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Mrs Lynne Daniels  
Headteacher  
Westgate Primary School  
Bowling Green Street  
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Warwickshire  
CV34 4DD

Dear Mrs Daniels

### **Short inspection of Westgate Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 31 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 February 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have created a strong community spirit across the school where all pupils are valued and nurtured as individuals. Many parents and carers who spoke to me, and those who responded to Ofsted's online survey, value this highly. Pupils who have social, emotional or behavioural problems are included in every aspect of school life. They respond well to the encouragement and kindness of other pupils and of staff. Pupils who start the school at times other than at the beginning of the school year also benefit from the supportive and caring ethos.

At the previous inspection, inspectors recommended that you ensure high-quality teaching is consistent across the school. Since then, there have been changes in staffing, including the appointment of a new deputy headteacher and subject leader for English. Leaders at all levels are now accountable for continually improving the quality of teaching and learning and the use of assessment. This includes coaching and mentoring, visiting lessons and regular checks on work in pupils' books. You recognise that leaders do not always provide precise feedback to teachers about what they need to do to improve their teaching even further. You continue to work on this.

You organise frequent meetings for all staff to work with other schools, to compare notes and reach agreements on judgements of pupils' achievement. This helps to ensure that information about pupils' achievement is accurate. Leaders and governors are confident about how to interpret and use assessment information

effectively. This includes information about children's learning in Reception Year. This has resolved a further area for improvement from your previous inspection. Staff take full advantage of the training and support provided by the local authority. You receive effective support and challenge from the local authority's learning improvement team.

Pupils are proud of their school and say that teachers 'make learning fun'. For example, they talk enthusiastically about their knowledge of famous artists, about learning to design and make models of Viking long boats, and their local history topics. This, and the attractive display of pupils' work in corridors and classrooms, are testimony to the school's rich and inclusive curriculum.

Governors have a comprehensive picture of the school's strengths and the areas that need further development. They successfully help to set and model the school's core values and vision. Although governors value the information that leaders present to them, they do not take it at face value. They regularly visit the school to gather information for themselves. They use published information about pupils' achievement to judge how well groups of pupils are doing at Westgate Primary when compared with other pupils nationally. Documentation shows that they raise meaningful and pertinent questions and pursue lines of enquiry until they are fully satisfied.

You will be leaving the school at the end of this academic year. The governors have appointed a new headteacher to lead the school from September 2018. Good arrangements have been made to support him as he takes up his new role and to make the transition smooth for the school.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

School leaders ensure that safeguarding is given the highest priority. All staff are well trained. They are fully aware of their responsibilities and what to do if they have any concerns. They know how to recognise signs that might suggest that a pupil is at risk.

You have established a culture of early help so that pupils and their families receive the right support as soon as possible. You are relentless in your determination to follow through every concern. Your records and day-to-day notes are testimony to this. You work closely with outside agencies and you never leave anything to chance. You are vigilant in checking on pupils' attendance. You work closely with families and local authority teams. You are determined to provide the right support for families to ensure that pupils are safe.

The school curriculum includes regular planned sessions to teach pupils to stay safe and to recognise risk. Pupils' comments include, 'if you are worried, you have to ask yourself, in your mind, does this feel right? If you are not sure, you should talk to someone.' Staff know the pupils extremely well and pupils say that there is always someone to talk to in school.

## Inspection findings

- The school's self-evaluation document provides an accurate summary of the school's strengths and areas for development. Improving pupils' attainment in reading and writing has rightly been, and remains, top priority. These were two of my key lines of enquiry for this inspection.
- You have looked to create sustained improvement in the way reading and writing are taught across the school. You have appointed a new subject leader for English, who is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. The subject leader's improvement plan contains focused actions, clear targets and timescales. It is clearly a useful, working document.
- Leaders have taken decisive actions to improve the teaching of phonics. Teachers and teaching assistants have regular staff training to help to sustain high-quality teaching in this area. This is having a positive impact. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check improved in 2017 and was slightly above the national figure.
- You have introduced effective assessment systems to support teachers in judging the standards of pupils' wider reading skills. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use and apply their reading skills across different subjects, such as science and research work in topic lessons. Your records show that the proportion of pupils who are working at or above the expected standard in reading is increasing. Nonetheless, many pupils do not have extensive experience of listening to, sharing and discussing their reading. This prevents them from developing a love of reading and reaching standards of greater depth. You continue to address this effectively.
- In writing, you have organised training for all staff to improve the teaching of spelling, grammar and handwriting. This is beginning to have a positive impact. For example, Year 6 pupils are eager to share and discuss their writing. They are clear about what they can do well and what they need to do to further improve their writing. This good practice is not consistent across all classes.
- A final focus of this inspection was to review the actions that you have taken to increase the proportion of children who reach a good level of development in Reception Year. You have rightly prioritised improving specific aspects of the early years curriculum, such as communication and language and early writing.
- During the inspection, Reception children were observed working together to create an 'alien collage'. They were eager to re-tell the story of the alien and to show me their writing in the 'space station log book'. Adults skilfully encourage children to express their ideas and to use their phonic skills to help them to write. These activities encourage children to develop confidence in communication and language and early writing skills. As a result, they make good progress and enjoy their learning.
- In 2017, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development continued to improve and was at least in line with the national average.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- precise feedback is given to teachers so that they know what they have to do to further improve their teaching
- teachers in all classes ensure that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their writing further and reach higher 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 Warwickshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marilyn Mottram  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and other senior leaders. I also met with the chair of the governing body and one other governor. I had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. I spoke to parents at the beginning of the day and took account of 33 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also considered 24 responses by parents to Ofsted's free-text service. I visited all classes jointly with you. We looked at examples of pupils' work and we talked to pupils about their learning. I spoke informally with pupils at different points during the school day. I reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation of its performance, the school development plan, and documents related to keeping pupils safe. I also looked at information relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.