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Mrs Karen Scott  
Headteacher  
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West Midlands  
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Dear Mrs Scott

### **Short inspection of Greswold Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 1 November 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 November 2012.

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

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

Your commitment and vision have had a significant impact on the continued improvements at Greswold Primary School. You share leadership responsibilities well with senior and middle leaders. They make a vital contribution to the quality of education for pupils. You are extremely well supported by a shrewd and knowledgeable governing body. Leaders at all levels have an accurate view of the most important priorities and continually focus on improvement. Staff feel supported and motivated to further develop their teaching. As a result, pupils are achieving well and enjoying school.

You and your team have a clear set of values which reflect the school's positive and productive ethos. Pupils know and understand the values of 'belonging', 'respect', 'independence', 'curiosity', 'kindness' and 'success'. One pupil explained: 'Curiosity is when you want to find out more which will really help you in your learning.' Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's ethos and the quality of education provided for their children. Their comments included: 'My child has been here for six years and has never once said she does not want to come to school. Staff are great and educationally, my child thrives.'

You and the staff have good relationships with pupils and know them as individuals. As a result, pupils' personal development is well catered for. Staff work hard to

provide pupils with a well-rounded education that is extremely well supported by wide-ranging enrichment activities. Pupils enjoy their Friday reward time when they choose additional activities such as computing, sport, reading, art or time in the library. The school council has raised all pupils' awareness of different charities. Council members are proud of raising thousands of pounds to support a charity providing education in Africa. The range of equipment and activities on offer at lunchtime captures pupils' enthusiasm. During the inspection, pupils enthusiastically introduced the founder of the 'Greswold Times' to the inspector. This is the school newspaper written and produced by pupils. Staff also plan a range of exciting residential trips, including a visit to France for Year 6 pupils. As a result of the enrichment programme, pupils are happy, confident and proud of their school.

Your school improvement plan is precise and targets appropriate priorities. You develop the plan in close collaboration with staff and pupils. Consequently, they feel valued and have a clear understanding of the direction of the school. There is a child-friendly version of the priorities on display for pupils to see.

You receive a high level of challenge and support from the governing body. Governors are astute and skilled. They contribute well to the ongoing review and improvement of school policies. For example, they have worked with you to ensure that staff's performance management targets are even more precise and measurable. The local authority also provides effective support.

You have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Teachers provide greater stretch for pupils in their learning, particularly in mathematics and reading. Pupils are motivated by the different challenge tasks that are appropriately matched to their needs. You have also ensured that there is a greater focus on stretching the most able pupils. In 2017 at the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected and higher standards in reading and mathematics was greater than that seen nationally. You recognise that writing standards by the end of Year 6 are not as high and require further development.

You have ensured that inconsistencies in teaching in lower key stage 2 are no longer prominent. Experienced teachers are placed across different year groups so that they can support the development of other teachers. Staff also benefit from sharing best practice and learning from one another. The deputy headteacher and other teachers work together to analyse assessment information and put in place successful additional support for pupils who need to catch up.

Your curriculum is thoughtful and interesting. Pupils enjoy learning about the world through creative activities. For example, they made Greek masks when learning about the myth 'Theseus and the Minotaur'. They also performed a play about 'Boudicca's Revolt' when learning about the Romans. Pupils also learn a wide range of musical instruments. Year 4 pupils learn to play a brass instrument and perform as a brass band to an audience. Pupils develop effective skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

The culture for safeguarding pupils is a strength of the school. The designated safeguarding leader is tenacious and follows up concerns thoroughly. Her records are extremely well organised and external agencies are involved in a timely manner. Staff have a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to recognise different signs of abuse. The person responsible for the appointment and recruitment checks of staff is meticulous in her work. You and the safeguarding lead are also proactive with parents on important issues. For example, you are running a workshop for parents to raise their awareness of online dangers and potential signs of child sexual exploitation.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They know what cyber bullying is and are well aware of what to do if they are concerned about something online. Pupils also enjoy learning about road safety and bike safety.

## **Inspection findings**

- We looked at the progress that children make in the early years. In 2017 the proportion of pupils who achieved a good level of development in Reception was smaller than in 2016. Your knowledgeable early years leader provided information to show that this cohort of children made good progress across the year. Children receive good-quality support to develop their fine motor skills so that they are ready to write. Boys' outcomes in writing have been below girls' for some years and you know that this is still an important area to focus on. Children develop good skills and understanding through a range of stimulating activities. They particularly enjoy being creative when engaged in art activities, building structures with bricks and engrossed in imaginative play with their peers. Leaders and staff provide good support for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for children who speak English as an additional language.
- Your actions have led to successful improvements in reading and mathematics. Your school improvement plan rightly highlights that writing requires further development. Some pupils do not make as much progress in writing as they do in other subjects. Furthermore, some of the most able pupils are not challenged enough to be able to reach the higher standards. Your plans for this area of work are well thought out. For example, you have set up a team of teachers to share ideas about how to improve the teaching of writing. Your valid priority is to help pupils understand the importance of writing and to ensure that teachers have the necessary skills to teach writing effectively.
- We also looked at how well the pupil premium funding is used to support disadvantaged pupils. In 2016 disadvantaged pupils' attendance was low. The proactive attendance team, including a learning mentor, offers positive support to families. As a result, attendance is improving for this group of pupils. Most disadvantaged pupils achieve well because they receive good-quality support. For example, in 2017 at the end of key stage 2, a higher proportion achieved the expected standard in reading and mathematics than other pupils nationally. However, some disadvantaged pupils require further support to accelerate their progress and to continue to improve their attendance. The plan of support for

disadvantaged pupils does not specify the intended outcomes or say how the impact of the strategies will be evaluated.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- a stronger culture for writing is developed from the early years to Year 6, and that all pupils, including the most able, are challenged sufficiently and their progress accelerates as a result
- the plan for the spending of pupil premium funding includes measurable outcomes, so that the progress and attendance for disadvantaged pupils can be precisely evaluated.

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

Yours sincerely

Matt Meekin  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and other leaders. I also met with the chair of governors and three other governors, and a representative from the local authority. I spoke to pupils informally and formally. I made short visits to eight classrooms with you and looked at pupils' books. I spoke to parents at the start of the day and considered 68 free-text responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. I also considered the responses from the online questionnaire completed by pupils and staff.

I scrutinised various documents including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plan, information about teachers' performance management and the documents that you use to check the quality of teaching. You shared with me the most recent assessments of pupils' attainment and progress. We discussed the national test results and assessments undertaken by pupils in 2016 and 2017. I also looked at the school's published information on the website, as well as minutes of governing body meetings and information about attendance, behaviour and safety.