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Mr Andrew Darby
Headteacher
Tredworth Junior School
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Dear Mr Darby

Short inspection of Tredworth Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 6 December 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. The school's vision, 'together we make the difference', is palpable in every corner of school life. There is strong evidence that, together, you and your team are making a significant difference to the lives of your pupils.

As a result of your strong leadership and commitment, the school has continued to develop and thrive since the last inspection. You do not accept anything but the best for your pupils. You strive continuously to ensure that they receive a good quality of education in a calm and nurturing environment.

There is no doubt that leaders, including governors, have high aspirations for what the pupils can achieve, both academically and socially. Consequently, they make good progress in their learning. As a leadership team, you accurately identify where improvements need to be made and quickly implement the necessary steps to tackle any weaknesses. For example, you are fully aware that further improvements need to be made for your most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, to ensure that they make the best possible progress. You know that this group could make even stronger progress and work at greater depth, especially in their reading and mathematics. In addition, you are striving to ensure that pupils' work in other subjects is of the same high quality as in their English work through regular checks. Consequently, this remains a focus for further improvement.

You place great importance on continual professional development to ensure that all staff improve their teaching. Any planned initiatives are carefully researched, trialled and then embedded thoroughly in the everyday practice of teachers. This is having a positive impact on pupil outcomes. For example, assessment systems clearly provide teachers with accurate information on what their pupils know, understand and can do. As a result, teachers plan activities which precisely meet pupils' specific needs. This has ensured that weaknesses identified at the last inspection, for example tasks not meeting the needs of pupils and targets not specifying detailed steps for improvement, have been rectified effectively. However, leaders are not complacent and understand the need to check that procedures are implemented consistently in every class, especially the targets set for the most able pupils, to ensure that they are sufficiently challenging.

A considerable strength of the school is the quality of care, guidance and support provided for your pupils, and for parents and carers. A strong culture of staff working closely together, with experts and other agencies, provides pupils with the necessary support to move their learning on. This high level of support enables the most vulnerable pupils to thrive. For example, family learning is providing parents with helpful guidance, allowing them to ably support their children in their learning at home, so that they make better progress.

Governance is strong. Governors are knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. There are well-established systems and structures in place to allow them to carry out their roles with diligence. Governors provide leaders with a good balance of challenge and support. They carefully monitor the work of the school, checking that actions taken are having the desired outcomes for pupils.

Parents speak highly of the school. Partnerships have strengthened significantly since the previous inspection because you have adopted innovative ways to engage parents in their children's education. This is helping their children to make stronger progress with their learning and preparing them well for the next stage in their education.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders, including governors, are committed to keeping pupils safe. There is a strong culture of safety and security which permeates the school. A shared understanding of the need to protect pupils from all possible risks exists. Staff, irrespective of their role, know pupils exceptionally well. They have their eyes and ears open at all times, keeping a watchful eye on every pupil, especially those whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and child protection records are detailed and of a high quality. The school's policies are informative, helpful, take account of the latest statutory requirements and follow the most current national guidance. The safeguarding policy is an easy-to-read, yet detailed, document. It provides relevant named contacts and helpful links to where further information or

guidance can be found. Staff resolutely adhere to these policies to minimise risk to pupils. Staff are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding. This comprehensive training enables staff to quickly spot concerns, allowing them to take rapid action with confidence.

Leaders and governors fully understand the importance of recruiting safely. All staff are carefully vetted before commencing employment to ensure their suitability to work with pupils. Governors regularly carry out health and safety checks to make sure that the school is a safe place for all members of the community.

The pupils I spoke to during my visit all said that they feel safe and secure. They know that adults in school will help them if they have a worry or concern. They describe how bullying is extremely rare and are confident that any incidents of anti-social behaviour are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

You make effective use of other agencies and professional expertise to ensure that your pupils are kept safe. However, you described situations when you feel frustration at social care's slow response to your concerns for the well-being of individual pupils. Nevertheless, you demonstrate an unwavering and relentless determination to ensure that you keep your pupils safe from harm.

Inspection findings

- Staff, pupils, parents and governors are effusive in their praise about how you lead the school. You demonstrate an enormous passion, drive and resilience to ensure that your pupils receive the best all-round education. You are extremely well supported by your senior leadership team who share your high aspirations.
- Senior leaders and governors, through accurate evaluation, know precisely which areas need to improve. In particular, you know that, although you have quickly diminished the differences between the most able and most able disadvantaged pupils, there is more work to be done to ensure that the most able pupils make stronger progress. This is especially so in their reading and mathematics. At times, the tasks set for them are not challenging enough. Consequently, over time, this reduces their opportunities to master more challenging work and to reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Pivotal to the school's improvement is the relentless focus leaders have on making sure that all teachers have the highest expectations for pupils. These expectations are clearly evident in teachers' performance management which drives school improvement. A consistent approach to teaching is being successfully achieved by evaluating the individual performance of each teacher against the teachers' standards. Priority is also given to staff development, which ensures that teachers and support staff have the necessary skills to undertake their roles effectively.
- In the most recent test results for Year 6 pupils, you were able to demonstrate that the percentage of your pupils achieving the expected standard was higher than those achieved by pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.

The percentage of pupils achieving the higher standard was well above those nationally in writing and in line in mathematics, but not so in reading. Through careful analysis you identified the reasons behind this and have taken rapid action to ensure that this dip is not repeated. For example, you are aware that there is a growing population of pupils who are arriving at the school with English as an additional language. Leaders are carefully assessing what these pupils can and cannot do, putting into place the necessary support to allow these pupils to quickly learn and understand the English language.

- In the 2016 tests, there was no difference in the percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard compared to other pupils nationally in mathematics. However, their attainment was lower in reading and writing. This is as a consequence of a high proportion of these pupils speaking English as an additional language. Additional interventions have been put in place to ensure that remaining differences in performance are quickly diminished. Current progress information shows that the actions taken are having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.
- You and your leaders, including governors, were disappointed in the outcomes for the most able disadvantaged, when compared with pupils nationally, in reading and mathematics. Rapid action has been taken by leaders to ensure that this is not repeated. Inspection evidence found that teachers' expectations are high and, consequently, the most able disadvantaged pupils are currently achieving as well as similar pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Well-planned interventions and regular one-to-one support help pupils to improve their skills and make good gains in their learning in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to their learning. This is because linking subjects together makes learning more meaningful and this curriculum approach excites them. Teachers plan activities which inspire and motivate pupils and they are eager to do well. For example, in Year 6, pupils have been enthused in their learning about space through the topic 'to infinity and beyond'. They have been absorbed in learning about what it is like to be in space through their research and subsequent writing about the astronaut Tim Peake. Similarly, pupils in Year 3 have been captivated by their work based on Roald Dahl's book 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. Their performance poems on chocolate were inventive and engaging for the audience, demonstrating pupils' strong imagination and writing skills, such as their use of exciting descriptive vocabulary choices to convey meaning. However, inspection evidence found that the high-quality work found in pupils' English and mathematics work is not always consistent across other subjects. As leaders, you have identified this as an area to be improved and have a detailed action plan to ensure that this is tackled quickly.
- You provide pupils with a wide range of experiences to support their learning. For example, all pupils in Year 5 learn to play the clarinet, with some continuing

lessons into Year 6. Other opportunities include a variety of sports, drama and craft clubs.

- Pupils read widely and enjoy talking about their favourite authors and preferred type of books. I also noted how confidently they read aloud, making good use of punctuation and expression to engage the listener. The most able readers, including the most able disadvantaged, enjoy being able to select their own books and read challenging texts with aplomb. The least able readers are heard frequently by staff and have books selected which are appropriate to extend their accuracy, fluency and confidence in reading.
- Staff are excellent role models for pupils. They help create a caring and considerate community. This is a friendly and happy school in which to work and play. The warm welcome starts on arrival at the school by the school administrators who work in the office. Their friendly approach is greatly appreciated by pupils and parents. Consequently, pupils feel that they can approach any member of staff to help and support them in times of difficulty.
- You are committed to ensuring that pupils adopt healthy lifestyles. Consequently, governors have invested in refurbishing a room into a fully operational kitchen. All pupils have the opportunity to cook nutritious dishes, often alongside their parents, using produce grown in school. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of healthy food and the importance of eating a balanced diet to keep fit and well.
- Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their improving attendance. Leaders know that they need to continue to work hard with families to emphasise the importance of regular attendance. This you are doing and, with the support of the school's family support worker, there is evidence of some dramatic improvements in the attendance of individual pupils.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of education and care that their children receive. All who I spoke to agreed with the response to the online questionnaire, Parent View, that they would recommend the school to other parents. 'This is a brilliant school, the staff are very professional and it put my mind at rest, this was the perfect school choice for us' was a typical comment made by parents.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers consistently provide the highest levels of challenge to enable pupils to make even stronger progress, especially the most able and pupils who speak English as an additional language
- pupils' written work in other subjects is of the same quality as in their English work.

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

Yours sincerely

Jen Southall
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, your assistant headteacher, your deputy headteacher, other leaders and three members of the governing body. I also spoke to an officer from the local authority.

You and I made short visits to lessons to observe pupils' attitudes to their learning and to look at pupils' work. I listened to readers to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching of reading.

A wide range of documentary evidence was considered, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and information relating to pupils' current achievement and progress. I also checked the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements and attendance information.

I spoke with pupils during lessons and at other times during the day. I spoke to parents at the start of the day and also took into account the six responses from parents to the Ofsted online survey 'Parent View' and considered additional comments received via text message from parents.

The key lines of enquiry tested during the short inspection day were:

- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in ensuring that pupils make as much progress as they can, especially in reading and mathematics
- the effectiveness of the school's assessment systems in monitoring the progress of all pupils
- how well disadvantaged pupils are performing, especially the most able disadvantaged
- how effectively the school keeps pupils safe.