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Mr Andrew Edwards
Headteacher
The Revel CofE (Aided) Primary School
Brockhurst Lane
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Dear Mr Edwards

Short inspection of The Revel CofE (Aided) Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 13 September 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 October 2011.

This school continues to be good.

You and your leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. Since your appointment in September 2015, you have built further on the school's strengths. Pupils' behaviour is usually excellent and academic standards have been consistently good. The school curriculum is thoroughly worthwhile and includes a rich variety of subjects and experiences. High-quality outdoor learning activities in the extensive and well-kept school grounds, music and sport are all worthy of particular mention.

There have been several staff changes and you have recently appointed new staff to some key positions. During this time of change, you made sure that the school's caring way of working was preserved but you also injected a sense of renewed ambition. It is clear that the majority of pupils leave The Revel School having reached above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Even so, you recognise that some pupils, especially the most able and the small number of disadvantaged pupils, could make even better progress if teaching was honed with more careful attention to their particular learning needs. As noted in the previous inspection, this is more apparent in mathematics than in other subjects. You and the governors have made this clear to the whole staff team and everyone is united in their work to drive ongoing improvements. Together, you aim to create an outstanding school.

Parents express supportive views about the school. Responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire indicate that parents are pleased with the level of care and education

provided across the three sites that operate under the governance of The Revel School.

Safeguarding is effective.

All staff understand their duty of care, and around the school buildings there are many notices that remind staff of what to do should they have a concern about a child's safety or well-being. Staff training is up to date and, in response to the recent updates to statutory safeguarding requirements, staff have undertaken a questionnaire so that you and other leaders can check that everyone understands roles and expectations.

Pupils' safety is a high priority at all times and several instances of staff attending to safety-related matters were observed during this inspection. In one instance, a teacher took it upon herself to follow up reports of a child cycling home without wearing a cycle helmet. At break and lunchtimes, first aid is given promptly when required. At the beginning and end of the school day, staff are vigilant when seeing pupils off and on the school buses. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and pupils of all ages agreed that bullying of any sort was uncommon at school. Older pupils reported that, if it were to happen, adults would be quick to stop it. They also explained how they could ask an adult for help or post a concern in a worry box, if anything was bothering them.

The designated safeguarding leader is efficient and well organised in her work. She makes sure that procedures operate correctly and that proper and secure records are kept. Communication within the main school and between the three sites is very good. Whether working as a teacher, lunchtime supervisor or helping out as a volunteer, all adults are given clear guidance and know that safeguarding is everyone's job. Safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

Inspection findings

- You have been in post for one year but in that time you have achieved much. You have built successfully on the positive legacy of the previous headteacher's work and you are taking action to lift ambition and standards higher still. Your evaluation of the school's current position is well informed and intelligently set out. You and the governors acknowledge the school's many strengths, but also understand exactly what needs to be done to lift it to greater successes. In your view, the specific and successful targeted teaching of key pupil groups, however small, is an important factor in raising the school's effectiveness from good to outstanding. You are right.
- You think and plan strategically but also make sure that you take a personal interest in every pupil and their day-to-day welfare. Parents who spoke with me or who responded to the online questionnaire expressed confidence in the school leadership and the direction in which you are taking the school. Pupils, too, feel confident that this is a good school where they are helped to do their best and succeed.

- You have made several new appointments to the leadership team, which have brought extra strength to the school. In addition, you have made some changes to the deployment of existing staff. When making these decisions and planning school improvement, you put pupils' interests first. All your staff understand your priorities and there is a strong sense of teamwork. Your key leaders and staff team present as capable, motivated and effective. Your school is doing well and is well placed to do even better.
- Most children start school with knowledge and skills that are in line with those expected for their age. Within days of starting in the early years, they begin to forge ahead in their learning and understanding of school routines and expectations. Indeed, when I visited the Reception class at the Brinklow site, the calm, purposeful working environment and children's sense of security and contentment were evident. This is all due to the provision on offer, the way it is led, the good teaching and the reflective, nurturing and ambitious practice in classrooms. While the split-site arrangements mean that children have to move from a nursery site to the reception site to the main school, the quality of communication between all three sites makes sure that The Revel School ethos operates in each place. Children get off to a great start in the early years and this continues through the main school.
- The school has a proven track record in helping pupils to acquire good literacy skills. The proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics in key stage 1 have been some way above the national figure for several years. There is no doubt that this is due to high-quality phonics teaching and the well-organised approach to tracking pupils' progress. You have given careful thought to the resources used in class and make sure that all pupils have access to good-quality material. You also understand the importance of ensuring that all staff stay up to date with training, and you keep a close eye on this. Across the school, the attention to reading cannot be faulted. By chance, the day of this inspection coincided with the centenary of Road Dahl's birth. In order to mark this day, the pupils enjoyed a special assembly where Dahl's work was celebrated. However, staff also highlighted the value of creativity and the joy and sense of adventure, excitement and success that reading and writing can bring. Around the school, there are many displays, posters and messages that echo this sentiment. Even in the outside learning area (which is a superb and extensive learning resource), staff had created a puzzle trail inspired by children's story books. Staff are clearly doing much to fire pupils' imagination and many pupils benefit from support at home with their reading. It is no surprise that standards in reading and writing have been consistently above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Standards in mathematics are also above average but, over time, have not quite kept pace with those seen in reading and writing. You are alert to this, and raising standards in mathematics is a key priority in your development plan. In order to bring about improvements, you have arranged additional training, appointed a new mathematics leader and purchased new resources. Importantly, you have also carried out a careful analysis to find out exactly which groups of pupils are not doing quite as well as you think they should. Your analysis is spot on. You know that the very brightest pupils and a small number of disadvantaged pupils could reach higher standards if teaching met their learning needs with

greater precision. There is some highly effective mathematics teaching in the school but, in places, the level of challenge is not quite right and this slows progress. You have communicated these findings and your ambition to everyone in the school community. Moreover, the summaries that you and your key leaders regularly present to governors are excellent. Everyone is given a consistent message. Consequently, staff know what is expected from them, feel valued and supported, and work with a sense of team spirit and ambition.

- Since the previous inspection, most pupils have attended school regularly and unexplained absence or lateness are rare. Nevertheless, a few pupils have missed too much school and not always with good reason. You and your team have taken action to support and, when necessary, challenge families who have not managed to get their children to school when they should. You have done this in a constructive and helpful way and the work of the parent support worker, in particular, is to be commended. As a result of this keen attention to unnecessary absence, attendance has improved and is better than the national average.
- Many pupils arrive by bus. The arrangements for meeting pupils off the buses in the morning and seeing them back on at the end of the day work with well-organised efficiency and ensure that everyone is accounted for and kept safe. I spoke with the bus drivers and the on-board chaperones and they reported that pupils are usually well behaved on the school transport and show respect for others.
- Pupils' behaviour is generally good or excellent in most situations. They clearly understand the difference between right and wrong, are polite to others and invariably try to be helpful. They display respect for other people's viewpoints and beliefs and chat with confidence and curiosity with their peers. This confident inquisitiveness was apparent during my conversations with pupils during the day. Several pupils politely enquired how the inspection was going and a few asked what they could do to help. In addition, they readily volunteered information about school life. Those who spoke with me said that they enjoyed school and valued their lessons and the variety provided by the school's curriculum. They particularly appreciate the opportunities to participate and succeed in subjects such as sport and music, both during and after the school day. They also explained how the junior leadership team meets with the school's leaders so that pupils can have a say in how things are done at school.
- Teachers encourage pupils' mature and thoughtful discussions to help pupils develop responsible attitudes and self-respect. Pupils are prompted to ask questions and think about why certain decisions are made. During this inspection, for example, a judge came into school to talk with pupils about the nature of his work and why laws and justice were important. The pupils were captivated and asked plenty of questions that indicated their understanding of the value of fair rules and democratic processes. This attention to the wider purpose of education and the values that guide us is evident across the school. The school chickens, for example, provide extra interest and teach pupils to value and care for life. During this inspection, I observed a pupil carefully removing a freshly laid egg. The excitement and awe at this memorable event shone out clearly, from both staff and pupils.

- Governance is well informed and effective. Within the governing body, there is a wide range of expertise, which is put to good use. Governors make sure all statutory duties are met and display a firm and accurate grasp of the school's successes and areas for further development. They know the school is doing well and are ambitious for it to do even better. To this end, they make sure that they provide appropriate challenge, give support where needs be, but expect the best from everyone.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they work to raise standards higher, especially in mathematics, by making sure the most able pupils and the small number of disadvantaged pupils make the best possible progress
- teaching in mathematics is as carefully focused on the learning needs of different pupils as it is in other subjects.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Coventry and the director of children's services for Warwickshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Martin Pye
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. I also met with school administrative staff and the school's parent support worker. I carried out short observations of teaching in most classes, attended a school assembly and looked at pupils' work. I met with a group of governors and a group of pupils and listened to some pupils read. I also talked with pupils in lessons, on the playground and in the dining hall. In addition, I spoke with parents and school bus drivers at the beginning of the school day.

The school operates on three separate sites. I spent most of the inspection day at the main site where key stages 1 and 2 are taught and made a short visit to one of the early years sites. I did not visit the part-time Nursery provision, which came under the governance of the school at the beginning of September 2016, but I did check the safeguarding records for the staff that work there.

By the end of the inspection, there were 75 recent responses on Parent View. I took account of these and noted the school's routines for gathering staff, pupils' and parents' views. I looked at a number of documents, including pupils' progress

information, the school's own evaluation of its performance, information about the work of the governing body, records of leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and learning, and several school policy documents. I also checked the school's website and the procedures for keeping pupils safe. I asked members of staff and parents about safeguarding matters.