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Mrs Nicola Barby
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Barby

Short inspection of Dinglewell Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 10 January 2018, 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 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. As headteacher, you communicate a clear vision for Dinglewell Infant School that your staff and governors share. You are determined that all pupils receive the best possible education, and continually reflect on how you can improve the school. You have initiated new approaches to teaching that meet the demands of the new national curriculum well. Pupils are inspired to work hard and develop a love of learning because of effective teaching. Standards have improved quickly over the past year so that they are now in line with, or above, national figures in each subject.

You have tackled successfully the recommendation from the previous inspection to improve outcomes for pupils in mathematics. You provided a range of training and professional development for staff to extend their skills and develop effective practice. Pupils, especially the most able, are now fully challenged in their learning and making faster progress.

You ensure that the curriculum continually evolves to capture pupils' imagination, inspiring them to produce good writing across a range of styles. New topics have engaged the interest of boys in particular, and standards are much improved. Pupils are producing lively writing across subjects with increasing sophistication in their use of vocabulary. Sometimes, pupils' work is let down by errors in common spellings, not helped by a lack of accuracy in their handwriting. However, you and your leaders recognise that there is still more to do in this respect.

A strength of the school is the welcoming, inclusive learning environment that you and your staff have created. The values of the school are well known to pupils and underpin the effective relationships that characterise Dinglewell. Pupils strive to achieve the much cherished 'Gold Value Stars', awarded for exemplifying a key value. Parents and carers comment on a real 'family' atmosphere, where every child is encouraged to flourish. Consequently, they are very proud to belong to this school. Indeed, you and your staff are extremely committed to ensuring that pupils who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities receive the best possible support, enabling them to progress well.

Safeguarding is effective.

The culture of safeguarding is strong because you and your governors place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. Policy and practice within school meet statutory requirements. All staff and governors receive the appropriate training to identify possible signs of risk and harm. Records show that teachers are up to date in their training, including guidance in recognising the dangers of extremism and terrorism. Recruitment and vetting procedures follow the statutory guidance stringently. The governor responsible for safeguarding checks regularly that the school's single central record is maintained accurately. Governors also check that staff are confident in reporting any concerns about pupils, taking their views into account when updating policies and procedures.

You work well with other agencies, making timely referrals should the need arise. You are tenacious in following up any referrals to ensure that you receive a satisfactory response. Your records are of good quality and clearly detail any subsequent actions. The school goes that extra mile to maintain support for any vulnerable pupils and their families to ensure their ongoing welfare and safety.

You teach pupils how to stay safe through your curriculum, for example telling pupils not to give out personal information when online on the computer. Parents and pupils state overwhelmingly that the school is a safe and happy place in which to work and play. Most pupils attend well and are seldom late for school. Your swift response to the slight dip in attendance last year has quickly reduced any unnecessary absence.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, I met with you to discuss the school's progress since the previous inspection. We agreed the following lines of enquiry: how well the most able pupils, including girls, are challenged in mathematics; how successfully leaders have accelerated progress for boys in writing and for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities in phonics; and how well the school keeps pupils safe.
- Following the key stage 1 results in 2016 that were below national figures, you took prompt and effective action to improve teaching in mathematics. The 'do it', 'stretch it' and 'deepen it' approach has introduced higher levels of challenge to extend pupils' thinking. Outcomes in 2017 were above national figures at the expected standard because pupils were enthused by the new way of learning.

Their fluency in calculation quickly increased. However, you recognised that the most able girls were not achieving as well as boys and have adjusted teaching to address this. Current work in books shows that the most able pupils are achieving equally well and working at greater depth.

- There is no longer a significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls in writing. New themes in the curriculum are inspiring boys to achieve as well as girls. They particularly enjoy writing across subjects in a variety of styles, such as factual observations in science or persuasive leaflets in geography. During my visit, we looked at a range of writing in pupils' books and agreed that pupils write in lively and engaging ways. They also write with a greater command of language. An example of this is in Year 2, where their accounts of life in London during the time of Samuel Pepys were well written, using increasingly mature vocabulary. The focus on improving handwriting is enabling pupils to read their own work more easily. This also helps to promote accurate spelling. However, you are aware that these skills are not yet fully embedded to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they could.
- You have strengthened the way phonics is taught. The teaching of letters and sounds is well organised to ensure that pupils develop effective reading skills. Most pupils met the expected standard for their age in the 2017 Year 1 phonics screening check. However, you are aware that some pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities require a more precisely tailored curriculum to enable them to develop their literacy skills. The 'Fizzy' sessions of occupational therapy exercises are effective in building both their physical and mental resilience. This work enables them to concentrate for longer periods in lessons, retain their learning and make faster progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' writing continues to improve, particularly their spelling, to enable them to achieve the highest possible standards.

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

Sandra Woodman
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and discussed the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress and improvements since the previous inspection.

Together, we observed learning in classrooms and looked at a range of pupils' work in books. I listened to several pupils reading from key stage 1. I met with pupils to talk about their experience of school life. I held meetings with middle leaders and with three governors. In addition, I spoke with an external adviser who supports the school. I looked at a range of written evidence, including documents relating to safeguarding and attendance information. I took account of the written comments of 110 parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the views of parents who spoke to me before the start of the school day. I also took account of the views of 28 members of staff and the 37 pupils who returned the online questionnaires.