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Mr Kirk Hopkins
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Hopkins

Short inspection of Oldbrook First School

Following my visit to the school on 27 February 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 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, ably supported by your assistant headteacher, have developed a strong team of teachers and support staff. Your ambition for the pupils, parents and staff is palpable. Parents appreciate the warm and friendly atmosphere you have created. Staff are united in their belief that your leadership is at the heart of the school's continued success.

Parents and carers value your considerable efforts to involve them in the life of the school. You provide many opportunities for them to improve their own knowledge and understanding of what their children are learning. In Reception, for example, families attend classes to learn how to help their children with phonics and mathematics and to develop positive behaviour routines. More recently, you hosted a Diwali coffee morning where many Hindu parents shared their beliefs and cultural traditions with parents of other faiths. The respect and celebration of different cultures are key strengths of the school.

Governors are knowledgeable and possess impressive skills. They offer you challenge and support to improve the work of the school. The new programme of governor visits to gather first-hand information helps the governing body to evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses more accurately. Recently, governors visited classes to gather information on the quality and breadth of the curriculum. They are well positioned to secure further improvement.

Pupils are polite, kind and considerate. They revel in the lively and interesting curriculum. Year 2 pupils study the constituent countries of the United Kingdom and used geographical information systems to identify the features of the local area. In Year 1, pupils learn about healthy eating, and planning, making and tasting their own fruit rockets. In English, pupils write well for a range of purposes. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to help pupils to develop their vocabulary, punctuation and grammar. You rightly recognise that standards of writing in the foundation subjects do not yet match the high standards seen in English books.

At the time of the last inspection, you were asked to ensure that pupils use their calculation skills to solve mathematical problems. Pupils now quickly develop secure skills in the basics of mathematics. They use these skills to solve complex problems involving tricky concepts such as time, money and statistics. Pupils explain their thinking well and show enthusiasm and aptitude in mathematics. As a result, pupils make strong progress.

Safeguarding is effective

Safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose and tailored to the needs of the school and the community it serves. Leaders and governors perform thorough checks on all staff before they take up employment. Records are securely stored and well maintained. Teachers are well trained and know how to identify and support pupils at risk of harm. They pass on concerns quickly to leaders who, in turn, use this information to get pupils the help they need.

Parents receive useful support from the school. Many attend workshops, which the school arranges, that teach them positive approaches to behaviour management. This has helped many parents to understand how best to cope with challenging behaviour. The work to promote greater attendance has been particularly effective.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils explained how they should 'stop, drop and roll' if caught in a fire and know how to report concerns when using computers or mobile devices.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection we agreed to look at: the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements; the progress of children in early years; the level of support and challenge offered to disadvantaged pupils; and how effectively leaders evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses to plan for, and deliver, further improvements.
- In 2016, leaders opened a new Nursery provision on site. This is now well established and provides a good start for children, particularly those who had not previously received Nursery education. Children in Nursery quickly develop social and communication skills which help them to enjoy and achieve at school. In Reception, children work with purpose and tenacity, exploring the vibrant classrooms and sharing rich experiences with their friends. Staff guide children to develop strong skills in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, children in

early years are well prepared for the challenges of Year 1.

- Teachers use their secure understanding of the school's assessment systems to identify pupils who need additional support or challenge. Their work to support low- and middle-attaining pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, has helped these pupils to keep up with others in school. Leaders recognise that the progress of the most able disadvantaged pupils needs to accelerate so that greater proportions of these pupils attain a high standard.
- Leaders have a deep and accurate understanding of the school. They work with other school leaders and local authority officers to gain useful external validation of their judgements. Evaluations are used effectively to form sharply focused and well-judged plans to secure further improvement. As a result, the school has improved since the previous inspection.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the progress of the most able disadvantaged pupils accelerates so that greater proportions attain a high standard
- the standard of pupils' writing in the foundation subjects matches the high standards evident in English work.

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

Yours sincerely

Daniel Lambert
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, senior and middle leaders, and four governors, including the chair of the governing body. I observed learning in six classes, all jointly with senior leaders. Together we looked at pupils' work. I analysed a range of the school's documentation, including information about pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. We discussed your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I considered the six responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and letters submitted by parents. I also spoke to parents at the beginning of the day. I scrutinised the results of the Ofsted pupil survey and gathered the views of other pupils throughout the day.