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Miss Julia Shingler
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Shingler

Short inspection of Causeway Green Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 14 December 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 April 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 taking up your post in January 2017, you have had a positive impact on the school. You have a clear vision for the school's development, which is shared by staff and governors. You are absolutely determined that every pupil is given the best opportunities to succeed at Causeway Green. You are building on the school's strengths but also identifying the most important aspects that require further development. The school improvement plan is a helpful document which is easily accessible to staff, governors and parents. It clearly outlines the most important actions leaders need to take to improve the school further. Morale in the school is high and staff enjoy working here. This outward-looking, ambitious approach has helped the school to provide a good education for all its pupils.

Pupils are very happy and are proud to be part of this inclusive school community. Relationships are strong and pupils have complete confidence in staff to take good care of them. Pupils are polite and their behaviour is impeccable. They get along together happily, both in class and at free times. They willingly seize the opportunities to take the many roles of responsibility that the school offers them. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One wrote: 'My child enjoys all aspects of the school and I am more than happy with her progress here.' This was typical of many responses that I received.

Pupils achieve well because teaching is strong and provides pupils with many interesting and challenging learning opportunities. Outcomes for pupils are

consistently at or above those seen nationally at the end of key stage 2. In both key stages, pupils make good progress from their different starting points. In most year groups, disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as other pupils, because staff understand and meet their needs well.

You check on the quality of teaching regularly and have an effective assessment system that supports teachers' identification of pupils' next steps in learning. Pupils now know what they need to do to progress. Pupils spoke positively about their target cards and 'brag cups', which help them to know how they are getting on. They also said that the targets help by making them challenge themselves to achieve even more. Pupils like the opportunities to respond to teachers' comments and show teachers that they can improve their work.

You are rightly developing the roles of staff so that they can lead subjects and other areas of the school's work effectively. This is an important aspect, as it is increasing the school's capacity to improve through the development of its emerging leaders. The training opportunities provided for staff to enable them to develop effective leadership skills are proving to be successful.

You have tackled the area for improvement identified in the previous inspection. It was recommended that school leaders improve the quality of teaching in writing and mathematics, particularly in key stage 1. Standards in mathematics and writing at the end of Year 2 in 2017 were above and just above, respectively, the national averages. You acknowledge that pupils' current outcomes for writing, although improving rapidly, need to improve further. Particularly, the accuracy of a few pupils' spelling and punctuation needs to be a focus. However, in key stage 2 in 2017, almost all Year 6 pupils achieved the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics, and nearly half of Year 6 pupils achieved a greater depth of understanding in mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

You are acutely aware of your responsibility to keep children safe and give pupils' well-being the utmost priority. Your senior leadership team has made sure that all the appropriate safeguarding arrangements are effective. Staff value and care for pupils. They know each pupil well and are prompt in reporting any concerns. School leaders go to great lengths to ensure that absent pupils are safe. Several parents reported that the school looks after their children well.

All adults are appropriately trained in safeguarding pupils and know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns. Pupils stated that they feel safe at school and they had learned how to keep themselves fit and healthy. Records relating to safeguarding are maintained and stored securely. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding reviews the school's practice and checks regularly that systems and procedures are effective.

Inspection findings

- At our initial meeting, which included your two deputy headteachers, we agreed some areas to explore so that I could be satisfied that your school remains good. It was reassuring that you had already identified the same areas as I had in my preparation for the inspection. We decided to focus on:
 - how school leaders ensure that current pupils, including the disadvantaged, make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in key stage 1
 - how well teaching enables pupils to make good progress in phonics in key stage 1
 - the actions taken by leaders following the 2017 key stage 2 results which showed that pupils had made slower progress in reading and writing than in mathematics and followed a similar trend in 2016
 - how well teaching enables pupils to make good progress in science in key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- We saw pupils in all classrooms hard at work in mathematics, English and science. Their books showed that they take pride in their work, presenting it neatly and completing exercises. They also showed that pupils from different starting points, including those who are disadvantaged, made good progress over time in both key stages. In key stage 2, the rapid action taken by leaders indicates that the progress made by the vast majority of pupils has reversed the mathematics outperforming trend, and pupils are now making accelerated progress in reading and writing.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the current attainment of disadvantaged pupils in their class and their next steps in learning. In lessons, teachers' expectations of all pupils are high and questions are often accurately targeted to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable. As a result of these strategies, differences between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and that of others are reducing over time.
- Pupils relish the challenge presented to them and view mistakes as learning opportunities. Pupils work very well with one another in the classrooms, when tackling tricky problems, and help and support each other. However, you acknowledge that although achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is good, there is still more you can do. School staff have correctly noted this as an area of concern and have already taken appropriate actions to further encourage pupils to challenge themselves even more and demonstrate a deeper understanding in their books and discussions.
- Teachers and learning support practitioners have good subject knowledge and high expectations that enable them to teach phonics accurately and help pupils to become capable, enthusiastic readers. Reading lessons are pitched appropriately to ensure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make good progress and are interested in their work. Pupils regularly use and apply their phonics knowledge in their writing. They do not always spell every word correctly, but having secure phonics knowledge means that your pupils are

confident to have a go. As a result, they are not held back in their writing.

- When looking at pupils' work in science, we noted pupils are now making good progress. Their books demonstrated an understanding of scientific concepts and there was evidence of pupils recording the results of experiments they had carried out. A pupil in a Year 5 science lesson told me he enjoyed his weekly science lessons, particularly the many opportunities to carry out experiments.
- Pupils are provided with many opportunities to carry out additional responsibilities, for example being a pupil leader or a member of the school council, and this makes a strong contribution to their personal development.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all groups of pupils continue to develop and strengthen their ability to further challenge themselves and demonstrate an even deeper understanding in their books and discussions
- teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to further develop and apply their writing skills, particularly improving spelling.

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

Yours sincerely

Steven Cartlidge
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and your deputy headteachers. I also met with groups of pupils, and four members of the governing body. I scrutinised school documents, including safeguarding checks, information about pupils' achievement and records of checks on the quality of teaching. I visited all classrooms with you to speak with pupils, look at their books, observe their learning and to hear several pupils read. I examined safeguarding and child protection information. I took account of the 36 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and I also took account of the views of the 14 parents who texted or wrote to me. I considered the 60 responses to the staff survey. I examined the school's website and reviewed information about pupils' progress, attainment and attendance. I spoke by telephone with the school's improvement partner. I also considered the school's self-evaluation, improvement priorities and assessment information for current pupils.