyed writing in detail, using their developing scientific vocabulary, to describe what happens when events unfold in slow motion. Similarly, the greater emphasis on pitching work to challenge and stretch pupils' learning is helping a greater proportion of the most-able pupils to achieve the higher standards.
- Staff identify opportunities to use the school's curriculum to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of other countries. Current work has engaged pupils in finding out about life in France and the United States of America. This approach is clearly helping to broaden pupils' awareness of the similarities and differences that exist between different countries.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and exhibit positive attitudes to learning. They respond quickly to teachers' instructions and focus diligently on the different activities planned. Work in pupils' books shows that there is a clear progression in their development as standards improve across the school. Handwriting is taught well so that by the time pupils are ready to transfer to secondary school they can write neatly and at speed while using a joined script.

- Staff meet regularly during the year to assess the progress and performance of each individual pupil. The information they gather is recorded on the school's tracking system and used to determine which pupils are in danger of slipping behind. When this happens, teachers review the support being provided and, if necessary, discuss alternative approaches with the school's special educational needs coordinator. As a result, these pupils are quickly helped to get back on track.
- The decision to employ a part-time special educational needs coordinator is having a positive impact on the school's work. Not only is the school able to delegate an important responsibility to an additional member of staff, teachers and teaching assistants are able to draw upon her considerable expertise and experience when planning work to support pupils who have special educational needs or disability. This approach is helping these pupils do well and make at least the progress expected.
- Teachers with subject leadership responsibility for English and mathematics are growing in confidence and contributing to the school's improvement work. Although relatively new to their leadership roles, they are increasingly working with colleagues to assess and prioritise pupils' performance in their respective subjects. They are appreciative of the support and training that they have received. They work closely with the governors linked to their particular subject, which helps to ensure that the governing body is well informed of progress being made.
- Governors make a strong contribution to the school's work. They visit regularly to see the pupils at work and to meet with school leaders. Their 'hands-on' approach, along with the information provided by the school, ensures that they are very knowledgeable about the impact of each new initiative being introduced. Individual members bring a wide range of skills and expertise to the governing body, which enables them to ask pertinent questions when challenging school leaders about the impact of their work.
- The school's use of technology is another key element in its continuing success. Your approach and enthusiasm for this subject is helping pupils to rapidly develop their computing skills. The use of 'blogging' to communicate is an innovative approach that has resulted in the school's website receiving a very high number of 'hits' from visitors interested to find out about the school. The website provides a wide range of valuable information about the school's work. However, some of the content is not current and, as a result, the website does not fully meet the government's regulations.

- Pupils behave well around the school. They get on well together and enjoy playing with one another during breaks and lunchtimes. When outside, pupils use the space well and have good access to a playing field and a range of outdoor equipment, which they enjoy. Supervision levels are good. Pupils respond quickly to instructions, so that at the end of break they are ready to move back to their classrooms ready to learn.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- identify appropriately challenging targets for the school's future development that build on previous successes
- increase opportunities for subject leaders to lead the drive to improve pupils' achievement in their respective subjects
- update the school's website regularly so that it complies with current government regulations.

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

Yours sincerely

Ken Buxton
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met you, the staff and two governors, including the chair of the governing body. I also met with the school's improvement adviser. During the day, I visited every class to observe teaching and to see pupils at work. You joined me in visits to two classrooms. I also met with a group of pupils to discuss their views about the school. In addition, I reviewed information about pupils' progress and other relevant school documentation, including minutes of recent governing body meetings and numerous reports about the school's effectiveness. I also scrutinised a wide range of the school's safeguarding documentation and records. In addition, I looked at the 29 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. I also took account of parents' written responses to Parent View and noted the eight responses to the staff questionnaire.