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Mrs Jane Siddons
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Siddons

Short inspection of Lightmoor Village Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 14 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 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 and your highly skilled deputy headteacher provide strong leadership. This is a very different school now compared with the time of its previous inspection. As the village of Lightmoor has grown, pupil numbers have soared and the school has grown significantly in size. All the parents I spoke with, as well as the vast majority who completed the online questionnaire, Parent View, are very pleased with the way leaders, governors and staff have managed the improvements. The vast majority of parents are very satisfied with the education and welfare provided for their children.

Together with your governing body, you and your deputy headteacher have been diligent and effective in managing staff changes as the need for more staff has increased in the last five years. The intelligent recruitment of key leaders and staff has strengthened the teaching and the quality of support provided for pupils. Governance has improved, having been highlighted as needing further improvement at the time of the previous inspection. Governors are more skilled and effective than previously. The governing body is both supportive and challenging in holding leaders and staff to account for pupils' progress and teachers' performance.

The school is a positive and inclusive community and you strongly believe in considering the needs of pupils first when planning improvements. Pupils are enthusiastic and very well-behaved learners. They thrive, succeed and enjoy their education. Many pupils told me that they love coming to school, as one group

confirmed, 'This is a great school, you make friends easily and learning is fun.' Others in the group agreed, as well as confirming how safe pupils feel. Pupils who are members of 'Team Safe' told me, 'We make sure that everyone is safe by checking if pupils are behaving and treating each other well.' Team Safe is a good initiative involving pupils in the management and welfare of other pupils. Along with other responsibilities, such as being school councillors, monitors, librarians and play leaders, pupils represent the views of others and make a significant contribution to their school community.

You and your staff plan a creative and varied curriculum that enlivens pupils. The curriculum and teaching make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' personal and academic development are enhanced by a broad and interesting range of topics, visits and additional extra-curricular sports and activities. The staff value pupils' work and efforts and this is clearly demonstrated in the excellent displays of work around the school and in classrooms. These include accounts of educational visits to local museums, studies of ancient civilisations and examples of high-quality two- and three-dimensional art and design, including fine art using different media such as paint, chalk and ink. Additional activities and clubs enable pupils to engage in a range of sports, games and musical ensembles performed by the school's brass band.

Pupils' achievement continues to improve, especially in mathematics. Last year's national assessments show that, in both key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils reached above-average standards in reading and writing and high standards in mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as other pupils nationally who are not disadvantaged. There are no significant differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities also achieve well and make good progress towards their individualised learning targets. The expert support and intervention programmes provided by teachers and highly skilled teaching assistants are very effective in helping pupils who have additional learning needs.

Good early years provision has been maintained. Reception children get off to a good start and reach standards that are above those seen nationally. Assessments show that over the last three years there has been a sustained improvement to the proportion of Reception children reaching a good level of development.

Despite these positive outcomes, there is room for more improvement. The most recent national assessments show that some of the most able pupils fall short of reaching high standards or learning in greater depth in reading and writing. Leaders and staff have given this appropriate attention and this is reflected in the school's development plan. Currently, there are indications that more focused support for the most able pupils is already increasing the proportion reaching high standards.

You and your deputy headteacher play an active role with other schools in the teaching alliance to train, develop and recruit teachers and support staff. Highly effective staff development, training, coaching and mentoring have ensured that the school provides nothing less than good teaching. The close working relationships

with other schools in the teaching alliance enable staff to see and share best practice. This is having a positive effect on many different aspects of teaching and learning.

Teachers and support staff are very good at teaching phonics in the early years and key stage 1. The most recent national results show that all pupils reached the expected standard in the phonics screening check in both Year 1 and Year 2. This lays strong foundations for pupils' early development in reading and writing and accounts for pupils' accurate spelling when writing independently. However, because staff do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their spoken language, some pupils' writing could show a wider range of vocabulary. Teachers set consistent expectations for pupils' writing and this is reflected in neat presentation, well-formed handwriting and accurate spelling and punctuation. The form and structure of pupils' writing are improving well as they progress through the school. However, I noticed that teachers and supporting adults do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to answer questions fully or discuss, share and generate ideas orally with their classmates. In some cases, the questions posed by teachers do not enable pupils to think deeply and pupils are sometimes interrupted when trying to answer questions as adults try to move the lesson on, without giving pupils time to reflect or discuss their ideas fully. These general features of the teaching limit pupils' use of speech, language and vocabulary and this sometimes stifles the range and quality of their independent writing.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. Staff vetting and checking systems are rigorous. All the parents I spoke to and those responding to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that pupils are safe in school and are well cared for by the staff. Senior leaders and those in charge of each key stage keep robust records to follow up absenteeism to make sure that pupils are safe when not in school. There is a very effective nurture programme which fosters strong relationships with pupils and families. There are well-defined and clear referral procedures so that teaching, support, administrative and ancillary staff are aware of whom to go to if they are concerned about a child's welfare or safety. Pupils who are members of Team Safe also play a significant role in ensuring that pupils are safe.

Inspection findings

- Leaders, governors and staff are committed to continuous improvement. The deputy headteacher manages assessment information very well. You and your senior management team ensure that staff present regular assessment updates during review meetings to identify whether pupils are on track to reach their expected learning targets. This level of scrutiny is effective, as the school identified from last year's assessments that boys were achieving less well than girls in reading and writing. Interventions and additional support for boys' reading are already having an impact as differences between boys' progress and that of girls are reducing.

- Teachers use assessment information well to check and identify any differences between the achievements of different groups, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' work in books and assessments of their progress show that lessons are effective in reducing and closing differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others who are not disadvantaged.
- The teaching of mathematics is particularly effective, enabling pupils to reach high standards by the end of Year 6, building on the good start made in the early years and key stage 1. Leaders have correctly identified, as a core priority, appropriate actions to sustain improvements to the progress made by the most able pupils. Current assessments for reading and writing show that more focused teaching and interventions planned for groups organised by ability are helping the most able pupils make more rapid progress. There is further scope for teachers to plan more demanding tasks for the most able pupils and, in particular, to pose more varied and challenging questions to help pupils think deeply.
- Teachers provide and plan an interesting and stimulating curriculum that energises pupils. This is reflected in consistently high standards of behaviour in lessons and pupils who are typically engaged and interested in their learning. Pupils are keen to answer questions during class discussions. However, there are occasions when pupils are not given enough time or opportunity to answer or speak in complete sentences. There is a tendency for adults to lead discussions without giving pupils time to discuss, share and generate ideas fully. This limits pupils' use of speech and language and their use of vocabulary, which is reflected in their independent writing.
- Attendance rates are well above average, reflecting how much pupils enjoy school. The positive relationships that you and your staff have fostered with families have reduced persistent absenteeism significantly. In addition, the welfare, care and attention given to particularly vulnerable pupils are very effective. For example, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and emotional or behavioural difficulties, including pupils who have autistic spectrum disorder, receive highly skilled support from well-qualified teaching assistants. The nurture programme is well planned, with additional space used in what the school calls 'The Treehouse' (a specially designed nurture classroom), enabling pupils to receive regular small-group or individualised support so that they can be reintegrated and cope in mainstream lessons.
- Governance has improved since the previous inspection. Governors bring a broad range of skills that are both helpful to the school and enable them to challenge any underperformance. The governing body carries out thorough skills audits before recruiting or co-opting new governors. The chair and vice-chair oversee and manage governance well and ensure that all statutory requirements are being met, including those for safeguarding, child protection and the national curriculum. Regular monitoring and reports from senior and middle leaders inform governors so that they are kept up to date with pupils' progress and performance. I checked some of the most recent governor minutes and could see that governors challenge leaders and ask the right questions when

they identify any lapses in teachers' performance or pupils' progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers continue to focus on the achievement of the most able pupils so that the tasks planned and questions posed for them in lessons deepen their understanding in all subjects but particularly in reading and writing
- teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to share and generate ideas, speak and explain their answers fully to broaden their vocabulary and improve still further the quality and range of their independent writing.

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

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the deputy headteacher and three governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. I also met with a school improvement partner from the local teaching alliance appointed by the local teaching school. Together with the deputy headteacher, we visited every class together to observe some teaching, looked at pupils' work in books and spoke to pupils during lessons. I also spoke to pupils during morning breaktime and at lunchtime and then to another small group in the afternoon. I spoke to some parents at the start of the school day and considered the 50 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. I scrutinised the school's development plans and priorities, and discussed with you and the deputy headteacher how leaders monitor and check the quality and effectiveness of teaching across the school. Your deputy headteacher and a senior leader in key stage 2 shared with me the most recent assessments of pupils' attainment and progress and we discussed the national test results and assessments undertaken by pupils in 2016. I checked staff vetting and safeguarding procedures to determine whether the school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective.