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Mr Richard Bateman
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Bateman

Short inspection of Little Eaton Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 21 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.

Relationships between pupils and adults are a real strength of the school and pupils value the caring atmosphere that they feel is all around them. All pupils spoken to told me how safe they feel and that they feel well looked after. Incidents of poor behaviour are extremely rare and no poor behaviour was seen while I was at the school. Bullying is also extremely rare and pupils feel that adults would deal with any incidents that occur very quickly and fairly. Pupils enjoy being rewarded for good behaviour and value rewards such as the 'Golden Table'.

Both you and your governing body have an accurate view of the many strengths, as well as the areas for improvement in your school. You are right to prioritise writing for boys as an area that needs to improve, and governors and the adults that work in the school are clear about the need to bring teaching skills and practice in this area up to the same high level as in mathematics and reading, where outcomes are stronger. The large majority of pupils currently at the school are making at least good progress from their starting points in reading and mathematics. This is also true for most groups of pupils. Fewer pupils are making the same progress in writing, and this is particularly true of boys in both key stage 1 and key stage 2.

You make good use of expertise in the school by regularly sharing best practice

among staff, who regularly work with each other to create new resources and share ideas. More widely, you have ensured that your school does not become too inward facing by joining a cluster of local schools that support each other with teaching and learning strategies and development. You also make good use of local authority support through regular developmental visits by a school adviser. Consequently, the standard of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Your own records demonstrate that the impact of teaching over time is good, with some elements that are having an outstanding impact on pupil outcomes.

Pupils' work is almost always neat and well presented and work shows clear and good improvement over time. Pupils are proud of their work and much of it is celebrated on displays and through positive and encouraging comments from teachers. During the last inspection, you were asked to ensure that pupils build consistently on the direction they are given by teachers. It is now obvious that pupils are clear about their next steps and the targets they need to aim for to keep making good progress.

Pupils also enjoy the very wide variety of opportunities to learn outside school, such as during educational visits, particularly residential ones, for example Year 6 going to Bude in Cornwall. Examples of other visits include a trip to the Houses of Parliament for Year 6 to learn about citizenship, and a visit to Cadbury World for Year 4 in order to develop their knowledge of science. The school also ensures that visitors come to the school to provide enriching experiences. Most recently, a well-known local author visited the school during 'Book Week'. This was very popular with pupils, and one parent commented that her son had 'not put a book down since!'

You make sure that pupils are well supported to cope with life in modern Britain through thoughtful opportunities to explore and celebrate society's differences, including between those of different faiths, those from families in differing economic circumstances and those with different sexual orientations. Pupils were unanimous in their view that discrimination is wrong and one pupil reflected the view of a group by saying, 'We're all humans and we should be treated equally.'

Although outcomes for the most able pupils are generally strong, and are sometimes higher than national levels for both attainment and progress, more could be done to stretch these pupils' learning, especially in mathematics where pupils report that work is sometimes too easy. In one mixed Year 3 and 4 class, the most able pupils were seen to complete tasks that were too repetitive and straightforward for them, and only after they had completed these tasks could they go on to work that was at an appropriate level for them.

Rates of pupil attendance are securely above national rates for all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. Rates of persistent absence are correspondingly lower than national rates, and this includes for disadvantaged pupils whose attendance is improving. This reflects well on the pupils' positive attitudes to learning.

You have worked closely with staff and governors to create a tracking system that better identifies current rates of progress and attainment for pupils in both key stages. Your assessments in phonics in Year 1 and writing in Year 6 have been validated by the local authority, which found them to be accurate and in good order. You are also keenly aware that a next step for further improvement is for your staff to use this performance information quicker, so they can evaluate and if necessary refine lessons and opportunities for pupils to quicken their progress.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and unanimous in their view that their child is safe and happy at school, with one parent commenting, 'I feel lucky that my child was able to get a place here.'

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that there are strong procedures and systems in place for the reporting and monitoring of any concerns that staff may have about the children in your school. You take swift and appropriate action when you need to involve outside agencies and you do not give up when you think they could do more to support a child in your care.

You ensure that the process for employing new members of staff is thorough and includes relevant pre-employment checks which are included on the single central record. Staff and governors have also had relevant training to keep children safe and they all know how to raise any concerns they may have about a child's welfare. Consequently, there is a strong culture of safeguarding in your school so that children are kept safe.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have ensured that the areas of improvement from the last inspection have been addressed effectively, including the sharing of good practice in school and more useful guidance from teachers so that pupils are clear about what they need to do next to move their learning on.
- While outcomes in mathematics are good and pupils say they enjoy the subject, some pupils told inspectors that the work they do is too easy. Inspectors agree with them.
- Governors are rigorous in ensuring that the pupil premium funding is well spent and they are concentrating on the achievement of everyone who is in receipt of it. They are regularly asking school leaders 'What about those that can?' and this is focussing leaders on supporting all pupils to make the most progress and achieve the highest outcomes they can.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in lessons so that they make good progress.
- Subject leaders do not always evaluate the impact of their intervention work quickly enough to facilitate prompt changes where necessary.
- Boys do less well in writing than they do in reading and mathematics, although

recent work to improve handwriting and comprehension is leading to greater proportions of boys making expected progress. The school recognises there are further improvements to be made in this area.

- The attendance of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, is well above the national average. Persistent absence rates are well below national rates.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- boys' progress in writing matches that in mathematics and reading
- the most able pupils tackle more difficult work promptly to enable them to make even better progress and deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts
- subject leaders evaluate the impact of their work more regularly to increase the proportions of pupils who make the best progress they can.

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

Mark Mitchley
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this short inspection, I held meetings with you, the subject leaders for English, mathematics and special educational needs and/or disabilities, and two members of the governing body, including the vice-chair. I also met a representative from the local authority who is currently supporting the school. I spoke with parents at the school gate as they brought their children to school in the morning and also took account of their views through 67 responses to Parent View and the 65 responses to the text service. I visited each classroom with you to see the learning that was taking place and I looked closely at a range of books from a range of subjects in key stage 1 and in key stage 2. I examined a range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the development plan, and minutes of governing body meetings, school performance information and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils.