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Mrs Sharon Stelling  
Headteacher  
Langley Moor Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Stelling

### **Short inspection of Langley Moor Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 24 January 2017, 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 March 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are clear about what the school does well and have systematically tackled the things which needed to improve. You have taken decisive action to eradicate weak teaching and to increase the proportion of teaching which is outstanding. As a consequence, pupils are achieving better outcomes by the end of key stage 1 in reading and pupils across the school are reaching higher standards in their writing. The progress of the most able pupils has also accelerated, particularly in reading and writing.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they have a strong moral code. They attend well, try hard in their lessons and their excellent presentation and handwriting indicates the pride that they take in their work. Pupils enjoy the broad and balanced curriculum which prepares them well for the next stage of their education. They are particularly proud to be studying Mandarin, as well as French, recognising the importance of learning different languages.

Since the previous inspection, you have improved the quality of reports to parents, providing helpful information about the progress pupils are making. Parents now have very regular opportunities to meet with teaching staff, with separate additional meetings provided for families of those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Class blogs on your website are valued and are particularly popular with parents of children in the Reception Year, who appreciate the insight into the activities that take place during the school day. The vast majority of parents

are positive about the work you do to communicate with them. At the time of my visit, your school website did not include all the information that schools are expected to publish online. Leaders worked quickly during the inspection to address this, but governors need to ensure that they undertake regular checks to assure themselves that the website meets statutory requirements.

You identified correctly that pupils were not achieving as well in mathematics as they should and have taken steps to improve the quality of teaching. This has paid dividends across key stage 2, where all groups of pupils are now making consistently good progress. However, you know that there is still more to do to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they can in mathematics across key stage 1 and in the Reception Year. You have plans in place to address this, but you recognise that the targets you have set are not always as sharp as they could be to enable governors to keep a close check on your work.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Since the previous inspection, you have developed a team of leaders who work with you on safeguarding priorities. You keep meticulous records and meet regularly to review progress on safeguarding cases. These careful checks have led to you challenging the local authority tenaciously when you have disagreed with their decision-making about pupils you feel may be at risk.

You are rightly proud that you have secured the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools level 2 award. This work has helped to develop an open culture in school where pupils are confident to discuss issues and concerns. Pupils take on the role of anti-bullying 'champions' and play a pivotal role in preventing bullying and discriminatory behaviour. They feel safe and happy in school and trust the adults who work with them.

Since the previous inspection, you have overhauled your approach to managing attendance. You have taken strong and effective action to tackle absence and punctuality issues. Fewer pupils are missing the important start of the school day. The attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved and is now in line with the national average.

### **Inspection findings**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment of writing has improved since the previous inspection. Professional development for staff, particularly to develop their subject knowledge of grammar, has led to better outcomes. Pupils now consistently achieve above average standards in English grammar, punctuation and spelling skills by the time they leave the school.
- Senior leaders and governors sought external support to help them to accelerate progress in writing across the school and this has helped to improve teaching so that more is outstanding. Pupils now write at length in a range of subjects and for a clear purpose. Pupils' workbooks across the school evidence the strong

progress they are making in their writing. At the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was above the national average and more pupils reached the higher levels of attainment than in previous years.

- Senior leaders and governors make good use of additional funding to help disadvantaged pupils to achieve well. Well-planned extra support for pupils has enabled them to make well-above average progress in writing. All pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, have benefited from support so that all reach the expected level in the national phonics check by the end of Year 2. Leaders are now focused, correctly, on improving the proportion of younger disadvantaged pupils who make more rapid progress to reach the higher levels of attainment in mathematics.
- You and the governing body have taken recent action to strengthen the leadership team, including the appointment of new leaders of mathematics and English. This has enabled you to work together to eradicate weaker teaching and to secure consistently strong progress for all groups of pupils across key stage 2 and in all subjects. Through regular checks on the quality of pupils' work and support provided to teachers, leaders have improved the teaching of English across key stage 1 and this has led to a higher proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding the expected levels by the end of Year 2 in reading and writing. All staff who responded to the online questionnaire during the inspection acknowledged the positive work of leaders in motivating and supporting staff to perform well.
- You have provided training, coaching and support to teachers to help them to develop the new 'mastery' curriculum for mathematics. There are now more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge by solving problems and undertaking investigations. Across key stage 2, pupils' books show that they are making strong and improving progress in the subject and older pupils enjoy mathematics, describing it as, 'fun but tricky'.
- You recognise that in the Reception Year and across key stage 1, work set in mathematics can be too easy for pupils, preventing them from making the better progress of which they are capable. This is a priority in your school development plan and you have identified a range of actions to address this. However, the targets you have set in the plan are not always precise or measurable enough and this limits governors' ability to keep a close enough check on your success in tackling this issue.
- Leaders have undertaken regular checks on the quality of teachers' assessments, for example in writing. Partnership working with other local schools has helped to ensure that teachers assess pupils' work accurately. Teachers make good use of this information to plan to meet pupils' needs, particularly in reading and writing across the school and in mathematics at key stage 2. Leaders recognise that this still needs to be developed further so that younger pupils are given just the right work to help them to achieve well in mathematics.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers use pupils' assessment information effectively in mathematics to plan challenging work so that more pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, exceed the expected level at the end of the Reception Year and a higher proportion reach and exceed expected levels across key stage 1
- regular checks are undertaken to ensure that the school's website complies with statutory requirements
- targets set for improving the outcomes achieved by pupils are precise and measurable so that governors can regularly check on the progress being made.

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

Yours sincerely

Claire Brown  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this one-day inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher and other members of the leadership team. I also met with the chair of the governing body, another governor and a representative of the local authority. I visited classrooms to observe teaching and to look at pupils' work. I spoke informally to groups of pupils during breaktime and in lessons and met formally with a small group of pupils from key stage 2. I scrutinised the work in pupils' books alongside leaders. I evaluated information in relation to pupils' progress throughout the school, the school self-evaluation document, the school development plan and your arrangements for checking the performance of teachers. I reviewed the documentation related to your work to keep pupils safe and examined the information and policies on the school's website. I considered the 81 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire.