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Fiona Tomblin  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Tomblin

### **Short inspection of Parwich Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 9 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 January 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 recognised and promptly implemented improvements to raise pupils' achievement. You are a determined leader who leads the school team confidently and effectively. You know the school's priorities and areas for improvement well through your accurate evaluation of teaching and learning. The school's plans to drive further improvement are effective.

Pupils are happy and show a thirst for learning. Relationships are positive in the school; pupils show warmth and care towards each other and are respectful of adults. They value the trips and extra-curricular activities which leaders have provided to enrich the school's curriculum.

Since the last inspection, you have improved the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers have opportunities to attend training sessions and share effective practice. Consequently, teachers know exactly what they have to do to improve their practice so that their pupils make continued good progress.

You have astutely recognised the need for the school to be involved in a range of local educational partnerships. This has enabled you and other staff to drive confidently for pupils to achieve better. You have used local cluster meetings as opportunities to check the accuracy of teachers' assessments and share local expertise and practice. In addition, you have joined the Ashbourne Dove Valley Teaching School Alliance, so that staff can access a range of training opportunities.

You value these wider educational partnerships as an important part of continued school improvement.

You and other staff have successfully created regular opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills independently. This is evident in pupils' workbooks and displays around the school. They have had opportunities to write about a range of topics in their workbooks, such as pancake day, countries of interest and important people in history. Pupils' mathematics books show that they have opportunities to use and apply their mathematics skills independently and develop their deeper mathematical understanding.

You rightly recognise that teachers do not always plan activities that provide the most able pupils with sufficient challenge, particularly in reading and mathematics. This is a high priority for the school and you have already implemented a new reading scheme to ensure that the needs of the most able pupils are met and an updated maths scheme has been introduced to meet the higher expectations of the revised curriculum. In mathematics, leaders have also recently completed an audit of mathematics resources and purchased resources to help meet pupils' specific needs, so that they make consistently good or better progress. You acknowledge that the school has not yet had time to assess the full impact of these schemes on pupils' achievement.

Teachers do not always give pupils opportunities to develop and deepen their understanding and their critical thinking skills. For example, in one lesson, pupils were learning about life in Kenya. They made thoughtful contributions but the teacher's questions were not challenging enough to make sure pupils developed the critical thinking skills that would help to deepen their understanding.

You and the governing body are also aware that pupils do not have a full enough understanding of different cultures and traditions. You have already made valuable headway through achieving the International Award. Pupils have participated in a range of activities, such as a visit to a local mosque. You appreciate there is further work to be done to ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is firmly established.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

School leaders have excellent partnerships with parents, carers and external agencies. This has helped to ensure that pupils are supported and kept safe. Safeguarding training for staff and governors is up to date and governors make thorough checks on all safeguarding practices. Staff know precisely what to do in the event of a safeguarding concern and have all of the information and guidance they need to provide excellent support for pupils in their care.

High-quality, detailed records show that you manage concerns swiftly and understand the procedures for referring pupils where there is a concern. You are prompt and vigilant in gathering further support by approaching the appropriate external agencies.

Pupils feel safe at the school and are confident that their concerns are quickly dealt with by staff. They know precisely how the school keeps them safe, through site security and visitors signing in on arrival. Pupils receive frequent reminders in assembly about keeping safe while using the internet, for example. Pupils said bullying is rare and they feel assured that teachers will deal with any friendship disagreements promptly. Pupils say that adults help them to make friends.

### **Inspection findings**

- The governing body is a strength of the school and provides considerable challenge and support. Governors are knowledgeable about the strengths and priorities for the school and conduct regular visits. Consequently, the governing body is well informed and in a strong position to provide continued effective support.
- Pupils' workbooks in key stage 1 show that pupils make good progress because the teacher plans well-designed activities that provide sufficient challenge for all. For example, pupils wrote descriptions about animals and how they are suited to their environment. One pupil wrote, 'an arctic fox is very fluffy so it can blend in the snow. The toad has black splodges on his back so he can be camouflaged.' Pupils consistently use and apply their word and sentence skills in their writing so that they make rapid progress.
- You recognise that pupils at the end of key stage 2 made disappointing progress in 2016, particularly among boys. You gave specific reasons for the weaker progress of some pupils and are confident that the new reading resources will ensure that pupils make rapid progress.
- You have implemented a system that enables you to track pupils' attainment and progress carefully. You and other teachers regularly meet to discuss pupils' progress in detail. Consequently, you have been able to organise additional learning support for pupils who are not making good progress.
- You have created a rich and vibrant curriculum which is complemented well by visitors, trips and extra-curricular activities. Teachers plan imaginative topics which develop the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, as well as their knowledge of science, history and geography. You have placed science as a high priority in the school so that pupils are able to develop their scientific knowledge and skills through practical activities. For example, pupils in key stage 1 have used their observational skills to test different types of chocolate.
- Parents commented warmly on how well the school caters for their children's individual needs. Parents value the nurturing and caring atmosphere, as well as the range of after-school activities on offer. The school ensures that it consults pupils on their preferences so that a broad range of activities are available.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for lower-ability pupils. Pupils are encouraged to persevere in their work and are well supported when they make mistakes. Teaching assistants provide effective support in class for pupils because they take the time to understand their specific needs and they support learning through

careful questions. Consequently, pupils make good progress and become confident learners.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers always provide the most able pupils with sufficiently challenging work, so that they make the rapid progress of which they are capable, particularly in reading and mathematics
- teachers provide pupils with more opportunities to develop their critical thinking skills across the curriculum
- teachers extend opportunities for pupils to experience a wider range of different cultures and backgrounds as part of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

Yours sincerely

Emma Nuttall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and other governors. I visited a number of lessons, examined samples of pupils' work and talked with pupils about their work. I spoke with pupils, informally, during breaktime and lessons, and more formally in a group.

I observed pupils' behaviour around the school at breaktimes and during lessons. I met with parents at the beginning of the school day and took account of 11 responses to the Ofsted free-text service and 20 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. There were 5 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 14 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. I examined a range of documents, including safeguarding records and policies, behaviour policies, the latest published and internal information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's self-evaluation summary and improvement plan, records of meetings of the governing body and information relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.