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26 July 2017

Mr Steve Duncan
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Duncan

Short inspection of Wiveliscombe Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 29 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 February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since your appointment in September 2014, you have led the school through a period of significant change. You have increased expectations for pupils' outcomes within the school community, while addressing the national changes that all schools have had to respond to. You are determined that the 'whole child' should be celebrated and not just academic achievements. Your newly introduced vision and values, alongside the new curriculum 'know, show and grow', reflect this ambition.

You ensure that a clear passion for teaching and learning is evident throughout the school. You consistently seek to improve pupils' experiences and your determination to raise expectations is reflected in the progress that pupils make in their learning. An increasing proportion of pupils attained the expected standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2016. Standards in 2016 are in line with those nationally.

Pupils say that they enjoy learning and feel safe in their school. They appreciate the wide range of experiences that the school provides. They enjoy being allowed to take responsibility for their own learning and select challenges that they believe will take their learning to the next level. Pupils are confident in talking about their learning and explain how their teachers have taught them how to review their work so that they each use a 'critical eye' to see how they can improve.

Most parents who responded to Parent View, and those who spoke to me, told me what a good school this is. They have confidence that you and your team provide a safe and secure environment for their children. Parents commented on how the school endeavours to create a well-rounded child, particularly through the introduction of the new school values and developing resilience in their children. They appreciate the nurturing environment that the school offers, including the care and support for vulnerable pupils. A few parents commented on their concern about the restructuring of class sizes but recognise that you have had to make some tough decisions.

Safeguarding is effective.

One of my lines of enquiry was to check that the school has safe and secure systems to safeguard its pupils. There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. School leaders, including governors, are committed to keeping pupils safe. The staff team knows pupils exceptionally well and ensures that daily systems, including morning briefings, enable the team to be aware of individual pupils' needs. They are highly aware of those whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

All safeguarding arrangements and records are fit for purpose and child protection records are detailed. The school's policies are informative. They take account of the latest statutory requirements. The designated safeguarding leaders regularly review the school's actions to support vulnerable pupils and ensure that actions to support them are fit for purpose and have the appropriate impact. You have effective relationships with external agencies to support you in keeping pupils free from harm.

The pupils I spoke with during my visit all said that they feel safe and secure. They know that adults in school will help them if they have a worry or concern. They talked confidently about how the school helps them to understand how to keep safe, including about initiatives such as e-cadets, who take a lead in helping to share information with their peers about how to keep safe.

Inspection findings

- At the time of the previous inspection, the school was challenged to ensure that pupils who could make accelerated progress did so. This was my first key line of enquiry during the inspection. Your rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work is ensuring that teachers receive positive guidance and that they now make sure that pupils are challenged and make faster progress.
- Pupils' use and application of written skills across the curriculum was another target that the school was asked to work on. This was another aspect of the school's work I looked at during the inspection. Due to your consistent focus in this area, pupils' work in their topic books shows that they are now consistently using the skills learned in their English lessons across the wider curriculum, such

as writing historical plays and producing fact files about Charles Darwin.

- Your determination to improve outcomes for pupils across the whole school is respected by your school community. Work in pupils' books shows that your determination to focus teachers on pupils' individual starting points is having a positive impact on their outcomes.
- Governors are ambitious for the school and they hold leaders to account robustly. They talk confidently about how they ensure that the evidence they are given at governor meetings matches what happens in school by visiting school to corroborate the information given. They manage the performance of school leaders effectively. Governors challenge leaders to ensure that they know actions are precise enough.
- You and your team were disappointed with the proportion of pupils who reached the higher standards in the previous academic year. You have worked hard to ensure that all staff have better clarity and are more confident about what 'greater depth' looks like in their year groups. As a result, current outcomes in key stages 1 and 2 indicate that a greater proportion of pupils have reached the expected higher standards. You are determined to secure further improvements, including raising the proportion of pupils attaining the higher standards in mathematics and English.
- You place high importance on improving pupils' reading abilities across the school. Pupils appreciate the wide range of books that they can read and enjoy. They read challenging texts fluently and assuredly, which demonstrates a love for reading.
- In 2016, only 12% of pupils who left Reception with higher ability reading skills went on to attain the higher levels, therefore this was another focus through the inspection. Through the interventions and support, you have ensured that all pupils who attained higher levels at the end of the Reception Year have gone on to attain a high standard at the end of Year 2. In addition, some previously middle-attaining pupils have made accelerated progress.
- You have challenged and supported teachers' subject knowledge so that they have greater clarity of understanding about what good teaching and learning looks like. You are determined that this improving picture for pupils' outcomes across the whole school develops even further.
- Teachers implement the school's systems for marking and feedback. Although there is good progress in books, you agree that the quality of spelling and use of punctuation needs to be more consistently applied across the curriculum.
- The school has lower numbers of disadvantaged pupils than that of other schools nationally. It was therefore important that, as my final line of enquiry, I checked the quality of provision for them. You have high expectations of these pupils and have systems in place to track their work. Work scrutiny showed that many of these pupils were working confidently at age-related expectations, though they are not consistently challenged to attain at the higher levels.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide effective challenge in mathematics and English across the school, so that the proportion of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, working at the higher level increases further.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Springett
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, your deputy headteacher and subject leaders. We talked about the improvements which have been made since the last inspection. Together, we carried out a 'learning walk' through the school. I heard some pupils from Year 2 read. I also held discussions with four governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, and talked with a group of pupils from across the school. I also spoke with an officer from the local authority.

I looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and information relating to pupils' current achievement and progress. I also checked the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements and attendance information.

I spoke with parents at the start of the day and considered the 86 responses to the online survey 'Parent View' and the additional comments received from parents' free-texts.