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Mr Paul Baddeley  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Baddeley

### **Short inspection of The Lantern Community Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 31 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 July 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. Over a period of time in which there have been leadership and staffing changes, you have ensured that the school has continued with its focus on raising pupil achievement. You have successfully developed a strong leadership team, including a deputy headteacher who is confidently and effectively leading the school during your part-time secondment.

There is a warm, caring ethos throughout the school community. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, demonstrated by their attitudes to learning and pride in their work. They move around school in a calm and orderly manner. The pupils I spoke with were delightful and polite. Their responses to my questions were both mature and insightful. They shared their aspirations to achieve great things when they are older, telling me they want to be scientists, architects and doctors.

Pupils at The Lantern Community Primary School demonstrate confidence and independence. I observed children in Reception working and supporting each other effectively during activities, and working equally well on tasks on their own. Routines and expectations for learning are well established throughout the school, and pupils in all year groups engage well during lessons.

You and your leaders use your school development plan effectively to steer school improvement. For example, since the previous inspection, you identified that disadvantaged pupils were not making sufficient progress and you ensured that this

became a whole school priority. You successfully developed a nurture group that has proven to be pivotal in the positive support that it provides for the most vulnerable pupils. This provision enables pupils to revisit routines and participate in programmes that help them to catch up on any gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Attending this group has had a significant impact on increasing pupils' confidence and self-esteem. When pupils from this group re-integrate into whole-class learning during the morning session, they settle into work quickly and engage well in their learning. In this way, you have successfully raised the achievement of disadvantaged pupils so that they make progress in line with other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.

Your current action plans for improving pupils' outcomes, particularly in writing, are clear and precise. You provide an effective strategy for monitoring and evaluating progress. Speaking with governors, school leaders and teachers, it is evident that the steps needed to improve outcomes are a whole-school priority recognised by all stakeholders.

Parents I spoke with at the start of the school day and those who responded to Ofsted's free text questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about school staff, safety and ethos. One parent commented: 'The school is a genuinely caring, nurturing environment where children are listened to and respected.' Parents are extremely happy with the progress their children are making and equally complimentary about the support that teachers and leaders provide for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who find school challenging at times. This is echoed on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, in which all parents who responded said their children are happy at school, and the overwhelming majority would recommend the school to other parents.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

Processes for identifying, recording and following up concerns about pupils are meticulous. Your emphasis on and commitment to pupils' well-being is seen in lessons and in your curriculum planning through the teaching of e-safety and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE).

Pupils were able to explain what the term 'bullying' means, and said that it does not happen at the school. They have a good understanding of e-safety and could explain the potential dangers from online activity. Pupils also told me that they feel very safe at school and know whom to speak to if they have any concerns. You and your leaders have created a strong safeguarding culture across the school.

### **Inspection findings**

- To ascertain that the school remains good, one of my key lines of enquiry was about pupils' achievement in writing. Although, in 2017, attainment for key stage

2 was broadly in line with the national average, it was below at key stage 1. In addition, assessment results in 2017 indicate that some pupils did not make enough progress from their starting points by the end of the academic year.

- On visiting classrooms across the school, it became clear that pupils are producing good-quality writing. Pupils in key stage 1 and 2 confidently edit their own work. Books show that they are able to apply grammar skills effectively in their writing. Inspection evidence supported the 2017 pupils' results in the grammar tests at the end of key stage 2, which exceeded the national average. Pupils were able to identify and explain to me features of a non-chronological report, pointing out examples of technical vocabulary and grammatical features.
- The focus on writing starts in pre-school where children have access to clipboards and pens to encourage writing during activities. The early years leader ensures that children take part in activities which will inspire them to write. For example, after a forest school activity involving a fire pit, I observed children engaging in small-world play, building a pretend fire in a model forest and acting out a camping trip using a tent. Children were then able to write sentences using this experience. One child wrote, 'we held marshmallows' and one child labelled a picture they had drawn of a fire pit. Pupils' workbooks demonstrate that by the first term in Year 1 many children are able to form letters correctly, write for a specific purpose and punctuate sentences accurately.
- You explained that writing has been a key priority for the school. Leaders have thoroughly reviewed the school's approach to writing. Monitoring shows that there is a consistent approach to writing across all year groups. Investment in professional development and rigorous performance management is supporting teachers and additional adults effectively to ensure that they give pupils opportunities to develop their writing and demonstrate the good progress they are making.
- You have reorganised your staffing structure so that the more experienced staff are better placed to support less experienced teachers and to share best practice. Newly qualified teachers speak highly of the support they are receiving from experienced teaching assistants as well as teachers at all levels. However, you have acknowledged that pupils are not writing extensively enough in other subjects to develop their writing in more depth.
- My second line of enquiry looked at the quality of teaching and learning in key stage 1. This was because the number of pupils who passed the phonics screening check was below national expectation. This line of enquiry also tied in with my final line of enquiry, which was concerned with the achievement of the most able pupils. The number of pupils in 2017 who achieved at the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 and in writing at the end of key stage 2 was below the national average.
- You were able to demonstrate that pupils in Year 1 last year made good progress from their starting points at the end of Reception in their phonics knowledge. When these pupils entered Year 1, a high proportion had not achieved a good level of development. You also explained that you had reviewed and, subsequently, changed the phonics scheme, and that the new scheme is having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. I observed very effective teaching in your

nurture group, where the teacher demonstrated good subject knowledge and pupils were engaging fully in the activities. Almost all pupils meet the phonics screening check standard by the time they leave key stage 1.

- As identified in the school's development plan, leaders are supporting and working closely with teachers to develop their knowledge and understanding of the mathematics and English curriculum expectations, particularly what is required to achieve the higher standards. We agreed that in order for more pupils to make good and better progress across all key stages there needs to be a greater focus on the progress of individual pupils, particularly the most able. Your deputy headteacher has already begun to work on this aspect. Teachers are already more proficient at acknowledging what pupils can already do so that they can build more effectively on this prior knowledge and enable pupils to make even faster progress.
- The work that leaders are doing to ensure that all teachers thoroughly know the expectations required to reach the higher standards is already having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. In both key stages, I saw evidence in the workbooks of those pupils whom teachers have identified as the most able pupils of where teachers' assessment practice is clearly identifying pupils' next steps to quicken their progress to reach the higher standards.
- The school's 2017 pupil achievement information indicates that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standards at the end of Year 6 in reading and mathematics was significantly above national averages. However, you acknowledge that there is more work to do to ensure that more pupils reach the higher standards of attainment in writing at the end of key stage 1 and 2.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide pupils with more opportunities to apply their writing skills across all curriculum areas and, hence, improve their achievement in writing
- leaders and teachers focus precisely on the progress that pupils, especially the most able, make so that more pupils make at least good progress and achieve the standards of which they are capable.

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

Yours sincerely

Cindy Impey  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

- During the inspection, I met with you, senior leaders, staff and four members of the governing body. I also spoke with parents.
- I visited all year groups. This year's and last year's examples of pupils' work were scrutinised. I spoke with pupils about their work and about what they enjoy about school. I also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and as they moved around the school.
- A number of documents were reviewed, including the single central record of employment checks, the school's self-evaluation, pupils' assessment and progress information.
- I also took account of the 103 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, completed by parents and the 90 free text messages from parents.