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Mrs Vicki Fenemore
Headteacher
Winkleigh Primary School
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Dear Mrs Fenemore

Short inspection of Winkleigh Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 14 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 February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Changes to the leadership team have strengthened the school's ability to respond effectively to external changes in the curriculum and assessment arrangements. You have introduced effective procedures to ensure that pupils achieve well. You and your governors understand the school's strengths, and prompt action is taken to tackle weaknesses. The planned actions, however, are not always precise enough to allow governors to check if they have secured the desired swift improvement and to fully hold you and other leaders to account.

You and your leadership team have ensured that the areas needing improvement identified at the previous inspection have been tackled effectively. Pupils, including the most able, are making faster progress because work is better matched to meet the differing needs of pupils and age groups. You have raised expectations of what pupils can achieve and are sharply focused on continuing to ensure that pupils are both supported and challenged to do their best. As the school has taken on responsibility for the provision made for two- and three-year-olds, you are now able to identify very early those children who may need additional help or would benefit from more challenge with their learning. The stimulating and supportive environment provided for these children, and its continuation into the Reception class, is ensuring that the school's youngest members get off to a very good start. Volunteers make a valuable contribution to younger pupils' good achievement in reading and, by Year 6, an above-average proportion of pupils reach the higher standard. You are focused on making sure that in Years 1 to 6 pupils will also

achieve this success in writing and mathematics. Current pupils are making better progress as a result. The effective deployment of skilled teaching assistants to work with individual pupils and groups across the school is making a significant contribution to pupils' improved progress this year.

The quality of teaching has improved further as a result of access to good-quality training opportunities through your involvement in the Two Moors Learning Partnership. Teachers have a good understanding of what pupils are expected to know in each year group and of how to assess their work accurately. Leaders regularly look at pupils' work, visit lessons and scrutinise teachers' planning to check that teaching, learning and assessment are consistently of a high quality. As a result, at least good pupil progress is being maintained across the school.

Pupils like being at school and enjoy the company of their friends. They work very well together, support each other through the sharing of ideas and are interested and engaged by the rich and varied curriculum provided. Pupils take pride in their school and their achievements. Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school, and almost all consider their children to be safe and happy there. Most felt that their children were making good progress because they were taught well, but a few think their children could be challenged to achieve more.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Governors check that records are detailed and of good quality. You and your governors welcome the independent checking of your policies and procedures by an external specialist safeguarding organisation. You respond swiftly to any recommendations as part of your ongoing commitment to keeping pupils safe. Staff and governors have completed all relevant training. A supportive and nurturing ethos permeates the school. You and your staff are very aware of the challenges faced by some families, and staff are very clear about what action to take if they are concerned for the safety and welfare of any pupil.

Pupils report that they feel safe in school and know that they can share concerns or worries with the adults who work there, who they said 'help us a lot'. They talk with confidence about the typically good behaviour of pupils and the very small amount of poor behaviour, with any disputes that do arise being settled quickly. In lessons, pupils show high levels of respect and tolerance towards each other. They talk knowledgeably about how to manage personal risk, including when using new technologies. They are very clear that they must not give out any personal information online.

Inspection findings

- To be sure that the school remained good, one of the lines of enquiry we pursued was to unpick the reasons for the disappointing 2016 results in key stage 1. Unpredictable staffing changes contributed to the fall in results, together

with some uncertainty about the specific expectations for pupils' knowledge and skills and how these might be assessed accurately. This year, staffing across key stage 1 has been more stable. Good training has ensured that teachers and teaching assistants are much better equipped to ensure that pupils are helped to reach or exceed the levels expected in reading, writing and mathematics.

- You have set challenging targets for what pupils are expected to achieve in Years 1 and 2. You use a range of activities, including the careful scrutiny of pupils' work, to check if pupils are working successfully towards these higher goals. We looked closely at the assessment information you have collected since September and at pupils' current work to confirm that pupils are indeed making better progress this year. Pupils are able to write longer pieces of work and make better use of grammar and punctuation. In their mathematics work, they are using a wider range of strategies to complete calculations and to tackle problems.
- Many more pupils in Years 1 and 2 are already working at the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics than at this time last year. You recognise that there is more to do in writing and mathematics to ensure that all those who are able are supported to reach the higher standard. Actions taken to achieve this goal, including improved planning of lessons, are showing signs of success with some pupils already working at the higher standard in each subject.
- You have taken swift action to support pupils now in Year 3 to catch up quickly. The quality of the work, which confirms your information about the progress they are making, is very encouraging. Most have caught up quickly on any gaps in their learning from the Year 2 curriculum and are working confidently towards meeting the expected standards for Year 3. A few are now beginning to work at the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- We also agreed to look at the progress made through key stage 2 by pupils from their different starting points in writing and mathematics. As for key stage 1, you have raised the expectations of what pupils should achieve each year. Teachers are much clearer about how what they are teaching builds on what pupils have already learned and how it will support their future learning. You acknowledge that there is more to do to ensure that more pupils reach the higher standards. However, teachers' skilful planning is helping more pupils, including the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, to make quicker progress this year. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls, or for disadvantaged pupils and other pupils from similar starting points.
- Pupils' work in Year 6 shows good progress, with most currently working at or above the expected level. In writing, pupils show their eagerness to improve through their response to high-quality feedback from teachers. I saw notable improvement in the use of paragraphs, more complex sentences and punctuation. Pupils apply their writing skills well in other subjects. For example, as part of their learning about environmental issues in geography, pupils wrote letters to the council regarding the difficulties associated with recycling. In mathematics, pupils demonstrate good levels of mathematical thinking and reasoning. For example, they were seen to immerse themselves in high-quality discussions to decide on how best to work out how many sweets would fit into a

box. Their accurate use of mathematical language and reasoning allowed them to agree a successful approach to solving the problem.

- Finally, we looked at how the school ensures that few pupils are absent. Tightened procedures have ensured a prompt start to the day. This has reduced the number of pupils who arrive late and have to join lessons that are already underway. Absences are followed up speedily to ensure that the school knows where pupils are and that they are safe. Working closely with the education welfare officer, you are quick to tackle any persistent absenteeism, with the result that the attendance of the vast majority of pupils is good.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- school leaders' planned actions for improvement are sufficiently precise to enable governors to evaluate their impact and hold the leaders fully to account
- teaching in Years 1 to 6 continues to be strengthened so that the level of challenge helps more pupils to reach the higher standard in writing and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Alison Cogher
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and other members of the leadership team to discuss the improvements that had been made since the last inspection. We considered your self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness and the way developments in the school are planned and checked for the difference they make to pupils' learning. We discussed the school's involvement in the Two Moors Learning Partnership. Together we toured the school, visiting all classes including the early years provision for two- and three-year-old children. We visited English and mathematics lessons in Years 2, 3 and 6 and looked at samples of pupils' work in books and on display, and information about their progress. I looked at all the safeguarding records and your recruitment and vetting procedures. I talked to pupils as they were having their lunch and outside as they played together. I met with three governors, including the chair of governors, and had a telephone discussion with a local authority representative. I spoke to parents at the start of the day and by telephone, and considered the 49 responses to Parent View. The 16 questionnaires completed by staff were also taken into account.