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Mr Andrew Shakesby
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Shakesby

Short inspection of Keinton Mandeville Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 21 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 June 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You have won the respect of staff, governors and the wider community in the short time you have been in post as headteacher. Your leadership is innovative and focused on creating high-quality learning provision throughout the school. As a result, staff are becoming much more responsive to the progress pupils are making in their classes and change approaches accordingly.

To bring about the necessary improvements in the rates of some pupils' learning and progress, you are ensuring that teaching encourages all pupils to become better learners. Certainly, pupils who spoke with me were very positive about the school and said they would recommend it to others. 'Teachers make lessons as fun as possible,' said one. And, 'teachers give us time to check our work so you can realise your mistakes and put things right,' was typical of the many positive comments made by pupils.

You have improved communication channels within the school. The school is more open and transparent in the way it carries out its work. You have begun to address some historical data issues regarding the achievement of pupils and have made gathering accurate assessment information on pupils' learning and progress a priority. As a result, you have identified where past assessments of pupils'

achievements have been overgenerous. Some pupils who were identified as high achievers at the end of key stage 1 are now receiving additional support to improve their reading skills in key stage 2.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils are safe in the school. A strong culture of safeguarding has been built around a secure knowledge of pupils' individual needs and any vulnerabilities they may demonstrate. Staff know the needs of pupils and their families well. They are vigilant in spotting any evidence that a child may not be thriving. The school possesses a very good knowledge of the pupils in your care whose circumstances make them particularly vulnerable.

The checks that are made on the staff's backgrounds and their suitability to work with children comply with legal requirements. Some minor clerical omissions were identified during the inspection in the recording of documents. Nevertheless, records show that staff and governors are well informed, appropriately trained and regularly updated on changes in safeguarding legislation.

The school takes appropriate action where necessary. For example, in working closely with parents to ensure pupils' good attendance. The school also draws on the expertise of external partners to support pupils with more complex needs and to keep them safe. Parents who spoke with the inspector at the start of the day agreed their children were safe and well cared for while at school. 'My children have been really well looked after and given a great start to their education in a really warm and caring environment,' was a typical comment written by a parent.

Inspection findings

- One of my key lines of enquiry in helping me to decide whether the school remained good was to find out how well the school had addressed the areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection. To this end, we reviewed how well the most able pupils were supported to achieve the higher levels they are capable of reaching. We reviewed pupils' written work in their books and on display around the school. We found plenty of evidence that pupils are given opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences. Pupils' writing reflects the rich and varied curriculum on offer. Handwriting is taught systematically to pupils throughout the school. I found some strikingly good-quality examples of writing on display in the classrooms. You acknowledge, however, that your most able pupils as a priority group are not currently monitored as closely as other key groups within the school.
- A focus on staff development and training is also helping to raise teachers' confidence. Training has empowered teachers to provide more effectively for the learning needs of all pupils. For example, training on dyslexia has improved teachers' confidence and secured a more inclusive approach to planning lessons. Your closer monitoring of pupils' progress means the tracking of your most vulnerable pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is now much more effective. Throughout the school, pupils who

sometimes find learning a challenge have also made good progress this academic year. In addition, new, practical resources are helping these pupils in particular to develop resilience and greater independence in learning.

- A further line of enquiry looked at how well pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making progress. Along with your senior leaders you have raised teachers' expectations regarding the level of support they provide for pupils with additional learning needs. Class teachers are now rightly expected, in the first instance, to provide for these pupils in their classes. You are also ensuring that any intervention programmes you provide are more carefully planned to support pupils' learning. For example, following recent assessment work an intensive programme to improve pupils' spelling has been successfully introduced to two groups of key stage 2 pupils. In addition, 'pupil passports' that identify personalised provision and targets for pupils have also been successfully introduced. These are proving to be effective in engaging pupils who require additional support, along with their parents.
- Another line of enquiry was how well pupils were learning to read. Children in the early years have settled well to learning and are making overall good progress. Throughout the school, every class teacher has identified pupils who are benefiting from reading with an adult each week. The school has invested in new books and reading comprehension resources to support pupils. Feedback from staff and pupils indicates that this investment is having the desired effect, putting reading at the heart of the school. Pupils who spoke with me also confirmed that they were looking forward to getting a new library. A 'rapid-read' scheme, aimed at improving boys' reading skills, has also been successfully introduced recently, although it is too early yet to evaluate the impact of this strategy. Pupils who read to the inspector did so with confidence. Less confident readers used their knowledge of phonics well to help decipher unfamiliar words. More confident readers read with expression and a secure understanding of the text.
- My final line of enquiry looked at how well governors are provided with sufficient, accurate and evaluative information regarding the work of the school. Your leadership is already demonstrating an improved confidence and rigour in monitoring pupils' learning. Governors say they have always been given good information about the work of the school. Now, the improved arrangements for assessing pupils' progress are beginning to give you and the governing body a much fuller understanding of how well individual pupils and groups are learning. Governors say they are pleased with how well you have settled into your role. They particularly appreciate your open and collaborative leadership style which allows all staff to feel empowered.
- Governors have undertaken additional training to further their knowledge and skills. They follow a monitoring timetable which helps them to prioritise their work and hold the school effectively to account. Governors regularly invite subject leaders to present reports at committee meetings. This provides them with the essential information they need to evaluate the impact of the work of the school. However, the most able pupils are not currently tracked as closely as other focus groups. Senior leaders' reports are sometimes overly descriptive and

lack concise evaluations about key groups of pupils such as the most able.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the monitoring of the most able pupils is carried out with the same rigour as it is for other groups of pupils, in order to help them achieve the higher levels they are capable of making
- reports to governors include evaluative information on key groups of pupils such as the most able
- checks on safeguarding records are carried out with greater rigour and precision.

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

Yours sincerely

David Edwards
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met regularly with you as part of a professional dialogue. I also met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair. I held meetings with teachers and spoke informally with other members of staff. Together, we undertook observations of learning in lessons. We spoke with pupils about their work and examined pupils' work, focusing on writing and presentation. I heard some children read to me. Before the inspection, I examined a variety of documents, including the school's website, published performance information and a summary of its self-evaluation. I spoke with parents at the start of the day and also took into account 43 responses to the online survey, Parent View.