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Mrs Pam Weston
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Weston

Short inspection of Summerfield School

Following my visit to the school on 1 February 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 set high expectations of your staff and pupils. You have built a strong working relationship with your deputy headteacher and have established a wider leadership team with clearly delegated responsibilities. As a result, leaders develop a depth of understanding within their area. This allows them to drive improvement effectively. The school environment is supportive and collaborative. You have a clear focus on academic standards while also valuing the development of well-rounded pupils.

The school is an orderly environment with a positive culture of learning and productivity. Classrooms are settled, and pupils demonstrate enthusiasm for their learning. Pupils show consistently positive relationships with their teachers and are confident to discuss work and make mistakes. You rightly promote respect, tolerance and diversity, and this work is evident throughout the school. Pupils understand the importance of valuing others and discuss this with clarity. As a result of this positive ethos, pupils of all backgrounds work and socialise well throughout the school and recorded incidents of poor behaviour are low. During a rainy breaktime, pupils throughout the school engaged in meaningful activities, from building models to drawing pictures.

At the time of the previous inspection, leaders were asked to ensure that the most able pupils made rapid progress in their writing. You have appointed middle leaders

with a clear focus on writing. These leaders effectively identify your most-able pupils and provide them with additional opportunities to study writing, beyond normal classroom teaching. During key stage 2, the most able pupils discuss and analyse the structure of more complex writing, ensuring that their own writing is succinct, clear and well structured. You rightly expect more of the most able pupils, although at times their targets are still not challenging enough. Pupils understand how to assess their own work and therefore know what is required to improve it. During key stage 1, monitoring of attainment ensures that any pupil who is not making sufficient progress is identified quickly and helped to improve. Leaders carefully analyse gaps in pupils' writing skills development and use this knowledge to plan for improvement.

Your leaders were also asked to further improve the quality of teaching. Teaching in the school enables strong progress for the majority of pupils. As a result of detailed monitoring, you have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching in your school and take effective action where the quality of teaching does not meet your expectations. Teachers regularly meet in small groups to share best practice and develop strategies for improving their teaching. Teachers value these opportunities and report positively on their effectiveness.

During the last academic year, the rates of pupils' attendance declined and persistent absence increased. You have identified this issue and rightly focused on securing improvement. Your leadership team has carefully analysed some of the causes of low attendance, especially for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for disadvantaged pupils. While attendance is now improving, there is further work to be done before all pupils attend regularly enough.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Staff training is up to date. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including online. Staff and pupils demonstrate understanding of how to report concerns. Staff understand how to identify pupils at risk.

You demonstrate an understanding of the locality in which the school operates and the specific needs of your pupils. As a result, your work to safeguard pupils is effective in meeting those needs. You work well with external agencies to support vulnerable pupils.

Inspection findings

- I investigated how effectively leaders are addressing pupils' high rates of absence, and I observed pupils' behaviour around the school. Staff work to build strong, open relationships with parents and carers. When pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory, you swiftly discuss this with parents and implement a plan for improvement. Actions are agreed with parents and you monitor the effect of these actions on pupils' attendance. This allows you to take further action if

pupils' attendance does not improve rapidly. You have used the pupil premium to target support for disadvantaged pupils with low attendance. Although the rate of attendance is rising, there is further work to be done to improve the attendance for all pupils.

- Pupils demonstrate positive relationships with their peers. Classrooms remain orderly and productive throughout lessons. Pupils say that rare incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with rapidly and effectively by staff. Pupils and staff say behaviour is well managed and does not disrupt pupils' learning. The use of exclusion is rare.
- I also considered the progress of pupils in reading and writing, including the most able and disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have used information from the last academic year to identify accurately groups of pupils who did not make strong progress. In response, during key stage 2, the most able readers are now provided with access to more challenging reading material to extend their learning. They are given opportunities to deepen their understanding, for example, by mentoring younger pupils. All pupils in Year 6, including the most able, are given frequent advice on how to develop further. Leaders' assessment of reading shows strong progress for the majority of the most able pupils. Pupils' written work during key stage 2 shows rapid progress for many pupils. However, although pupils know how to improve their writing, the level of challenge for the most able is not always high enough.
- Your key stage 1 English leader provides an accurate evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching in Years 1 and 2. As a result, you are developing strategies to improve progress in writing. An improved focus on monitoring pupils' progress now allows those who fall behind to be identified more quickly. This allows you to support these pupils so that they quickly catch up. You have targeted the use of pupil premium funding to support additional provision for the disadvantaged pupils who fall behind. Additionally, you have used pupil premium funding to ensure younger disadvantaged pupils are prepared to learn at the start of the day by attending breakfast club regularly. Pupils' work and your assessment information shows rapid progress in writing during key stage 1 for the majority of pupils, including the majority of disadvantaged pupils.
- I considered how effectively leaders have improved the quality of teaching. You and your leadership team make regular checks on the quality of teaching. As a result, you have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching in the school. You have taken external advice to ensure your judgements on the quality of teaching are robust. Weaknesses in teaching are dealt with in a supportive way, ensuring the continued development and well-being of your staff. Teaching is improving, although not all teaching is consistently challenging enough. You have a stable and supportive staff who value the time given for professional development and who share your vision to provide all pupils with high-quality teaching.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the attendance rates for all pupils continue to improve rapidly
- teaching is further improved so that more of the most able pupils make the best possible progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Corr
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I checked safeguarding arrangements, including the records of recruitment checks, policies and procedures. I reviewed a range of published information including the school's website. I reviewed the school's self-evaluation. I visited classes in all key stages with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, where I observed lessons and looked at pupils' work. In meetings with senior leaders, we discussed attendance, behaviour, the use of the pupil premium, progress information for current pupils, development of the curriculum and the monitoring and training of staff. I observed pupils during breaktime. I spoke with a group of teachers and a group of pupils. I spoke to parents at the end of the school day. I met with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I reviewed records of pupils' behaviour and governors' meetings. I considered 18 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, 18 responses to the pupil survey and 41 responses to the staff survey.