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Mrs Heather Good
Westover Green Community School
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Dear Mrs Good

Short inspection of Westover Green Community 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 February 2011.

This school continues to be good.

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

You lead your school effectively and have the utmost respect of pupils, staff and parents. You are determined that every pupil, whatever their need, ability or background, achieves well and is given every opportunity to be successful. The school is a harmonious place where pupils and staff interact positively; pupils genuinely enjoy coming to school. Your leadership team supports you well, helping to ensure that the school maintains its good standard of education and showing a determination, and capacity, to bring about further improvement. All staff who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire said that they are proud to be a member of staff at the school.

Pupils join Reception with low social, reading and writing skills. The Reception class is extremely well organised, with a wide range of activities to meet and develop each pupil's individual needs; the classroom is a hive of learning with positive interaction between pupils and adults. Pupils make rapid progress in phonics (the letters that sounds make), which develops their reading skills effectively; by the end of Year 1, pupils' phonics levels are in line with other pupils nationally.

Leaders recognise that pupils' attainment in writing over time has not been high enough. A concerted effort to drive up standards is having a positive impact. Staff have received helpful training, which ensures that the teaching of writing is

consistent across all year groups. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from trips and visits which stimulate their imagination and improve the quality of their creative writing. The writing that pupils currently produce indicates that they make good progress in English lessons. However, pupils' writing in subjects other than English is not yet of the same quality.

The teaching of mathematics has improved, with staff embracing the new National Curriculum and its emphasis on pupils mastering key concepts and ideas. Pupils' basic mathematical skills are well developed and they talk positively of their enjoyment of mathematics. Pupils do not, though, always receive enough opportunities to solve mathematical problems that really challenge their thinking and deepen their learning.

The attendance of pupils has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Leaders have raised the importance of good attendance with pupils and parents; rigorous systems are now in place to monitor each pupil's attendance level. Alongside the local authority education welfare officer, leaders take appropriate action to tackle poor attendees and also, through the home-school liaison worker, to offer families extra support when needed. Attendance of groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, is also rising.

Safeguarding is effective.

The designated safeguarding leaders at the school are trained to a high level. All staff have regular training to ensure that they understand the school's policies and practice with regards to safeguarding pupils. Staff work effectively with external agencies and with parents to monitor and support any potentially vulnerable pupils. The school's website is fully compliant with legislation and provides helpful information for parents, should they have any concerns regarding their child's safety.

Pupils have a very well developed understanding of safety, in particular when using the internet. Effective procedures are in place for pupils to report immediately any suspicious activity on the internet; pupils fully understand how to use this warning system.

Inspection findings

- Pupils' behaviour and conduct in lessons and around the school site are exceptional. They have excellent attitudes to their learning; relationships between teachers and pupils are a real strength of the school. Pupils appreciate the kind and supportive nature of the staff at the school. They wear their uniform with pride.
- The school provides a good curriculum and a wide range of enrichment activities. Pupils fully appreciate the clubs available to them, including cooking, dance, drama and sports. The curriculum helps pupils develop a good understanding of people of different backgrounds, beliefs and cultures;

pupils show high levels of respect for each other, whatever their background.

- Through visitors, including authors and poets, more-able pupils are inspired to read and write to very high levels. Weekly sessions are well designed to meet more-able pupils' individual talents and interests. For example, during this inspection, pupils worked with a poet and illustrator to produce a poem of very high quality based on the idea of candlelight in the darkness: one pupil wrote, 'See the warm gold flame as it flickers in the night'.
- Teachers plan activities which stimulate and engage pupils. Classrooms are calm and purposeful environments. Pupils use the classrooms to display pieces of their work and they can articulate the improvements they have made. They also respond positively to their teachers' feedback and use this effectively to improve, or 'polish', their work.
- The needs of disadvantaged pupils are met effectively. The teacher responsible for pupil premium funding tracks and monitors each pupil's academic progress and involvement in enrichment activities to ensure that they are achieving well. Any pupil who is at risk of falling behind is quickly given extra help. This support is effectively evaluated. As a result, disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as other pupils in the school.
- Leaders have a very accurate view of the school's strengths, pupils' achievement, and areas in need of further development. Governors are well-informed of how well the school is performing and provide an appropriate level of challenge and support to leaders.
- The local authority does not provide any academic support to leaders at the school as, correctly, they deem the school to be performing well. The school does, though, benefit from the local authority education welfare officer's support in improving pupils' attendance. The local authority uses the headteacher's expertise as a local leader of education to support two other schools in the county.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' writing skills are effectively developed across all aspects of the curriculum
- pupils have regular opportunities to solve mathematical problems that fully challenge their thinking and deepen their learning.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Somerset County Council.

This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Rowe
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, leaders, governors, a group of pupils and a representative of the local authority. We visited lessons, spoke to pupils in these lessons and scrutinised the quality of their work in books. I also considered documentary evidence related to the impact of the school's work, including in safeguarding, attendance, and use of the pupil premium funding. I took into account the responses to the Ofsted questionnaires from 31 pupils, 39 staff and 23 parents.