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Mrs Helen Atkins
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Atkins

Short inspection of Leas Park Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 25 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 November 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Neither you nor the school's governing body are complacent about the need to strive for the highest standards for each pupil. Leaders and governors are constantly seeking ways in which to improve the school, and this is reflected in a strong commitment to the continuing professional development of all staff. You have forged links with other schools in the area that have ensured that teachers' assessments of pupils' achievements are accurate. These strong links ensure that pupils receive the maximum benefit from the transition arrangements to and from Leas Park.

Pupils rise to the challenge of meeting the high expectations you and the other staff set for them. Pupils wear their uniforms impeccably and with immense pride. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils show great respect for each other and the adults with whom they come into contact. They were eager to share their learning with me in a mature and considered manner, excitedly reliving the enrichment activities, such as a recent visit to the Holocaust Museum, that they feel bring their learning to life. Their attitudes and the roles of responsibility that they willingly take on epitomise the values of tolerance, respect, ambition and service to others that are the cornerstones of the school.

Parents are almost unanimous in their praise for the school. Those I spoke with on the playground told me of the high quality of communication between school and

home and the confidence this gives, for example should their child be ill or require additional learning support. Parents value the information they receive about their child's progress and understand the relationship between this and the homework that teachers set. From the displays of photographs in the school hall, the popularity of events such as the Mother's Day and Father's Day lunches is clear, as is the pleasure that pupils and their parents derive from these occasions.

You and the other members of the leadership team have successfully tackled the areas for improvement from the last inspection. In particular, the attainment of the least able pupils in mathematics has improved and they are making faster progress. Work in pupils' books shows that, regardless of ability or background, pupils make good progress in mathematics as a result of consistent approaches to teaching and learning in this subject.

Pupils' English books show that there is also great consistency in the teaching of key grammar and writing skills. Teachers provide constructive feedback to pupils on their work although, typically, this is not used as effectively as it could be to guide pupils' next steps in learning. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to write for extended periods and to practise new skills and understanding. Consequently, their progress in writing is not as rapid as it could be.

Leaders and governors have an accurate picture of the school's strengths. Minutes from meetings show that governors hold you and the leadership team to account for the school's performance by asking well-chosen and challenging questions. Plans for school improvement identify the areas in need of improvement. They lack the detail necessary, however, for you to hold those responsible fully to account for the success of their actions to improve the school further.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. You review these arrangements regularly, seeking ways in which to ensure that any risks that pupils may face are recognised and their impact minimised. Extended residential visits and specific teaching also equip pupils to manage their own safety in a variety of situations. Pupils told me of how they stay safe when using the internet and of the potential harm that abuse of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and volatile substances can cause. Pupils and their parents feel that the school is a safe place where adults can be relied upon to deal quickly and effectively with any problems, though these are few.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and teachers monitor the progress and attainment of pupils regularly, addressing any underperformance quickly.
- Information about the attainment and progress of groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to underperformance, such as the least and most able, is checked particularly closely, and action taken to help these pupils catch up. They make

good progress from their starting points as a result. The pupil premium is used effectively to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils.

- Published information on pupils' performance shows that some groups of middle-ability pupils do not make as much progress as similar pupils in primary schools nationally. This is because pupils' prior learning has not been sufficiently secure and this slows down their rates of progress. Teachers take this into account and the work in pupils' books shows that teaching is usually well matched to pupils' abilities and they make good progress as a result.
- Leaders are sensitive to the needs of particular groups of pupils, such as girls, to ensure that they achieve well. Events such as a careers week in Year 6 encourage pupils' high aspirations and use positive male and female role models from the local community to inspire pupils. As a result, by the end of Year 6, pupils place a high value on their education and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide support for the small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities that ensures that they achieve well from their starting points. Leaders and teachers plan provision that supports and challenges these pupils, enabling them to make good progress socially, emotionally and academically.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide pupils with more opportunities to write for extended periods to ensure that they practise and secure essential writing and grammar skills
- leaders are more precise in their plans for school improvement, with measurable milestones and clearly defined roles and responsibilities that allow them to hold staff to account more effectively.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephen McMullan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met you and shared with you my key lines of enquiry. I also met with the school's deputy headteacher, two governors, pupils from Year 6 and parents at the start of the school day. I considered the responses of parents from Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. We visited all classes in the school, spending a short time in each, and looked at a sample of pupils' work together. I viewed a range of documents, including an evaluation of the school's performance and plans

for further improvement, information on how the pupil premium is spent, minutes from meetings of the governing body and a number of policy documents, including those for safeguarding and special educational needs.