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Mrs Lisa Jones
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Jones

Short inspection of Innsworth Infant 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 June 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You and other leaders know the children well because you take the time to check the progress of pupils thoroughly. As a result, you identify those who are at risk of falling behind and take effective steps to ensure that most pupils catch up by the time they leave the school. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

You and other leaders strongly encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour. Pupils mix well and reflect the school's values by showing respect and tolerance towards each other. A small group of pupils, whose views were typical, told me that this is 'a happy school'. Teachers and other adults work effectively with the pupils because you have successfully established a culture of trust and care for the children.

Since the previous inspection, you were appointed in September 2014 when the school federated with Innsworth Junior School. You have effectively evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses to ensure that you are following the right priorities for improvement. You hold teachers firmly to account and are ambitious for the pupils. Consequently, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved strongly across the school. The federation has also enabled you and the governing body to take a more strategic overview of key aspects of the school's work to benefit pupils and parents. For example, the federation shares staff to improve provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities

and to plan transition to key stage 2 for these pupils.

To secure further improvement, there are still some key areas that you and the governing body recognise must continue to be developed. Improving attendance for particular groups of pupils is ongoing from the previous inspection. In addition, you acknowledge the need to work even more effectively to ensure that more pupils leave the school having attained the highest standards. Furthermore, it is imperative to continue building on the recent and rapid improvements seen in the early years.

Safeguarding is effective.

You work effectively with governors to ensure that pupils are safe and that there is a prevailing culture of safeguarding in the school. You and other leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a high quality. In fact, those responsible for completing pre-employment and vetting arrangements undertake an additional check. Those responsible told me, 'It's always better to do more!' which aptly reflects school leaders' vigilance and your attention to safeguarding.

You are tenacious in supporting pupils and being a champion for them. Detailed case studies show how you repeat referrals to other professional agencies if you feel that there is a need. As a result of your rapid and timely actions, you keep children safe in a variety of situations. You ensure that all staff are similarly trained to be aware and vigilant so that they report potential harm quickly and effectively. Adults have a very clear understanding of the school's procedures for escalating and referring any concerns they have. Pupils feel safe and can explain how to keep themselves safe in different contexts.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry focused on how well pupils are making strong progress, particularly in increasing the proportion that can achieve the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics. You have a good understanding of the different groups of pupils and check how well they are doing. You use assessment information effectively to hold teachers to account and have identified the pupils whom you expect to meet the higher standards. Furthermore, you have altered key provision and strategies to take full account of the most able pupils. For example, additional spelling and writing sessions for Year 2 pupils help prepare them for key stage 2.
- The school's focus on reasoning and problem-solving is supporting most-able pupils to deepen their understanding of key mathematical concepts towards the higher standards. It remains an area for continued development to enable more pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, who reached the 'expected' standard at the end of Reception to attain the highest standards by the time they leave the school, especially in writing.
- My second line of enquiry focused on the children's outcomes and quality of provision in the early years. Following the very recent appointment of a new early

years leader and other additional adults, the transformation is rapid and tangible. Assessment information is now accurate and being used effectively to support the children through carefully considered opportunities and activities. Children are now benefiting from an environment that is meeting their needs for personal, social and emotional development as well as physical development.

- Teachers ensure that reading, writing and number skills are also given the priority required. However, some children, including boys and disadvantaged children, still need to catch up from a slow start earlier in the academic year. There is still a need to promote children's writing further across the curriculum. Altogether, though, the new staff have good subject knowledge and are ably demonstrating the skills required to continue making the necessary improvements.
- My third key line of enquiry concentrated on pupils' phonics skills and their ability to use and apply these in reading and writing. You and other leaders know the children well and are using assessment information effectively to match daily phonics sessions to the pupils' needs.
- Together we checked the learning of pupils, especially those who need to catch up in Year 2. This showed that the majority of pupils are now likely to meet the phonics standard by the time they leave the school. However, there are some pupils who were so far behind that this is not likely. In these cases, you are taking additional steps to support the pupils. This is also true for Year 1 pupils. You have wisely reviewed and given training to staff to ensure that the phonics programme reflects the higher expectations of the national curriculum. This includes a strategy for supporting those Year 2 pupils who have met the standard for transition to key stage 2.
- My fourth line of enquiry focused on absence, because this was a previous inspection concern and nationally published data shows that this is still high for some pupils. You and other leaders check pupils' attendance regularly and work closely with a range of external partners and agencies to support and challenge parents to bring their children to school.
- Case studies show that this has been highly effective for particular children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Your tenacity in this is supporting pupils well, especially with the transient population connected with the school. Nonetheless, you and other leaders, including governors, continue to tackle this vigorously, especially to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they increase the proportion of pupils meeting the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics
- more children reach a good level of development at the end of the early years foundation stage, especially boys and disadvantaged children

- attendance improves for all and in particular for disadvantaged pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Stewart Gale
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and the deputy to agree the timetable and inspection activities for the day. I also worked extensively with you and the deputy across the whole day. I met with the early years leader. I also met with the mathematics and English subject leaders. I scrutinised safeguarding records and discussed a wide range of matters related to safeguarding, including staff recruitment and vetting procedures and the most recent local authority safeguarding audit. Together, we completed extensive 'sampling' in the early years and for Years 1 and 2 in writing and mathematics. This involved scrutinising pupils' books and talking at length with different pupils, as well as checking the accuracy of the school's assessment information. I also met with representatives of the governing body and reviewed school documents, including the school's self-evaluation summary and samples of governors' visits and minutes of the governing body. I also listened to a small sample of Year 2 pupils read. I also considered the responses made by parents to Parent View, including 40 responses online and a further 40 received via text. There were also three responses to the staff survey, which were considered as part of the inspection. I also held a meeting with a representative group of teaching assistants and midday supervisors.