

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



16 October 2017

Miss Lisa Gibbs  
Acting Headteacher  
Leverton Primary School  
Honey Lane  
Waltham Abbey  
Essex  
EN9 3BE

Dear Miss Gibbs

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Leverton Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 3 October 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in November 2016. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to ensure that there is consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across all year groups by ensuring that:

- teachers continue to plan work which provides effective challenge for all pupils, particularly the most able, so that more pupils reach the higher levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics
- leaders continue to embed strategies which will improve pupils' outcomes in reading across the school so that pupils' achievement in reading is at least in line with national expectations for all pupils.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and your two assistant headteachers, the chair of the governing body and two other governors, middle leaders responsible for reading, writing and mathematics and a representative of the local authority. We discussed the actions taken since the previous inspection. The school action plans were discussed and evaluated. Together we observed teaching in all classes. The monitoring of teaching and learning, pupils' progress and attainment information, documents relating to the analysis of pupil premium grant funding and impact, the single central record and other safeguarding arrangements were also considered.

## **Context**

You have taken on the role as acting headteacher from May 2017 following the absence of the substantive headteacher. The previous inspection took place shortly after the school amalgamated with the infant school situated on the school site.

## **Main findings**

Since taking on the role as acting headteacher, you have embraced this challenge commendably. You and your leadership team have continued to focus on the areas of improvement recommended in the previous inspection report. These include senior leaders regularly checking that actions taken are helping pupils learn more effectively with a relentless focus on improving pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

The school's development plan clearly sets out the school's priorities in line with these areas for improvement. This has enabled leaders to focus precisely on the school's work and governors to provide effective support and challenge. Through improved monitoring, evaluation and assessment, you have established a culture of increasing accountability among teaching staff. Leaders and teachers work collaboratively. Improved communication between stakeholders ensures that all staff, including governors, are working towards the same goals. As a result, support is focused and precise, resulting in more pupils making better progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.

Governors involve themselves fully in the work of the school. They bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role which enables them to contribute positively to improving pupil outcomes. Governors' work links to the school priorities. They work closely with leaders. Through their own monitoring, governors are knowledgeable about the impact of leaders' monitoring and evaluation carried out within the school. This enables them to effectively challenge the work of leaders and continue to improve outcomes for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.

The newly structured senior leadership team demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils. Improved assessment systems closely monitor pupil progress through a range of activities that identify specific needs for individual pupils. This holistic approach includes half-termly detailed pupil progress meetings which measure individual progress for all pupils from their different starting points. These meetings also ensure that all adults who are involved in the progress pupils make are accountable. These improved systems quickly identify pupils who are not on track to make expected progress and appropriate support is planned to address any areas of concern.

In addition, middle leaders responsible for key areas of school improvement have embraced their new roles and are having a positive impact on pupil achievement. Their regular monitoring and evaluation identifies areas for whole-school development and appropriate actions are taken as required. You quickly identified training needs for staff that will support the school's actions to meet the areas for improvement. You have used the strengths in the school team to ensure that targets match teachers' and additional adults' skills. Middle leaders work with colleagues in other schools to share best practice, check the accuracy of pupils' work and build on their own knowledge. Leaders' collaborative work with other schools confirms that assessment of pupils' work is accurate. The monitoring and evaluation schedule identifies outcomes of actions towards school improvements which are effectively communicated to the school workforce and governors.

Regular monitoring by the senior leadership team ensures that inconsistencies in teaching and learning are identified early. Improved and rigorous performance management processes ensure that teachers' targets specifically relate to the progress pupils make. Regular teacher assessment of pupils' progress in lessons enables adults to swiftly pick up on pupils' misconceptions and any gaps in learning. Consequently, more pupils are now making good and better progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Since the previous inspection, outcomes for pupils have improved. Teachers are becoming more confident when planning teaching and learning activities so that they provide appropriate challenge to all pupils. In most lessons, the work pupils are given is matched to pupils' different abilities. A strong focus on the most able pupils has resulted in more pupils in 2017, at the end of Year 6, achieving at the expected standard and an increase in pupils this year reaching the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

A structured approach to teaching across the school has ensured that outcomes for pupils have improved in all subjects, particularly reading. Leaders and teachers have accurately identified gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding and have ensured that the teaching of reading skills is a focus in lessons. The teacher responsible for leading reading has successfully raised the profile of this subject, ensuring that there is consistency in the teaching of reading across the school, for example through guided reading sessions. These sessions are well organised and managed

and ensure that pupils have opportunities to learn and apply their skills regularly in lessons. You and your leaders have actively sought support from local cluster groups and the local authority to strengthen the leadership of reading and subsequently improve teachers' subject knowledge. Your commitment to staff professional development has ensured that teachers are developing the necessary skills to ensure that the effective teaching and learning of reading is embedded across the school. As a result, outcomes in reading are improving.

### **External support**

School leaders and governors have worked effectively with the local authority to meet the school's priorities. Regular monitoring and evaluation of leaders' work, by the local authority, has ensured that leaders have put actions into place quickly to address these priorities. The local authority has provided precisely matched support for leaders at all levels. For example, they have supported senior leaders in the reviewing and improving of monitoring and assessment systems and supported the development of subject leaders. They are extremely positive about the work leaders have completed in such a short time, particularly in the absence of a substantive headteacher.

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

Yours sincerely

Cindy Impey

**Her Majesty's Inspector**