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Mrs Carolyn Casserley  
Headteacher  
Wybunbury Delves CofE Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Casserley

### **Short inspection of Wybunbury Delves CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 6 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 May 2012.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have made sure that every child in the school experiences a rich and broad curriculum that fosters creativity and provides opportunities for pupils to develop their imagination, while they improve their knowledge, skills and understanding in English and mathematics. Teachers carefully craft art themes into other subjects, which they weave through their planning of pupils' work. Pupils are immediately 'hooked'. They enjoy their work, demonstrate enthusiasm and a natural thirst for learning.

Ably supported by other senior leaders, you have taken decisive action to eradicate historical weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, strengths seen previously in reading and writing continue, while pupils now make much stronger progress in mathematics than they did in the past. You have made sure that the school's dedicated and committed teachers develop the teaching skills and resources needed to implement the new national curriculum throughout the school.

Teachers are becoming skilled in using a 'mastery' approach to learning mathematics. Mathematical equipment is used well to explore number bonds and to reinforce the concept of number. Teachers' questioning supports fluency and pupils understand better how multiplication and division relate to each other. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 can reason and explain their mathematics, although some lack

confidence in sharing their ideas with their group or class. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to solve problems, although this approach is still developing and occasionally teachers do not do this well. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are challenged appropriately in mathematics. There is no noticeable difference in learning between girls and boys.

Areas requiring development from the last inspection have been addressed. Pupils quickly settle to learning as they start their lessons, and routines are well established and understood by all pupils. Pupils in key stage 2 readily tackle the tasks written on the board as they arrive in class, for example dealing with corrections as soon as work in books is handed back. Younger pupils quickly join their group at the front of class, when they enter the room, and are immediately ready to listen to the teacher. All teachers consistently share learning objectives with their class, in accordance with the school's policy. Teachers' marking includes comments on pupils' literacy skills and pointers to the next steps in their learning.

Since the last inspection, pupils' behaviour and conduct have continued to be exemplary, in lessons and around the school. Pupils' love of their school is reflected in their good attendance, and they are keen to share their views on the school with visitors. Those who hold positions of responsibility proudly explain their duties and show off their badges of office. Pupils proudly show their work to senior leaders and greatly appreciate the headteacher's awards and the other prizes and certificates they receive.

School leaders work in partnership with other schools in the diocese to share effective practice in teaching, learning, assessment and leadership. This includes 'mastery' of mathematics and the leadership of support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. School leaders therefore have the capacity to drive further improvements in the school and to support the development of other schools. Discussions about the school becoming an academy are at an advanced stage.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders have successfully developed a culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff have a shared understanding of their responsibility to make sure that all children are safe, happy and exceptionally well cared for here. The leadership team and leader of safeguarding have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of good quality.

Teachers have been trained in the most recent national guidance about keeping children safe and have a very good understanding of the key messages. All staff have completed training in looking out for signs of extremism or radical views and are confident about what to do if they have concerns about a child.

Pupils say they feel safe in the school, a view confirmed by parents, and there is

very little bullying. They say that, when it does happen, it is usually the result of a breakdown in friendships. Pupils are confident that teachers will do their best to sort things out and stop any further bullying. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet. Following a presentation in assembly from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, pupils know the telephone number to contact if they have any worries about situations where they may feel uncomfortable.

Leaders carefully plan opportunities for pupils to find out about current affairs and news themes, such as through their recent work on 'Brexit' which helped pupils to develop a good understanding of British values.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders have an accurate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school because their self-evaluation processes are rigorous and honest. Action plans to address these weaknesses are well written and serve as a useful tool for governors to hold leaders to account for their areas of responsibility.
- During their time at the school, pupils develop responsibility through their work on 'SPARK' (spirituality, practical activities, asking questions, resilience and knowledge), which is driven by leaders and upheld by the whole school community.
- A caring ethos is evident throughout the school and staff promote a culture of high expectations, and improvement through teaching skills to encourage pupils to become effective learners. Teachers refer to this as 'learnish'. Pupils told me that, 'Just because you can't do something, you haven't failed, it's just that you can't do it yet.'
- The school's three newly qualified teachers are well supported through a good induction programme, to help them as they embark on their teaching careers. They have joined a group of experienced and well-qualified teachers with excellent subject knowledge and a good understanding of pedagogy. Together, this team of teachers ensures that teaching is consistently effective, leading to good learning.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is checked carefully by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Records are detailed and use a range of information to make sure barriers to pupils' learning are removed. Information from parents is used well and the views of children about their learning are taken fully into account, along with those from outside agencies, such as social care, and child and adolescent mental health services. Irregular attendance, because of medical needs or frequent admission to hospital, hampers the progress of some of these pupils.
- Pupils love 'big art', which they explained uses art to 'get them interested' in their new text or class reader. Teachers' effective links between art and other subjects were evident in pupils' work in mathematics where bright, colourful curve stitching was displayed. From this, the most able pupils

were starting to form links with algebra and finding the  $n$ th term in a sequence, representing a high level of challenge in their work.

- Good handwriting techniques are encouraged from the outset and children in the Reception class were seen starting to form letters using cursive script. Pupils throughout the school are given plenty of opportunities for extended writing and to write creatively, often linked to their 'big art' themes. Teachers' assessment of writing is accurate, validated through the local authority and through external moderation within the local schools' partnership.
- Mathematics teaching is improving through teaching for 'mastery' and pupils are developing a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts as a result.
- Achievement in reading continues to be a strength in the school but not all pupils read texts that are challenging enough to extend their vocabulary, deepen their comprehension and provide breadth to the range of books they read. This is because as soon as they become a 'free reader', teachers do not give them enough guidance about which book to read next, to make sure it serves these aims.
- Some pupils, especially 'free readers', lack confidence in reading out loud with expression, or presenting themselves to different audiences, because they are used to silent reading or, as one pupil said, 'reading in my head'. When they do read out loud, they sometimes stumble over simple words and do not always know the meaning of words when they are asked.
- Staff in the Reception class now work more closely with staff in the pre-school (inspected separately) to provide greater continuity of care and to support transition as children begin school.
- Children are being supported well towards making a good level of development in the early years foundation stage. An external consultant has worked with teachers and other adults in this stage to improve teaching, learning and assessment and this is contributing to children making better progress.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of school leaders and wholeheartedly recommend the school. They greatly appreciate the support they are given to help their children with learning and say teachers freely give their time to parents to answer any queries they have. As one parent put it, 'staff go the extra mile', while another said, 'I don't want my child's journey here to end.'
- Governance continues to be effective. Governors know the school well and the governing body balances the budget carefully to make sure funds have the greatest impact on improving teaching and learning. Governors feel that some pupils and classes would benefit from additional support from teaching assistants, but funds do not currently allow this expansion. Governors were not aware that the school did not meet the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website. Changes were made during the inspection, however, and the school website now includes all it should.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers give greater guidance to pupils who have finished reading the series of levelled texts to choose more suitably challenging books to read
- teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to read aloud to a range of audiences.

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

Yours sincerely

Denah Jones  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

The key lines of enquiry during this inspection were to find out about the effectiveness of safeguarding and governance in the school and to gather evidence on actions taken to improve progress in mathematics, especially for girls and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. I also investigated what leaders have done to ensure strengths in attendance, reading, writing and phonics are being sustained. Improvements to teaching in the early years foundation stage were considered to find out if children are being better supported to reach a good level of development.

To gather evidence on these lines of enquiry, I met you and other leaders, a group of governors and your school improvement partner from Chester Diocese. I talked with parents before school started and also took into consideration the 41 responses and written comments on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I listened to a group of pupils read, talked with them about their reading books, talked with pupils during playtime and lunchtime and considered the 28 responses to Ofsted's survey to find out about pupils' views of the school. You accompanied me on a tour of the school and visits to all classes. Further short visits to lessons to look at teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics were carried out with your deputy headteacher, when we also looked at pupils' work in books and on display in classrooms. I met a group of staff after school and also considered the 15 responses from staff to Ofsted's questionnaire. Checks were carried out on safeguarding documentation and I held a meeting with your leader of safeguarding to find out how effective your strategies are in keeping pupils safe.