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24 May 2017

Mrs Julia Hawkins
Headteacher
Queen's Crescent Primary School
Windsor Close
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Wiltshire
SN14 0QT

Dear Mrs Hawkins

Short inspection of Queen's Crescent Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 May 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in March 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Queen's Crescent remains a school where the strengths and talents of pupils and staff are highly valued. Since becoming an academy in September 2014, you and your governors have maintained a strong commitment to the pursuit of excellence. You have high expectations and encourage pupils to be successful and enjoy learning. Staff exemplify and communicate the values of the school and take pride in all aspects of their work. As a result, pupils achieve well across subjects as they move through the school. Parents are highly supportive and full of praise for your work.

You, together with your staff and governors, know your school very well. You have a relentless focus on improving the education of disadvantaged pupils and this is reflected in their faster rates of progress. You enhance the way the school supports these pupils to improve their learning and their self-esteem. You work effectively with families to promote regular attendance and a greater involvement of parents in their children's learning. As a result, pupils' progress is accelerating and a growing proportion of pupils are meeting expected standards this year.

You tackled successfully the area identified as needing improvement from the previous inspection. You built on the previous successes in raising attainment in mathematics by further developing and improving the quality of teaching. Consequently, outcomes for pupils in 2016 were above national figures at the expected standard in both key stage 1 and key stage 2.

You are aware that the most able pupils were not challenged sufficiently to reach the higher standards across subjects in 2016. To this end, you provided a wide range of training and professional development for staff to extend their skills and increase their effectiveness. As a result, increasing numbers of pupils are on track this year to achieve beyond the expected standards. However, you acknowledge that there is more to do to embed this approach to make certain that the skills and the thinking of the most able pupils are stretched to the full in writing and mathematics.

You made changes to the curriculum to ensure that the teaching of reading engages pupils' interest and inspires them to read more extensively. You took good account of the views of pupils to provide them with high-quality literature and new technology that really captures their imagination. The new reading scheme and the strengthened teaching of phonics also contribute well to the better standards being achieved currently in reading.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. You ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are suitably detailed and of good quality. Governors check diligently that the school's systems are successful in keeping pupils safe. Staff receive regular training in the latest requirements for safeguarding, enabling them to be confident in reporting any concerns. Leaders know how to recruit safely and follow statutory guidelines conscientiously. In your role as designated child protection officer, you are tenacious in your monitoring and resolving of any issues. You work effectively with outside agencies to reduce any potential risk to pupils to keep them safe.

Pupils' attendance is above average. Pupils are hardly ever late for school. They feel safe here and enjoy their learning. The regular events to promote pupils' safety and well-being, such as the 'Childline' assembly and workshops, are much appreciated by pupils and their parents.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, I met with you to discuss the school's progress since the previous inspection. We agreed the following lines of enquiry: how successful leaders have been in improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, how well the most able pupils are challenged in their work in mathematics and writing, the effectiveness of the curriculum in promoting high standards in reading and how well the school keeps pupils safe.

- You are successful in addressing any differences in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and their peers because you monitor their progress precisely. The provision of work that closely matches individual needs enables disadvantaged pupils to catch up quickly to others in school. Additional support has improved their self-esteem and increased their confidence as learners. Initiatives, such as the 'love where you learn' programme of events, have involved parents positively in their children's learning. However, you know exactly where any differences in achievement remain and are taking swift action to make sure that these pupils make the best possible progress.
- While the most able pupils achieved the expected standards in both key stage 1 and key stage 2 in 2016, few exceeded them in mathematics and writing. Following extensive staff training, teachers are better able to plan to develop pupils' fluency in calculation skills and in understanding mathematical concepts. Pupils enjoy the 'passport' mathematical challenges where their knowledge and rapid recall of number facts are tested well. The work in pupils' books shows that this is having a positive impact on their mastery of numbers and in developing reasoning skills. Increasingly, teachers present pupils with tasks that require them to think deeply to solve complex problems, although their ability to explain their reasoning and their methods is not yet secure.
- During my visit, we looked at a range of written work by the most able pupils. We agreed that, since the start of the year, they write at greater length with increasingly accurate spelling and correct use of a wide range of punctuation. They use their imagination well to create characters and atmosphere when writing stories and poems. In their writing task, 'All about cats', the most able pupils in Year 2 demonstrated their ability to write in a more formal way. However, you acknowledge that pupils do not show consistently a mastery of writing in this style which is needed to reach a higher standard.
- In response to broadly average results in reading last year, you took prompt action to revitalise the reading curriculum. Following a consultation with pupils, you refurbished the school library and purchased new literature to engage their interests. The use of new technology for researching books by different authors has inspired pupils, particularly boys, to read more widely than before. Better teaching in phonics and the introduction of challenging texts for each year group has resulted in faster progress in the development of reading skills. Consequently, more pupils are meeting and exceeding the expected standards for their age this year.
- Pupils like coming to school and talk enthusiastically about their learning. For example, they enjoyed working with a 'real' artist to create the remarkable 'Looking through a window' paintings that decorate the school. They appreciate the care and kindness extended to them by staff. This is reflected in their very good behaviour and their willingness to support each other in school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- teachers continue to develop pupils' reasoning skills by requiring pupils to explain their methods and think more extensively
- pupils continue to extend their writing skills across a range of styles of writing to enable them to achieve the highest possible standards.

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

Yours sincerely

Sandra Woodman
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and discussed the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress and improvements since the previous inspection. Together, we observed learning in classrooms and looked at a large number of pupils' books. I listened to several pupils reading from key stage 1 and key stage 2. I met with pupils to talk about their experience of school life. Meetings were held with middle leaders and with four governors. In addition, I spoke with a representative of the local authority. I looked at a range of written evidence, including documents relating to safeguarding and attendance information. I took account of the views expressed by 41 parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and their written comments, as well as the views of 33 members of staff who returned the questionnaire and the 82 pupils who completed the online survey.

