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David Perkins
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Perkins

Short inspection of Laureate Community Primary School and Nursery

Following my visit to the school on 17 May 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 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. Although the school remains good, it has improved greatly over the last three years. You have focused very well on the most important points for development and standards are rising as a result. Your very strong leadership and clear vision have given the school a strong sense of direction and a shared sense of purpose. You have built a leadership team that is also deeply committed to further improvement and, as a result, is increasingly effective.

The school's 'REACH' motto (respect, enjoy, achieve, communicate and be healthy) is reinforced in every element of the school's work. Pupils are respectful of adults and each other and are keen to do well. It is clear that you have made 'REACH' a part of the school's day-to-day operation that is meaningful and aspirational.

Pupils enjoy school. They behave well and show good attitudes to learning. Pupils show particularly good understanding of equality and diversity. In a meeting with the school council, one pupil said, 'No one here is racist' and explained that prejudice of any sort is not tolerated at Laureate.

A large proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language and many pupils are at very early stages of learning English when they join the school. Pupils make rapid progress in learning to speak English and are quickly able to converse fluently. You value the 25 other languages that are spoken in the school and

celebrate pupils' abilities to speak them through their appointment as 'language ambassadors' and through the 'language of the month'. This has done much to address the recommendation from the previous inspection that leaders should do more to promote cohesion in the community.

The points for improvement from the last inspection have been addressed well. The school's overall standards have improved enormously over the last three years but the results of the key stage 2 national tests remained below average in 2015. You are fully committed to ensuring that standards rise to at least the national average in the very near future.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school's leaders have ensured that statutory requirements are met and that safeguarding is effective. You and the designated safeguarding lead have both received appropriate training to lead this vital area of the school's work. Two additional members of staff have also received designated safeguarding lead training, meaning that there is always an appropriate leader available to speak to should a concern arise.

You and the designated safeguarding lead have an excellent understanding of the issues around safeguarding children. You take action quickly when it is necessary and are tenacious in your approach to following up concerns and referrals to other agencies. Records are thorough, well organised and stored securely.

The school's single central record meets statutory requirements. The school's approach to staff recruitment is robust and all necessary checks are made before new recruits are allowed to take up their posts. The school also checks the suitability of volunteers well, before they are allowed to start helping in the school, and ensures that they are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.

Inspection findings

- You have a very accurate understanding of the quality of teaching in the school. You understand very well that what you see in the classroom when you observe a lesson is only part of your determination of the overall quality of teaching and learning for any particular group of pupils. You have high expectations of staff and take appropriate action when these expectations are not met. Although some weaknesses remain, the quality of teaching in the school is good overall and is improving as a result of your effective and decisive leadership.
- Your unrelenting focus on raising standards has paid dividends. Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 has risen, year on year, for the last three years. In 2013, the gap between Laureate pupils' overall attainment and the national average was significant. Although a gap still remains, this is now greatly reduced and the school is on track to close the gap entirely.

- The quality of the early years provision has improved greatly and children now make good progress during their time in the early years. In 2013, only 18% of children achieved a good level of development. By 2015, this figure had risen to 73%, meaning that the proportion that reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception year is now above the national average. Although many children enter the school's nursery with communication and language skills that are well below those typical for their age, the good quality of provision means that they catch up quickly.
- In 2015, far fewer boys than girls reached a good level of development by the end of the Reception year. This reversed the 2014 outcomes, where girls achieved far less well than the boys. This year, boys and girls are making equally good progress because you have ensured that the early years provision meets the needs of both genders equally.
- Phonics (the relationships between letters and sounds) is taught well. The proportion of pupils who reached the expected level in the Year 1 phonics screening check was well above the national average in 2015, and you expect it to be even higher this year. The strong start that children make in learning to recognise letters and sounds was exemplified in an observation of a phonics session in the Nursery. Children demonstrated knowledge and skills above those typical of their age and remained interested and focused throughout the whole-class session.
- You are deeply committed to improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. You have invested heavily in employing qualified teachers to provide additional support and targeted teaching (interventions) for disadvantaged pupils. You have found that this approach works very well for the school. Interventions are monitored very closely and they are changed promptly if they have not had the necessary impact on helping the individual pupil to make good progress after a reasonable length of time. A member of the senior leadership team summed this up by saying, 'If it's not working for that child, it stops and something else goes in its place.' Overall, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress throughout the school, although less so where teaching is weaker.
- You are equally committed to ensuring that children who are, or who have been, in the care of the local authority make good progress and achieve well. The designated teacher for these children ensures that these pupils' personal education plans include targets for academic achievement as well as personal and social development. You closely monitor the progress that these pupils make and, again, ensure that the impact of interventions is checked regularly. As a result, children looked after by the local authority make good progress.
- The quality of pupils' writing is improving and pupils make good progress overall. In some classes, many pupils are working above the expected standard for their age. However, where teaching is less effective, pupils make slower progress. Expectations are high and pupils take great pride in

their work. Pupils know their 'one thing' targets well and say that they find this approach very helpful in guiding them as to how to improve their work. They also find 'DIRT' marking (dedicated improvement and reflection time) a very useful way of finding the weaker points of their work and improving them.

- Pupils' attainment and progress are now monitored much more closely. Teachers use assessment information well to inform their planning. Work is now provided for pupils at different levels of difficulty, meaning that it meets the needs of all pupils. The most-able pupils are provided with work that challenges them appropriately.
- Governors are deeply committed to the school and to its continued improvement. They have great faith in you as a leader and have an accurate idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, overall, governors do not have a good enough understanding of their strategic role and this limits their ability to hold you to account. Governors have recently had their practice reviewed and have been given useful recommendations to improve it.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- a greater proportion of pupils make rapid progress in order that attainment at the end of key stage 2 is raised to be at least in line with the national average
- governors develop a more strategic understanding of the school in order to better hold leaders to account.

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

Yours sincerely

Wendy Varney
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior leaders and a group of governors. I met with the school council and spoke with other pupils during the day. I took into account the 41 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. I observed teaching and learning in lessons jointly with you, looked at pupils' books, and scrutinised a range of school documents.