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Dear Mrs Jones

### **Short inspection of Wootton Wawen CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 18 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 July 2012.

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

You and your leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment, in September 2013, you have built further on the school's strengths. Parents have noted the improvements introduced and say that you are 'approachable, driven, and always have the best interests of the children and school at heart'. They are right. You lead by example and have set high standards for staff and pupils. Where areas of weakness are detected, you analyse the contributory factors and take decisive and prompt action to ensure that they are quickly eradicated.

Teaching is consistently strong and as a result, pupils achieve well. You have created a culture within the school where academic excellence is celebrated, behaviour is exemplary and high levels of respect and consideration are afforded to pupils and staff alike. All pupils are proud of their school and particularly like being part of a small school community. As one pupil put it, 'Everyone gets on together here because we all know each other.'

You have successfully addressed the key issues raised at the previous inspection. You have raised the level of challenge for all pupils in mathematics and actively encouraged their increased independence and ownership of learning. For example, pupils can select the level of challenge they feel confident with, bronze, silver or gold, under the careful supervision of the class teacher. Changes implemented in teaching mathematics have ensured that pupils make good progress and attain

standards which are above the national average by the end of key stage 2. You have extended and developed the role of middle leaders so that they have a greater impact in raising the quality of teaching and learning. All leaders have dedicated time to carry out their roles and make regular checks on how well pupils are achieving. You have ensured that governors receive assessment information for different groups so that they have a good overview of which pupils are doing well and where further improvements can be made.

There remains work to be done in raising achievement in writing. Having focused on mathematics, you acknowledge that this is the case and have prioritised writing as an area for improvement this year. However, gaps in achievement between boys and girls in the early years had not been detected. This aspect requires attention because although most boys reach the levels expected, too few exceed these levels and do not attain as well as girls by the end of the Reception Year.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

As the designated safeguarding leader, you have created a strong safeguarding culture within the school. You ensure that all staff are trained and know the procedures for reporting any concerns about pupils. Appropriate referrals are made where causes of concern warrant external support or investigation. There have been very few staff appointments made since you joined the school, but where vacancies arise, you carry out appropriate safer recruitment checks on staff. You also maintain a single central register of staff details which show that they have been suitably vetted and cleared to work with children. Staff carry out risk assessments for different visits or activities to consider potential hazards.

A very high level of importance is attached to making sure that pupils feel safe and are taught to keep themselves safe. Regular e-safety lessons are included in the curriculum to ensure that pupils understand the potential dangers of using the internet. During my visit, all classes were involved in the 'Taking Care' project which focused on pupils identifying and avoiding dangerous situations. Regular visits from the fire service and police all contribute to pupils' knowledge of keeping safe. As a result of the extensive coverage and regular teaching time devoted to safeguarding, pupils feel very safe in school and have a well-developed knowledge of how to stay safe.

### **Inspection findings**

- Your judgements of the school's strengths and weaknesses are, on the whole, accurate. Together with your leadership team, you regularly check the quality of teaching and work in pupils' books. You analyse assessment information to determine how well individuals and different groups of pupils are achieving. You have devised a robust and detailed school improvement plan to address areas you are not yet satisfied with. This rightly includes raising standards in writing, embedding problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics, and accelerating the progress of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Actions taken to date show these areas are moving

forwards, but it is too early at this stage to determine the impact on outcomes.

- You are ably supported by a highly professional middle leadership team. Middle leaders share your ambition to raise achievement further and their strong subject knowledge enables them to detect precisely where, and which, pupils have gaps in their learning. They lead training for their colleagues, run workshops for parents to share teaching methods, and work alongside other local schools to check that teacher assessments are accurate. 'Non negotiables' and higher expectations are the order of the day in literacy. Systematic teaching of phonics and well-targeted interventions ensure that younger pupils get off to a good start in reading and writing. Pupils who read to me during the inspection showed good levels of sounding out and blending unfamiliar words. They demonstrate good attitudes to reading and teachers check that pupils read regularly and from a range of books.
- Governors use their individual skills and experience well to provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support to you and your leadership team. You provide them with helpful information to ensure that they are aware of how well the school is performing compared to other schools nationally. They are aware that writing progress is not as strong as reading and mathematics, but know that this is a whole-school priority. Governors visit lessons, for example geography and mathematics, to gain a better overview of teaching and learning. They undertake training, for example on preventing extremism and radicalisation, to ensure that they are up to date with government requirements and fulfil their statutory duties. They have a good awareness of how additional funding, including the pupil and sport premiums, is spent and the impact it is having.
- Teachers carefully plan interesting and exciting lessons which challenge and motivate pupils. They regularly mark pupils' work, in accordance with the school's feedback policy, and set individual targets in literacy and numeracy to help pupils reach or exceed the standards expected for their age. These are carefully tailored to meet pupils' individual needs. However, this practice is not used consistently in all classes in writing. Some pupils have already had two or three targets set this term to help improve their work, while others have not yet had any. You and your leadership team are keen to develop this system as you have already noted the improvements in pupils' writing following these personalised targets.
- You have introduced a new handwriting scheme and raised the profile of how handwriting is taught. This is having a very positive impact on pupils' ability to use a neat and cursive style. Most pupils in key stage 2 use ink, join their letters and present their work neatly. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are other features which you and your staff are focusing on. While improvements are noted in grammar and punctuation in pupils' writing, most pupils still struggle with spelling. This is because some teachers correct misspelled words on behalf of pupils, or do not identify the key or most important words for correction, for example 'sequence' being picked up for correction but not 'neat'. This limits pupils' abilities to learn to spell words accurately.
- Most children join the early years in the Reception Year with skills and abilities which are typical for their age in almost all areas of the curriculum. They make good progress and provisional results for 2016 show that the proportion

achieving a good level of development was above average. Imaginative activities are planned which build on and develop children's early skills. Good use is made of both the outdoor and indoor learning areas to develop the different areas of learning. For example, following the story of 'The three billy goats gruff', children worked in groups to build bridges for the goats to cross using giant Lego, wooden blocks or crates. Not only did this help to develop children's communication, language and social skills, but their use of gross motor skills contributed towards their physical development. However, outcomes at the end of early years for the last three years show that girls attain above boys, especially in literacy. This is because teachers do not provide enough opportunities, early enough, for boys to practise specific areas which they are weaker in, for example fine motor control, which then hinders their early writing skills. As a result, most boys attain less well than girls in reading, writing and mathematics and very few exceed the levels expected by the end of the Reception Year.

- Pupils make good progress across the school, although progress in writing has lagged behind reading and mathematics in the last two years. This is now being addressed and work checked in pupils' books, together with the school's own assessment information, shows that progress is accelerating. This is due to the effective action that you and your leadership team are taking.
- While there are only a small number of disadvantaged pupils in the school, they make good progress because the pupil premium funding is used effectively and pupils are well supported. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support through regular, targeted interventions. This enables them to achieve well and keep up with their peers. You have also considered the needs of the most able pupils and teachers set high levels of challenge and effectively question pupils to extend their thinking. Teaching to 'greater depth' deepens pupils' understanding, together with additional booster classes for the most able pupils. Pupils are regularly encouraged to enter national competitions, for example the young writers' competition.
- Effective systems are in place to monitor the attendance of pupils. You have raised the profile of this and regularly report attendance figures to parents through newsletters and to governors in meetings. You ensure that any absences are swiftly followed up and reasons established. Letters are sent to families where there is evidence of persistent absence. You track the attendance of different groups. While historically the attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been below the national average, this is no longer the case. Attendance for this group and the overall attendance of pupils in the school are now above average. This is because pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils behave extremely well at all times and their personal development and well-being are excellent. Pupils are polite, mature and articulate. They have a well-developed knowledge and understanding of different cultures, religions and current affairs. They readily take on additional responsibilities. All Year 6 pupils have different leadership roles, including running sports or technology clubs or managing the school library. Pupils feel very safe at school and enjoy the very wide range of sporting, musical and enrichment opportunities on offer.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- provision in the early years enables boys to achieve as well as girls
- the school's policy on setting individual writing targets for pupils is implemented consistently in order to raise the achievement of all groups
- spelling strategies are taught well to aid pupils' writing.

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

Heather Simpson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

Lines of enquiry pursued during this inspection focused on:

- the quality of provision in the early years, especially for boys
- ongoing achievement of pupils in writing in key stage 2, especially the most able
- how leaders monitor the attendance of different groups, especially pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the effectiveness of all leaders, including governance
- the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures.

During the inspection, I met with you and members of your leadership team and governing body. I discussed the work of the school with you and together we carried out some short visits to most classrooms. During these visits I looked at pupils' work and spoke to them about their learning. I also spoke informally to pupils about behaviour and how they learn to keep themselves safe. I observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes as well as in lessons. I heard a sample of pupils read from Year 1 and Year 2.

Additional information was provided through discussions with school governors. I looked at a range of school documents, including the checks on the suitability of staff to work with children and the school's information about pupils' achievement and attendance. I also reviewed the school's own evaluation of its work, together with the school development plan. I took account of the 24 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, together with 23 Freetext messages and emails sent in by parents. Further views were collected from parents as they collected their children from school. There were no responses to the pupil or staff questionnaires.