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Kim Spencer
Headteacher
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Dear Kim Spencer

Short inspection of Kings Lodge Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 5 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 October 2011.

This school continues to be good.

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

You lead the school with drive and determination because you have high expectations of yourself, your staff and all pupils. When appointed in January 2016, you expressed clearly and directly to governors that work was required to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This was necessary to ensure that high standards of achievement continued to be maintained. Since that time you have been committed and steadfast in your approach to improving the school. You take an honest, realistic and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. You work openly and collaboratively with staff and governors so that they feel empowered to make positive changes and are excited about the challenge. As a result, you are increasingly well supported by other senior leaders and governors.

Changes in leadership have changed the culture of the school and the way staff work together. Staff are now more willing, and better prepared, to be challenged over the quality of teaching and support they offer. As a result, they are better able to tackle weaknesses, share expertise, respond positively to assistance from outside the school and raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve. This is improving the quality of teaching. The higher expectations staff have of pupils is also improving their behaviour. There are fewer incidents of low-level disruption and pupils are attentive, cooperative and focused in class. You rightly recognise, however, that further work is required to improve pupils' attitudes to learning. This

would ensure that they are not just well behaved but also more eager to learn, participate and enjoy learning for its own sake.

The work of leaders and governors is correctly focused on raising expectations of pupils, improving the quality of teaching and helping pupils to be positive and focused in lessons. Actions taken have helped to ensure that the achievement of pupils leaving the school at the end of Year 6 is in line with, or better than, the national average in all their subjects. However, not all of the recently introduced changes have been well received by all parents. You rightly acknowledge that more must be done to improve communication between school and home. Currently, not all parents feel well informed and understand the reasoning behind some of the changes.

At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the key lines of enquiry to be considered and added other issues as they emerged during the day. These included establishing the most able disadvantaged pupils' progress and whether the actions to reduce absence had been successful. We also agreed to consider the effectiveness of safeguarding, actions to raise achievement in reading and writing across the school and how well the areas for improvement from the last inspection had been tackled. These lines of enquiry are considered below under 'Inspection findings'.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils are confident, self-assured and happy around the school site, in classrooms and in communal spaces. They feel safe and comfortable in the school environment because expectations of how they should behave are clear, and unacceptable behaviour is dealt with swiftly. One pupil who spoke to me said that school 'is like one big family'. Other pupils said that if they need to share any concerns, staff are supportive and approachable. They also knew about, and valued, the availability of the 'Time to Talk' counselling service. Pupils reported that bullying is rare (some said that there was no bullying) and that staff deal with it effectively if it occurs. Pupils also have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online. They knew, for example, that personal details should be protected and not willingly shared with anyone they did not know.

Comprehensive, detailed and regularly updated checks are carried out to ensure that staff are suitable to work with pupils. Staff receive the training they need in order to be able to recognise different forms of abuse and identify children at risk. Their training also ensures that they know the correct procedures to follow up any concerns they might have. You, as the designated member of staff for child protection, have a comprehensive knowledge of all vulnerable pupils in the school and their particular needs. You work effectively with other external agencies to support pupils, particularly those children who are looked after.

Inspection findings

- Governors are increasingly holding you and other leaders to account more rigorously, at your own insistence. They share your vision of higher expectations and a culture of 'no excuses'. They apply this standard to their own work and serve with commitment and dedication. They now have a good understanding of the issues that must be tackled in the school.
- Leaders have benefited from committed, longstanding support from the school improvement adviser. Although no longer working with the school, he has provided useful advice and professional expertise over time. This has helped leaders and governors to develop a more insightful and honest understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The quality of teaching is strong at key stage 2 and in the early years so pupils achieve well. However, leaders have recognised that achievement has dipped at key stage 1 and have taken action to improve the quality of teaching by making beneficial changes to leadership and staffing in these areas. Now, more effective monitoring of work by dropping into lessons regularly and informally, and scrutinising pupils' books takes place. Practitioners now more readily moderate work with teachers from other schools to ensure that standards are high and assessment accurate.
- You are taking effective action to be sure that achievement in reading and writing is as high as it is in mathematics. A member of staff has a key responsibility to improve pupils' comprehension skills. Teachers' feedback is now more focused upon helping pupils to identify and correct their own mistakes to improve their redrafted work. Furthermore, parents are now more engaged in supporting reading at home and staff have worked with pupils to develop a love of reading for pleasure.
- Groups of pupils with differing needs are supported to make the progress of which they are capable. This is because teachers have the same high expectations of all these pupils. The most able disadvantaged pupils produce work of the same quality, and achieve as well as their peers. This is because they respond well to the interesting tasks they are set and enjoy the varied, stimulating curriculum. Some of these pupils do not produce the same quantity of work as their peers because they lack self-confidence, which hampers their efforts. Leaders are working effectively to overcome this barrier to their progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress because they receive strong support from teachers and teaching assistants. Work in pupils' books shows that these pupils are provided with additional resources that help them to access the same tasks and activities as their classmates. For example, the work of a Year 2 pupil showed that tailored support had meant that she could write better shaped letters in writing about a poem. The work of other pupils showed that they had made use of different resources because their needs were not the same. Consequently, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make more rapid progress because they are empowered to do so when they attend school.

- Overall attendance over time has been in line with the national average. It dipped in 2015 but is gradually improving. It is still, however, marginally below the national average. Attendance for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, who have an education, health and care plan, is improving but remains well below average. This is because of a small number of cases where the actions of leaders are not succeeding. In the majority of cases, however, leaders are working closely with agencies and with parents to increase engagement with school and to improve attendance for these pupils.
- Leaders have effectively tackled areas for improvement from the last inspection. As a result, pupils' number skills have improved significantly in the last couple of years. Teachers are posing more challenging questions, particularly in key stage 2, so that the number of pupils working at a higher level compares well with the national average. The early years outdoor area is much improved, so that children are able to use a wide range of stimulating resources. Pupils also have a greater awareness of wider cultural and international issues. One Year 6 pupil, discussing views on the recent European Union referendum, commented, 'leaving the European Union is a bit of a gamble and I'm not really a gambler.'
- The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, stated that their child is happy and safe in school. However, a significant minority of parents do not feel that they receive enough information from the school or that communication is good enough.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- further action is taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning in key stage 1 by:
 - staff having higher expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - continuing to monitor the quality of teaching effectively
 - persevering with sharing best practice and moderating work with staff from different schools.
- further action is taken to increase parental engagement through better communication.

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. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Steve Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I spoke to you and the deputy headteacher, pupils, representatives of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.

With senior leaders, I made visits to lessons to observe pupils' attitudes to learning and together we scrutinised work in pupils' books. In addition, I listened to pupils' read.

A range of documentary evidence was considered, which included the school's self-evaluation, its improvement plan, and information about attendance and pupils' progress.