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Kirsty Eales  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Eales

### **Short inspection of Roundwood Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 4 October 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 December 2011.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has upheld the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school is a caring place, exuding a sense of community and togetherness. Pupils come to school eager to take part in the rich and engaging curriculum. Teachers skilfully engage pupils in discussions and tasks that capture their interest and help them to make good progress. Parents value this strong teaching. One parent summed this up stating: 'Every teacher my children have had has recognised their individuality, their strengths and weaknesses and tailored their teaching accordingly'. Pupils' behaviour is typically excellent as they collaborate and learn together. Lunchtime is an orderly affair both in the dining hall and outside, where pupils play and chat together. The school helps pupils to value the opinions of others. One pupil commented, 'I like the school because everyone is different; they all have different thoughts'. Pupils believe that all should be treated equally, regardless of any differences. Name-calling and bullying are rare. Pupils benefit from interesting after-school activities such as cross stitch, gardening, book and craft club, the school choir and sports. Pupils feel safe and learn to keep safe online and in the real world. Pupils and parents alike are very positive about the school.

At the last inspection, inspectors noted the many strengths of the school, including in leadership, teaching, pupils' achievement and behaviour. Two areas were identified for specific attention. These were to ensure that the

most able pupils receive consistently suitable challenge and to develop pupils' understanding of diversity in Britain. The most able pupils make better progress than at the time of the last inspection, most notably in English. Leaders have made sure that teachers understand pupils' starting points and tailor activities accordingly. Nevertheless, the most able pupils do not consistently receive the challenge needed to make outstanding progress across subjects. Leaders have increased the opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths and established a culture where staff and pupils discuss issues about diversity as they arise. The school's strong equalities policy stresses the need for teaching to enable pupils to recognise and tackle stereotyping and prejudice. However, the policy is yet to be fully realised in the day-to-day curriculum.

You have strengthened teaching in writing. Teachers set tasks at just the right level for pupils of varying ability and pupils have more opportunities to write at length in other subjects. As a result, pupils' achievement in writing has improved notably. You are currently working to improve achievement in mathematics. In 2014, leaders introduced a new approach to teaching mathematics. This has enabled pupils to meet the greater demand of the new mathematics assessments at key stage 1. Older pupils did not meet these higher expectations so well. You have increased leadership capacity in mathematics to tackle this. The deputy headteacher, an experienced leader, now leads mathematics at key stage 2, enabling the existing mathematics leader to focus on further improvement at key stage 1.

Leaders have worked effectively with staff to establish an engaging and stimulating curriculum that meets national requirements. Clear plans define the learning which pupils should grasp in each topic. Teachers make skilful use of this information, teaching lessons that grab pupils' interest and enable them to make good progress. Subject leaders check the quality of teaching in their subject so they can adjust plans when needed. Leaders have set up a sound approach to assessing and keeping track of pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. An electronic recording system helps you see at a glance how well pupils are achieving. Your plan to extend your assessment approach to science and foundation subjects is timely. Nevertheless, some minor tweaks are needed to ensure that leaders and governors have an incisive understanding of the achievement of the most able and disadvantaged pupils.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Staff know to refer any concern they have about a pupil's safety to you, as leader for safeguarding. You look into all concerns promptly and keep comprehensive records. Vulnerable pupils are supported well by the school, and further support is brought in from other services when needed. You are sure to refer cases to the local authority when necessary. Staff receive regular information and

training that ensure they are up-to-date with latest requirements. Checks on the suitability of staff are sound and the governor responsible for safeguarding checks that suitable records are in place. Parents know who to go to with any concerns. Posters in the reception area highlight exactly what to do.

## **Inspection findings**

- Leaders moved swiftly to meet to the requirements of the 2014 national curriculum. Plans for how subjects are taught are typically comprehensive and result in engaging teaching which enables good progress.
- Leaders have increased the opportunities for pupils to learn about social diversity. Pupils learn about other faiths and those with no faith in religious education lessons, assemblies and visits to places of worship. The school culture is one where people's differences are accepted and pupils listen to other people's views and experiences. On occasion, when the situation arises, such as the Paralympics, pupils learn about equality issues. However, opportunities to learn about equal rights and prejudice are not routinely planned for in the curriculum.
- A suitable system is in place for collecting and evaluating assessment information in English and mathematics. Plans to develop this approach to assess pupils' progress in all subjects are at an advanced stage. However, leaders have not used the information collected to gain a sharp insight into the achievement of the most able pupils.
- The most able make strong progress in English and mathematics and high proportions exceed the expected standard for their age by the end of each key stage. Most-able pupils currently in the school make good progress. Teachers make sure that these pupils tackle work of suitable challenge so they learn well. Nevertheless, expectations for these pupils could be still higher. Some teaching in foundation subjects does not provide activities with sufficient stretch for the most able. The requirement for these pupils to carefully review and edit their own work and tackle reading books that will really deepen and broaden their thinking is also not consistently evident.
- Leaders keep a close eye on the impact of pupil premium funding on the achievement of each disadvantaged pupil. Typically, these pupils achieve well. Well-planned support helps those who need to catch up. However, leaders and governors do not have an incisive understanding of the overall impact of pupil premium spending. Leaders analyse and report the progress of the very small number of disadvantaged pupils in each year group separately. This results in information that is not statistically significant, making it difficult for leaders and governors to evaluate the achievement of these pupils in comparison with other pupils nationally.
- Despite leaders' considerable efforts, the attendance of a few disadvantaged pupils remains low. The school now uses some pupil premium funding to pay for the services of a local authority education welfare officer to work with the families of such pupils. There are some

signs of success, but it is still early days.

- Pupils make good progress in writing. They write with confidence both in English lessons and other subjects. Teachers make sure that pupils of varying abilities have just the right amount of support and challenge in writing tasks. As a result, pupils in the school typically make good progress from their starting points. Provisional figures indicate that the proportion of pupils meeting and exceeding the expected standard at the end of each key stage was in line with the national average in 2016.
- Teaching in mathematics at key stage 1 is effective. Pupils use concrete examples and practical apparatus which help them to quickly grasp and apply mathematical concepts. Provisional figures for attainment at the end of key stage 1 in 2016 show that the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding the expected standard was in line with the national average. Overall, pupils made average progress in mathematics by the end of key stage 2 in 2016. However, less than half of the pupils with middle starting points met the expected standard. Leaders have responded to this by ensuring the necessary leadership capacity to build on improvements at key stage 1 and raise achievement in key stage 2.
- Pupils enjoy reading and read confidently in lessons. Those who find it hard are prepared to have a go. Pupils use their knowledge of phonics to help them work out tricky words. Those who need it are given helpful support to learn new words.
- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- full use is made of the information collected about pupils' achievement to ensure a sharp understanding of how well disadvantaged pupils and the most able are achieving and that achievement for these groups is increasingly outstanding
- the assessment system is developed into a comprehensive tool for evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum and ensuring that it promotes outstanding learning across subjects
- there are routine opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to learn explicitly about the nature of discrimination and prejudice and how it might be challenged.

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

Yours sincerely

Diana Choulerton  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I met with you and the deputy headteacher at the start of the day. We discussed your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and agreed the key areas that we would focus on during the inspection. These included: considering the impact of leaders' work to improve the teaching of writing; exploring how well the school meets the needs of the most able pupils and those who are disadvantaged; looking at how successfully the school's new curriculum and related assessment approaches have been implemented; and exploring the impact of leaders' work to improve pupils' understanding of diversity in modern Britain.

During the day, I held further discussions with you and the deputy headteacher. I met the vice-chair of the governing body and five other governors. We visited parts of six lessons. We scrutinised a selection of pupils' work. I listened to pupils read with the deputy headteacher and we discussed their reading with them. I took account of 13 staff survey responses and 48 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, I considered 48 parent responses by free text. There were no responses to the pupil survey. I spoke with pupils and staff at lunchtime. I analysed a range of the school's documentation, including leaders' checks on pupils' progress, and safeguarding policies and procedures.