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Dear Mr Finch

Short inspection of Mappleborough Green CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 2 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 October 2012.

This school continues to be good.

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

Following your appointment in September 2014, you have successfully built a team of staff who are committed to achieving high outcomes for all pupils. The appointments that you have made have been well judged to further strengthen teaching and learning. You have also ensured that teachers and other staff are provided with a good range of opportunities to develop and extend their practice, both through professional development sessions in school and through opportunities to visit other schools to observe and learn from highly effective teaching.

You have a clear and accurate view of the strengths of the school and also the areas where it can improve further. This is the result of effective evaluation of all aspects of the work of the school. The improvement plans that are now in place focus sharply on areas that will impact positively on pupils' learning. They also enable them to develop further as well-rounded citizens in modern British society. Pupils recognise the need to show tolerance and respect towards people with different beliefs. Specific targets for improvement have well-thought-out actions and demanding success criteria. For example, you, together with governors, have rightly identified that the opportunities to develop a depth of understanding of other religions and cultures need to be further developed and extended.

You have encouraged staff to be innovative in their teaching and to take risks if this will improve learning opportunities. This has resulted in improvements in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, outcomes for pupils by the time they leave the school in Year 6 are above the national average in these subjects. You have also ensured that opportunities for pupils' learning across all subjects have been developed to produce an exciting and relevant curriculum that allows pupils to make good progress. All members of the school community share your high expectations for pupils and have supported you in making changes that have benefited the pupils. While standards have risen over the past three years, you are not complacent and recognise that some pupils, especially the most able, could achieve higher outcomes.

You have established clear and exacting behaviour expectations that are understood and achieved by pupils. As a result, standards of behaviour are high and pupils have a clear understanding of their responsibilities in showing care and consideration for each other. This culture of support and mutual respect permeates all aspects of school life. Pupils spoken to during the inspection said that they liked being part of a small community where everyone cares for each other. Pupils were confident that bullying is extremely rare in school and understood the actions that they needed to take if they had concerns. The very large majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire were confident that their children were well taught and well cared for. Parents were appreciative of the positive impact that you have had on the school. One parent's comment that 'The staff have created an ethos that is highly aspirational, nurturing, holistic and inclusive' was typical of the views of many of the other parents who responded to the Parent View survey.

You have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Teachers now provide more opportunities for pupils to take greater responsibility and reflect on their own learning. Learning outside of the classroom is now built into the curriculum and pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to undertake local studies and participate in visits and trips to places that support their learning. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 recently undertook a study of the River Arrow that runs close to the school as part of their geography studies. This helped them deepen their understanding of how rivers are formed and the impact that they have on the environment.

While the curriculum is broad and balanced, you have plans in place to further improve some subject teaching. The approach to teaching French as a modern foreign language in school for pupils in key stage 2 has recently been revised. However, this is not yet fully embedded and pupils' learning in this area of the curriculum is not as strong as in other subjects.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe and secure. Robust systems are in place to ensure that all visitors to the school site are checked and that the school is a safe place for pupils. Training for staff is regular and focuses on ensuring that staff are aware of what to

do if they have any concerns relating to safeguarding. Staff have received training about child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and combating radicalisation and extremism. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

The procedures for appointing staff to the school are thorough and help to ensure that suitable checks are carried out to make sure pupils are not at risk. There are good induction procedures in place to ensure that newly appointed staff have a secure understanding of the school's expectations regarding safeguarding. Pupils are taught about how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They also understand and value the 'network' that is in place to enable them to express any concerns they might have to a trusted adult or friend.

Inspection findings

- There is a cohesive, whole-school approach to assessment with robust systems in place to ensure that the teachers are accurate in their judgements of pupils' progress and attainment. Teachers meet regularly with staff from other schools to review pupils' work and to moderate their assessments. The headteacher has developed a secure system of collating the outcomes of assessment that allows for analysis of progress of individuals, year groups and specific group of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.
- Leaders analyse the assessment information well to monitor pupils' progress. Termly pupil performance reviews are used to discuss pupils' progress and to set challenging attainment and progress targets. As a result, pupils make good progress. However, the evaluation of the progress of the most able pupils is not as well developed as that of other pupils. While teachers have a clear understanding of the potential of these pupils and set tasks that are of increased complexity, they do not consistently exploit opportunities to challenge these pupils. For example, questions are not sufficiently adapted to the abilities of the most able pupils and, as a result, learning opportunities can be lost.
- Governors have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This has been gained through close attention to the assessment information that is provided to them by the headteacher, effective systems for monitoring and evaluating specific aspects of the school's work, and use of external information.
- Leaders have developed and put in place a curriculum that makes learning relevant and exciting for pupils. Reading, writing and mathematics are taught extremely effectively. There is a strong focus on ensuring that pupils develop a secure knowledge of the use of phonics and can then apply these skills in their reading. Pupils become fluent readers who have a love of reading. This was evident on the day of the inspection when all pupils participated in World Book Day. Pupils and staff dressed up as characters from books by the writer of 'The Pea and the Princess' in preparation for a visit by the author the following week. Opportunities for pupils to apply their writing and mathematical skills are built effectively into other subjects. Outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are good and are continuing to improve further.

- Highly effective links are made between subjects through the thematic approach to learning that is now established in school. The topics are well planned to enable pupils to make strong progress in subjects such as history, geography, art and design technology. Pupils greatly enjoy the topics and they are extremely well enhanced through regular visits to places such as the Black Country Museum, Coughton Court and local museums. During the inspection, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were seen using their developing information technology skills and knowledge to develop computer programs for mathematics, for use by the pupils in key stage 1. Pupils undertake investigative work in science, and problem solving using reasoning in mathematics.
- Leaders are aware that the teaching of modern foreign languages is not as effective as it could be. They have recently adopted a revised approach to the teaching of French in the school but this is not yet fully embedded.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is supported extremely well. During the inspection, pupils were observed showing empathy and compassion for the people of Syria. They are appreciative of the many opportunities that the school provides for them to take on responsibility. Older pupils act as 'buddies' to younger pupils and regard this as a valuable and worthwhile activity. As one Year 6 pupil said, 'We like to look after the younger children but we also look after everyone in school.'
- Pupils have a good understanding of the principles of democracy and the rule of law. This was enhanced through a recent visit to the Houses of Parliament where pupils were able to see government in action.
- While pupils show respect for other people, their understanding of traditions and beliefs of other religions is not as developed as it could be. Leaders recognise this as an area for improvement. They are identifying opportunities for pupils to make visits to a wider range of religious buildings and to meet with people of different faiths to gain a greater depth of understanding.
- School leaders closely monitor the attendance of all pupils and ensure that parents have a clear understanding of the need to ensure their children attend regularly and on time. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance. Where specific circumstances exist for individual pupils that impact on their attendance, leaders ensure that appropriate action is put in place to address any gaps in their learning.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers develop further opportunities through questioning to provide high levels of challenge to the most able pupils in school
- pupils are provided with a greater depth of understanding of the beliefs and faiths of other people to help them in their development as citizens of a multi-faith and multicultural society

- the teaching of modern foreign languages is further developed to allow pupils to make good progress in this area of the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Adam Hewett
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and two subject leaders. I also met with seven governors, including the chair of the governing body. I considered the 47 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and looked at free text comments and a letter from parents. I visited, together with you, all the four classes to observe learning. I listened to some pupils read. I met with a group of pupils and also spoke with pupils in lessons. I observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime on the playground.

I scrutinised information about pupils' progress during the last academic year. I considered other documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and the school improvement plan. I scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures, including policies and checks on staff employed in the school, and checked the school website. I also analysed the range of views expressed by staff through Ofsted's questionnaire about the school and its leadership.