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Ms Carol McCollum
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Dear Ms McCollum

Short inspection of Drayton Parslow Village School

Following my visit to the school on 19 April 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 April 2013.

This school continues to be good.

You provide strong leadership at Drayton Parslow. You communicate a clear vision for the school and work tirelessly to ensure that pupils achieve well across all areas of learning. Your deputy headteacher is also a talented leader who provides effective support in helping you build upon the school's considerable strengths. Your team enjoy working at Drayton Parslow. One staff member stated, 'It is an absolute joy to work in such a lovely school where everyone works together for the greatest benefit of the children.' Together, you have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Pupils achieve well at Drayton Parslow and enjoy learning in the school's calm and nurturing environment. They say it is a 'very friendly school and the teachers really look after us'. Pupils typically behave very well, both in lessons and at play. You provide a wealth of equipment to keep them active outdoors. Parents hold the school in very high regard. As one said, 'We struck gold when our child was accepted into Drayton Parslow.'

Since the last inspection, you have wasted no time in tackling those areas which inspectors asked you to address. You researched carefully how best to improve pupils' writing and implemented clear plans to drive improvement. As a result, pupils make good progress and enjoy the many opportunities they have to write. You have also introduced a school-wide strategy to ensure that pupils are always involved in their learning and wider personal development. You monitor the

effectiveness of this closely and are able to demonstrate the positive impact that the strategy has on pupils' learning behaviours and their achievement.

Current pupils achieve well across a range of subjects. Children typically make good progress in the early years and are well placed to continue their learning in key stage 1. In 2016, the majority of pupils achieved the expected standard for their age in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Current pupils are also making typically good progress in phonics. By the end of Year 2, most pupils make good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Your information about pupils' progress and work in pupils' books indicate that achievement for current pupils in a range of subjects is at least good. The low numbers of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well to make effective progress from their starting points.

You provide rich training opportunities to develop your staff. You support them well and monitor their professional development closely. You have high aspirations to help them become outstanding practitioners and this rightly remains a priority. You are also rightly ambitious to develop the school's curriculum to be the best it can be. You have successfully led enhancements to the ways in which staff teach reading, writing, mathematics and science, and are now working to further enrich the broader curriculum.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have put in place robust systems to keep pupils safe. Records are of a high quality and are detailed and accurate. Leaders are trained appropriately in safer recruitment practices and carry out stringent checks when employing staff. The school's single central record of checks on staff meets statutory requirements and is checked regularly by governors.

You provide frequent training for all employees and volunteers to keep children safe. You keep staff up to date with any new safeguarding information. As the designated safeguarding leader, you are mindful to keep abreast of current child protection issues from a wide range of information sources.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. In the early years, children carry out daily 'safety checks' that help them learn about managing risks. Older children shared their knowledge of how to walk safely down the narrow lanes around the school. You provide opportunities for pupils to learn about e-safety and similar workshops for parents to support their children online at home.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we agreed to focus on three main areas of learning at Drayton Parslow. The first was how effectively leaders ensure that all pupils achieve well in writing and mathematics. We also looked at how well children are challenged to make good progress in the early years. The final area we addressed was how leaders ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum enables

pupils to achieve well across a range of subjects.

- Teachers make effective use of a range of appropriate learning resources. For example, in a Year 2 persuasive writing lesson a variety of aids were available to help pupils develop their sentences, choose appropriate words, and structure their writing effectively. Pupils demonstrated a firm grasp of persuasive texts by accomplishing writing such as, 'Dear Mr Owl, I am writing because I think you should go back outside into the dark. You can't stay in the classroom because you will get hungry.'
- In mathematics, teachers provide appropriate challenge for pupils' differing levels of ability. In a Year 1 lesson, 'hard', 'harder' and 'hardest' challenges were set for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of place value. All pupils grappled with appropriately difficult questions and made good progress from their different starting points.
- Teachers typically have good subject knowledge. Those who are new to the profession are mentored effectively to develop strong teaching skills. You provide these staff members with appropriate training and support for their ongoing professional development and welfare. You acknowledge this as a high priority to ensure that outcomes for pupils continue to be good or better across the curriculum.
- Children achieve well in the early years. Leaders monitor children's progress closely and adapt teaching accordingly. In phonics, some most-able children were developing their understanding of phonics by writing sentences with words containing the digraph 'ph'. Others were blending letters and sounds to form words such as 'spot' and 'stop'. Pupils made good progress because activities were tailored to their individual needs.
- Children are provided with a range of different learning challenges in the Reception Year. For example, an activity table had been set out to enable pupils to explore the scientific properties of magnets. Other tasks are provided in 'challenge' books for children to take home to complete with their parents or carers. Throughout the environment, high expectations abound and children achieve well because of the rich range of demanding activities provided to them.
- Leaders are developing an exciting curriculum at Drayton Parslow. Staff take into account pupils' interests and ensure that learning is engaging and motivating. Wherever possible, learning is based upon real-life experiences. For example, pupils designed canal boats having first visited the Stoke Bruerne canals as part of their history studies. You continue to evaluate your curriculum and are rightly working to ensure that it inspires pupils to learn across all subjects.
- Specialist teaching brings additional expertise to enhance pupils' learning. In a Year 1 music lesson, pupils were discovering how to bring interest to their singing by changing the volume of their voices back and forth between loud and quiet. The teacher modelled the song well and enthused the pupils to develop their musical understanding.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all staff continue to develop their skills to reach the highest professional standards and enable pupils to continue to make sustained and substantial progress
- the wider curriculum is further enhanced to inspire pupils to deepen their learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Dom Cook
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I observed learning across the early years and key stage 1 jointly with the executive headteacher. I spoke to pupils, and looked at work in their exercise books. Meetings were held with senior leaders and three members of the governing body. I also spoke on the telephone with a representative from the local authority. I took into account 25 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 23 written comments, and one letter handed in to the school office. I also analysed 14 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. A range of documents was reviewed, including: the school's development plan, leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness, the school's single central record of checks made on staff, information about pupils' achievement, the local authority's reports, and records concerning pupils' attendance.