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Mrs Jenny Barrett
Headteacher
King Richard Infant and Nursery School
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Dear Mrs Barrett

Short inspection of King Richard Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 15 June 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.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You promote a strong, caring culture and every pupil is highly valued and known well by you and your staff. Pupils are happy in school and parents are supportive. Parents speak highly of the care and quality of learning their children receive. As one parent commented: 'Staff are caring and approachable and want the best for all the children.'

Teachers and other staff have created a positive climate for learning. As a result, pupils say they enjoy coming to school. They are respectful and relationships between pupils and their teachers are good. Pupils are enthusiastic and confident learners. They particularly appreciate learning through topics that motivate and interest them. For example, Year 2 pupils excitedly told me about their current 'robots' topic where they were designing and creating their own robots. One pupil enthused, 'I love being taught new things!'

You encourage pupils to be active in the community through initiatives, such as the 'community tree planting', and by helping them to organise many successful fund-raising projects. You have taught them to understand the importance of respecting others and of valuing diversity. As a result, pupils are thoughtful, reflective and communicate well. Pupils I spoke with told me that King Richard Nursery and Infant School is a school where 'everyone is welcome. We have lots of new children who come to our school and they speak all sorts of languages but we all get on just the same.'

School leaders have a clear strategic overview of what is required to shape and drive the future of the school. Your self-evaluation is accurate and informs subsequent policies, actions and staff training. For example, you recognised that the quality of phonics teaching needed to improve. It was clear during the inspection that there have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning in this area. This has ensured that this year, a higher proportion of pupils have reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check than in previous years.

The governing body provides school leaders with effective support and challenge. They are knowledgeable and monitor regularly the actions taken by leaders to secure improvements. They fulfil their strategic role effectively. Governors have a particular focus on pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and on disadvantaged pupils. They ensure that the additional funding for these groups is used effectively.

The high quality of teaching reflects your high expectations of staff. You regularly check how well pupils are learning in their lessons and what their books show about their progress. You use the information you gather to help teachers to become even more effective. The information your deputy headteacher provided for me shows that pupils are making good progress from their starting points. This was confirmed by the wide range of work I looked at during my visit.

You have dealt effectively with the areas for improvement that the inspector gave you at the last inspection. Staff have frequent opportunities to share good and outstanding practice and learn from colleagues both within school and with colleagues in other schools. This has ensured that teaching remains at least good.

Subject leaders are now confident in their roles and responsibilities and lead their subjects well. They have a good understanding of how well pupils are achieving in their subjects. The guidance they provide to colleagues on planning and classroom practice is raising standards, particularly in English and mathematics.

You have ensured that the outdoor area promotes learning well in all years, and across different subjects, by restructuring classrooms and reviewing outdoor provision. Nursery and Reception Year children now benefit from extensive, motivating outdoor learning environments. Years 1 and 2 pupils also have regular access to outdoor areas to enhance their learning. Pupils I met during my visit explained how they have opportunities to go outside for problem-solving activities in mathematics and also to use the nature area to investigate aspects of science and music.

Pupils' attendance is currently in line with national figures for pupils overall. However, published data indicates that, for some groups of pupils, attendance is not as high as it should be. It is clear that you work closely with families and external agencies to improve attendance. You and your family support worker rigorously track the attendance of pupils and were able to discuss with me why the attendance

of specific pupils is low, and the actions you have taken.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed. You make sure that the safeguarding of pupils is effective and a high priority. The requisite checks are made prior to any adult being employed by the school or allowed to have unsupervised contact with the pupils. Staff and governors receive the appropriate training. You and your staff are alert to the things that make pupils vulnerable. Staff are vigilant and records show that you take decisive and prompt action when it is needed to secure pupils' well-being.

Pupils are self-assured and happy in school. Pupils I spoke to said that they felt safe in school. They told me that bullying is rare, but when it does happen staff deal with it quickly and fairly. They feel well cared for by staff in school. Pupils know how to use the internet safely and could explain to me how they can keep safe, especially in relation to strangers.

Inspection findings

- School leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the school's current strengths and areas that need improving. You are aware that the increasing number of pupils new to the school, with little or no English, can significantly affect outcomes in attainment at the end of the Reception Year and at the end of key stage 1. Consequently, you have started to monitor more closely the progress of key groups of pupils in order to demonstrate progress from their starting points.
- The majority of children enter the school with levels of development that are lower than those expected for their age in most areas of learning. Effective training and support from the local authority has ensured that teachers of the Nursery and Reception classes place particular emphasis on developing children's communication, reading, writing and number skills throughout the school day. Although the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development in 2016 was below the national average, it was an improvement on the previous year. Current information indicates further improvements in 2017.
- Your English leader's determined focus on a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) has ensured that outcomes for current pupils in Years 1, and the majority in Year 2, have improved. You use the pupil premium funding and funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure that these pupils make good progress through targeted support for reading.
- Leaders reviewed teaching and learning to increase the proportion of pupils attaining greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, the proportion of pupils working at greater depth in mathematics has increased significantly and leaders have clear plans in place to sustain these improvements. In English, changes to the curriculum mean that pupils are now motivated to write for different purposes and with a deeper understanding of context and

grammar. New approaches to the teaching of reading have resulted in more regular, focused teaching of specific reading skills. These approaches have been largely successful, particularly for pupils who have attended the school throughout key stage 1. The proportion of pupils with reading skills exceeding the expected standard, by the end of Year 2, is increasing. However, you agree that actions need to be further developed so that even more pupils achieve the expected standard and higher in the future.

- Attendance in 2016 was below the national average overall and persistent absence was high for specific groups of pupils. Current attendance figures for these pupils are much improved, and in some cases no longer an issue. However, leaders, including governors, have recognised that the target of eradicating persistent absence and sustaining the improvements in overall attendance remains a priority.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- efforts are sustained to improve the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year
- more pupils attain the expected standards or higher in reading and writing by further developing the improvements in teaching and learning
- actions to eradicate persistent absence and improve overall attendance are sustained and, where possible, developed to make them even more effective.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephanie Innes-Taylor
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, your deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, the leaders of the early years, English and mathematics, your family support worker and a representative from the local authority. I spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day and I met with a group of pupils. I also met with several members of the governing body.

We visited classrooms together and I looked at a range of pupils' work. We discussed the progress of different groups of pupils and the school's plans for

improvement. I considered the responses of parents from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the responses of staff from Ofsted's online survey for members of staff. I scrutinised evidence from a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance, information regarding procedures for safeguarding and monitoring of behaviour, information on how the pupil premium is spent, analysis of attendance and a number of policy documents, including those for safeguarding and behaviour. I examined the school's website to check that it meets requirements on the publication of specified information. You and I visited the school's breakfast and after-school provision to ensure they are safe for pupils and provide a good standard of care. I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, on the playground and in the lunch hall. I checked the school's single central register to ensure it met current safeguarding regulations.