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Mrs Fiona Hughes  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Hughes

### **Short inspection of Overseal Primary 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 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. Your vision is that everyone associated with Overseal Primary School will have the chance to 'SHINE'; this is your school motto and stands for Self-confident children; High aspirations; Independent learners; Nurturing environment; Excel and achieve. You make sure that staff, governors, pupils and parents have a chance to contribute to the developments the school is making. As a result, staff feel valued, pupils are confident, independent learners and almost without exception, parents would recommend the school to others.

At the last inspection, inspectors asked you to focus on raising pupils' achievement and increasing the amount of outstanding teaching so that more pupils achieve the higher levels. Since that time, there have been significant changes to the primary curriculum and assessment systems. Nevertheless, you have maintained the above-average standards that pupils achieve and in some aspects of the school, achievement has improved further. For example, in Year 1, the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics check has risen, so that every pupil achieved this milestone at the end of 2016.

You place great importance on ensuring that the quality of teaching is at least good. There have been several changes to staffing since the last inspection and you ensure that professional development for staff is a high priority. Staff, at all levels, told me that they are proud to work at the school and they appreciate the focus you place on developing their skills.

You are very ably supported by the two assistant headteachers. They fully understand the importance of their role in improving outcomes for pupils. They support you in your leadership role and, like you, they have a very clear view of the strengths of the school and the aspects you are currently striving to improve further.

You have forged strong links with parents. You encourage them to play a part in the life of the school. Parents are invited to meetings with school leaders to discuss improvements, such as to school reports, communication, homework and the priorities on the school development plan. Several improvements have been made as a direct result of the feedback parents have given you, for example, in changes to the format of school reports or the noticeboard for parent information. Parents who shared their views with me were very positive about how well you communicate with them. They commented on the 'family atmosphere' and how happy their children are at school. One parent said, 'Overseal Primary School is a wonderful, caring environment... we feel lucky to have our children attend.'

Pupils are cared for very well. One parent said, 'The teachers and all who work in the school cannot do enough to help both the children and the parents.' There is a quiet, comfortable space called the 'chill den' where pupils can go if they want to talk to an adult in the morning. Pupils who have particular needs receive the support they require to help them succeed.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding and the welfare of pupils are of utmost importance at Overseal Primary School. You ensure that all the appropriate vetting checks take place before an adult works at the school. Your records are well organised and detailed. You make referrals to the local authority if necessary and you work closely with parents and a range of agencies to keep pupils safe. Staff and governors have received the most up-to-date training and can speak knowledgeably about issues relating to safeguarding pupils.

Every parent who responded to the online survey, Parent View, said that their child was safe in school. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They told me that bullying was very rare, and that name-calling only happens occasionally, but that they would have a trusted adult to talk to if they had concerns. Pupils are able to explain, in some detail, how to be safe when they use the internet. You offer sessions for parents so they can learn about online safety, and you provide further information on the school website.

## Inspection findings

- Governors have a range of experience and skills which they use to good effect to ensure that they know the school well. They take the opportunity to work alongside senior staff, and to meet with pupils, to ensure that they are fully informed of the progress of developments. Governors are ambitious for everyone associated with the school and they take great pride in the achievements of pupils and staff.
- The school library is bright and welcoming. Pupils at the early stages of reading draw upon a variety of strategies to help them read, and to correct themselves when they make a mistake. More confident pupils read with expression. They can describe favourite authors and recognise how guided reading sessions in class, or particular interventions, have improved their reading skills. You and other leaders have astutely recognised that pupils' skills in identifying the hidden meaning in texts could be improved. You have already begun to improve the teaching of this important aspect of reading.
- You have implemented a system to track pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Leaders and teachers keep a close eye on how well pupils are doing, so that additional support can be provided if it is required. This system is well understood by staff because you have provided training for them.
- Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics (foundation subjects) also check the provision across the school in the subjects for which they are responsible. They have begun the process of assessing how well pupils are achieving in their subjects. They are now well placed to develop the system further so that pupils' progress across all subjects is carefully checked, so that pupils who are capable of achieving greater depths of knowledge and understanding are supported to do so.
- In 2016, provisional results indicate that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics exceeded that seen nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils made good progress across key stage 2 in writing and mathematics and particularly good progress in reading. School assessment information shows that disadvantaged pupils are diminishing the gap with their peers.
- You and your staff check the assessments teachers make of pupils' work to ensure that these are accurate, both in school and through discussions with other schools. You have identified that there is scope for even more pupils to achieve a greater depth of knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers insist on high standards in writing at all times. Pupils have targets which help them to understand what is expected of them. They recognise the importance of these targets in helping them to write to their best standard in every subject. For example, one child had written, 'Impatiently, I waited for the plan to be executed as I paced the room, dragging my hand across the cold, stone castle wall.'

- During our tour of the school, we saw pupils using their skills, knowledge and understanding of mathematics to solve problems. Older pupils were using reasoning skills to solve complex problems. In the Reception class, a teaching assistant was skilfully supporting a group of children to measure and count accurately and to recognise numbers. She developed their vocabulary, their ability to recognise numbers and their understanding of the importance of making sure that the small cup was full each time they poured the quantity of water into the bigger cup as they counted.
- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Displays around school remind pupils of the importance of tolerance and respect. During the inspection, Year 1 pupils were reflecting on the personal qualities that make someone a 'good friend'. Pupils told me that they particularly enjoy the celebration, during assembly every Thursday, of pupils who have demonstrated the school's values that week. Pupils also explained that they recognise the importance of taking responsibility, for example, as school councillors and music monitors. They can learn to play a musical instrument, visit the theatre and represent the school in sporting activities or by singing at the village remembrance service. These are just a few examples of the opportunities pupils have at Overseal to prepare them for life beyond primary school.
- The school meets statutory requirements for the publication of specified information on its website.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- assessment systems for foundation subjects are fully developed to ensure that pupils, particularly the most able pupils, make the progress of which they are capable
- disadvantaged pupils who are capable of attaining a greater depth of knowledge and understanding are supported to do so.

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

Yours sincerely

Di Mullan  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I held meetings with you, both assistant headteachers and four other members of staff. I also met with three members of the governing body, including the vice-chair of governing body, a representative of the local authority and a group of six pupils. I spoke with a representative from a provider of alternative provision that a pupil attends. I scrutinised a range of the school's documentation, including that relating to the progress of pupils, the school's improvement planning, self-evaluation and documents relating to safeguarding. I visited all classrooms with you to see the learning that was taking place. I spoke to pupils and looked at the work in their books. I listened to two pupils read. I spoke with parents as they brought their children to school in the morning and I took account of the views of staff and parents through their respective online surveys.

During this inspection, I focused particularly on whether safeguarding is effective and how effectively leaders have:

- addressed the areas for improvement from the last inspection
- ensured that disadvantaged pupils, including those who are the most able, make the progress of which they are capable
- ensured that all groups of pupils make good progress across the whole curriculum.