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31 October 2017

Mrs Fay White  
Headteacher  
Coalway Junior School  
63 Coalway Road  
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Gloucestershire  
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Dear Mrs White

### **Short inspection of Coalway Junior School**

Following my visit to the school on 18 October 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 January 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You and your governors have a strong vision for the school, which is shared by your deputy headteacher and middle leaders. Over the last 18 months you have secured a package of additional support and training to improve teaching. This work is effective. Leaders' strong drive for improvement has ensured that the school has recovered quickly following a dip in its performance since the previous inspection. Consequently, the proportion of pupils meeting, and exceeding, the standards expected in reading, writing and mathematics is now above the national average in 2017. Teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' progress are typically good.

Pupils enjoy school. They behave well and demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to learning in class. They say that their learning is mostly challenging and they enjoy working in groups with their classmates. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the sports curriculum. They benefit from wide-ranging opportunities across the school and enjoy competitive sports.

At the previous inspection you were asked to ensure that pupils apply the feedback they receive from teachers to take greater responsibility for their own learning and progress. Your work in this regard has taken hold well. Most pupils respond well to advice from teachers and their peers. This enables them to deepen their learning in mathematics and writing further.

You were also asked to build on the existing opportunities for sustained reading to develop pupils' confidence and independence further. This was so that the difference that existed between pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics was lessened. Most pupils I talked to during the inspection showed a good understanding of what they read. Leaders' whole-school strategy to teach reading comprehension is making a positive difference. Teachers' expectations of pupils have increased. As a result, pupils' achievements in reading have risen quickly across all year groups and there is no discernible difference in achievement between subjects.

The final aspect for development at the previous inspection was to ensure that you build quickly on what pupils can do, know and understand when they enter into Year 3. Your work in this regard is largely effective. You use a variety of ways when pupils start Year 3 to check their understanding in reading, writing and mathematics. You check pupils' understanding in lessons through teachers' assessments and by using published and internal data on their achievement. As a result, teachers plan learning that builds on pupils' individual needs well. This is most effective in mathematics. You recognise that the results of some reading test assessments do not help teachers gain a better understanding of pupils' skills in reading quickly enough.

The views of parents are generally positive. The majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, state they would recommend the school to others. However, you acknowledge you have more to do to ensure that all parents are satisfied. While nearly every parent who responded to 'Parent View' felt that their child was making good progress, a small minority would like more comprehensive and regular information about the progress their children make.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Policies, procedures and training relating to safeguarding meet requirements and are up to date. The checks you carry out when recruiting new staff are in line with national requirements to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children. The single central record is meticulously kept.

Designated safeguarding leaders and family support workers document and follow up precisely their timely intervention and active engagement with multi-agency support. You have ensured that staff know how to use and apply their safeguarding training within their daily routines and work to minimise pupils' risk of harm. As a result, pupils feel safe at school and say there are many staff they can talk to should they have a concern. Pupils say that teachers and support workers listen and help them sort out any problems quickly.

### **Inspection findings**

- A key line of enquiry to ascertain that the school remained good was to establish the effectiveness of the teaching of mathematics. This is because pupils'

achievement dipped in 2016 and published information about pupils' progress has not been as positive as it could be.

- The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers use assessments of what pupils can do, know and understand proficiently to ensure that teaching meets pupils' learning needs well. Where pupils have gaps in their learning, teaching ensures that they fill these quickly. Over the last 18 months, leaders have put a comprehensive range of staff training in place to remedy previous weaknesses in teaching and ensure accurate coverage of the mathematics curriculum. This has proved successful. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils. The whole-school strategy to teach reasoning skills and problem-solving has taken hold well. Consequently, in 2017, the proportion of pupils who meet and exceed the standard that is expected at the end of key stage 2 has increased considerably, and is above the national average. Current pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress in mathematics.
- Another aspect I examined was the impact of leader's actions to ensure that pupils are making consistently good progress in reading. This is because some pupils who previously had an average level of attainment did not meet the standards expected for their age by the end of key stage 2.
- Strong subject leadership has ensured that the teaching of reading has improved and is now good. Most teachers use thorough assessments well as a basis for securing improved achievement in reading. You place a high priority on the teaching of comprehension skills to develop pupils' understanding of what they read. This is enabling middle-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 to catch up. Teachers routinely expect pupils to discuss their understanding of the texts they read and to use their reading skills within wider curriculum work. However, on occasion in lower key stage 2, teachers give too limited attention to hearing pupils read to assess their understanding. This means that sometimes the choice of books pupils read and the comprehension work teachers expect them to complete are not finely tuned enough to pupils' needs.
- My final line of enquiry focused on how well leaders, including governors, are driving improvement at the school so that pupils' levels of achievement and attendance continue to rise.
- Your well-established governing body set high expectations and hold you and other leaders to account determinedly. They have an acute understanding of the strengths of the school and aspects that require work. Consequently, their checks on the impact of leaders' action focus on the right aspects of improvement and pupils' achievement has risen. Governors have prioritised funding to appoint family support workers. Their work has a positive impact on pupils' emotional development. As a result, pupils' attendance and enjoyment of school has improved. Attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average.
- You, along with leaders at all levels, have secured a comprehensive package of staff training, reworked the school's curriculum and tightened your monitoring of pupils' progress so that teaching now encompasses all aspects of the national curriculum. However, initially you and other leaders did not act quickly enough to ensure that teaching fully met the changed requirements of end of key stage 2 assessments in 2016. Consequently, pupils' achievement dipped. You have now

remedied this weakness. As a result, pupils' progress across the school is typically good and you deal with the more challenging aspects of the curriculum successfully. However, in a few classes, some variation remains in the progress that middle-attaining boys make in writing. The checks that leaders make on pupils' progress from their starting points are not as precise they could be.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders' and teachers' expectations are uniformly high so that boys make consistently good progress in writing, with an increasing proportion of pupils making rapid progress by the end of key stage 2
- teachers' assessments of pupils' reading abilities include a broad range of strategies in Year 3, including hearing pupils read, to check pupils' understanding so that teaching builds firmly on what pupils can do, know and understand and makes the most of the time pupils have for 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 Gloucestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Julie Carrington  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I spoke with you, senior and middle leaders and two governors. I also held telephone conversations with the strategic lead of education at Gloucestershire local authority and a school improvement adviser. We made visits to lessons to observe pupils' learning and to scrutinise their work. I looked at pupils' workbooks in detail with you. I scrutinised a selection of pupils' books alongside your deputy headteacher. I also heard pupils read and listened to their views of the school.

I considered a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's self-evaluation, development plans and school performance information. I also looked at monitoring records for teaching, learning and assessment, analysis of pupils' attendance, behaviour and safeguarding documentation.

In addition, I took account of 47 responses to the Parent View online survey, free-text messaging service and feedback to Ofsted. I gathered the views of staff through the online questionnaire and through discussions during the inspection.