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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Mr Douglas Stroud and Mrs Tina Shute  
Headteachers  
Cedarwood Primary School  
Wilkinson Drive  
Kesgrave  
Ipswich  
Suffolk  
IP5 2ES

Dear Mr Stroud and Mrs Shute

### **Short inspection of Cedarwood Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 7 March 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 July 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 both very proud of your school and despite a recent reorganisation of the staffing structure, have created a strong and caring team. You both have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and have used the decline in standards in 2016 and priorities from the last inspection to drive improvements. You are determined to make the education provided even better.

Pupils enjoy school and have a thorough understanding of the school values, which have impacted positively on relationships and behaviour in the school. The pupils feel that the school helps to develop their confidence, with one pupil stating, 'everyone is good at something'.

Parents are positive about the school and appreciate the hard work of the dedicated staff. As one parent described, 'teachers know their pupils and what makes them tick'. The breakfast club has been a good addition to the school for working parents. There is a good community spirit and parents often come into school to support projects, such as decorating areas of the school or celebrating cultural events.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors commented on the many strengths of the school, including the strong leadership and the pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Inspectors identified the need to provide pupils with enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects. You have addressed this through the creative curriculum you provide, which supports pupils to apply their knowledge and skills. Pupils enjoy the engaging opportunities the school plans based on their interests. In the Reception classes, children responded with excitement to the visiting dinosaurs in the swamp. There was a range of creative learning activities available, linked to the dinosaur theme, to support different areas of learning and application of skills. This included a phonic session, which had children reading words about crossing the river to reach the dinosaurs and measuring dinosaurs' footprints.

You agreed with me that you can do more to provide further opportunities for pupils to develop skills in subjects such as history, geography and science. You also agreed that you need to support all pupils to take pride in their written work by improving presentation and handwriting.

Governors are skilful, highly committed and share your high expectations for pupils. They know the school well, including its strengths and areas for development, which enables them to challenge and support leaders effectively. The governors share your ambition for pupils and for the school to be even better. They make regular visits to the school and receive useful information from you on how well pupils are doing. Governors spoke of the careful use of funding to buy intervention resources, which have positively impacted on standards in reading and mathematics. The school has used the support from the local authority well to strengthen leadership and management, such as through working with other schools to develop middle leadership.

### **Safeguarding is effective**

Leaders, including governors, have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are well trained and ensure that staff receive regular training in safeguarding to enable them to follow the school's comprehensive procedures. The school's recording systems are rigorous and the regular checks made ensure that these are consistently maintained. Records show timely involvement of support agencies, with actions followed up.

Pupils told me that they always feel safe in school. Work through the curriculum on e-safety ensures that pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. A large majority of the 91 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed their children are kept safe.

## Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we agreed to review the progress boys make in reading and writing across the school. This was because boys have achieved less well over time than girls in school and against boys nationally. Our visits to classrooms, my scrutiny of pupils' books and your progress information show that boys have made good progress since September 2016. Their current progress is now in line with that of the girls and is likely to reduce the differences between boys and girls in school and nationally. When visiting classrooms, boys stated that they often found it 'difficult to think of ideas for writing'. Owing to the supportive ethos of the school that has developed, boys felt confident to discuss their ideas with a partner, which has helped their writing.
- Following the decline in standards in 2016, you have taken effective action. You have concentrated on improving teaching in reading and writing for all pupils across the school. Consequently, each year group has made good progress in reading and writing so far this year. However, you agree that writing is a high priority for the school. Standards in Year 6 remain lower than in reading and mathematics. In addition, presentation in books varies across the school and handwriting is not good enough in some classes.
- The school has been developing its writing assessment procedures and has completed internal and external moderation of writing levels. You are now confident that writing assessment information is accurate.
- Outcomes for mathematics in key stage 1 are improving. This was another area we agreed to review during the inspection due to the decline in standards in 2016. The assessment information you provided shows that pupils in key stage 1 are now making good progress in mathematics due to the actions you have put in place.
- The mathematics leader has introduced a mastery approach, which has supported the pupils' fluency in mathematics. Training and support have ensured that all staff feel confident in their teaching of mathematics. Evidence in books shows that pupils have opportunities to reason and solve problems. Misconceptions pupils have were dealt with in lessons and in books.
- We also reviewed the attainment of pupils in other subjects, such as science, history and geography. This was because the number of pupils attaining the expected level in science in key stage 2 was well below the national average in 2016. Pupils gain the necessary subject knowledge, but lessons do not provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to develop subject-specific skills.
- We considered the attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who are disadvantaged. We also reviewed some aspects of behaviour management. The actions leaders have taken have improved attendance for all pupils, including those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who are disadvantaged, which is currently higher than the attendance rate last year.

- Monitoring arrangements for behaviour, attendance and safety are more rigorous now and outcomes are shared with the governors to ensure that they are well informed. The school meets regularly with parents to gain their views to support school improvement, including recently to discuss the proposed changes to the behaviour and anti-bullying policy.
- Currently, the school website is not up to date. You explained that there have been some issues with updating the website to ensure that parents are kept fully informed about all areas of the school's work, but agreed that this is an area to continue to develop.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- Year 6 pupils continue to make better than expected progress in their writing so that standards rise further
- all pupils take pride in their work so that their presentation and handwriting are improved
- more opportunities are provided for pupils to develop skills in subjects such as history, geography and science
- the website is well managed and up to date with the required information.

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

Yours sincerely

Rachel Welch  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with both of you to discuss progress since the last inspection and to agree the key lines of enquiry to be examined during the inspection. I also met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body, and representatives from the local authority and the school council respectively. I scrutinised a variety of sources of information, including your self-evaluation, the plans for improvement and assessment information for all year groups. I also scrutinised the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures, the records of checks leaders make on the suitability of staff to work with children and information regarding attendance. We visited lessons and looked in books in a number of classes. I also looked at 91 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, 29 staff survey returns and 83 pupil survey responses.