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Miss Z Wilson  
Headteacher  
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Cheshire  
SK9 6EH

Dear Miss Wilson

### **Short inspection of Lindow Community Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 1 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 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 provide strong leadership and have steered the school successfully through a period of change. You are very well supported by committed governors and staff who share your high aspirations for pupils. It is clear that you are raising expectations across the school and this is leading to stronger outcomes for pupils.

The on-site resource provision for hearing-impaired pupils is a strength of the school. Expectations for pupils are high. The learning is enhanced by well thought-out topics that enthuse pupils. For example, the topic of conservation has resulted in extended writing opportunities for pupils by writing to a zoo about their animals. Pupils' work was of a very high quality.

You promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well and give pupils a clear understanding of fundamental British values. You have designed a curriculum that provides a combination of learning activities, assemblies and opportunities to discuss moral issues. For example, the discussion around online bullying allowed pupils the opportunity to reflect and discuss aspects of the rule of law.

Governors know the school and community well. They ask probing questions about the school's effectiveness. Your evaluation of the school's strengths and priorities for further improvement are accurate. Development plans are well defined and focused.

Pupils have a strong understanding of the school's values and take a pride in their work and being a member of the school community. Pupils put these values into practice

every day. They relish the learning on how to be part of a diverse group in lessons. One comment from pupils included, 'It doesn't matter where we are from or what we look like, in our school we look after people. We all have something that makes us "us".'

The vast majority of parents and carers are supportive. One comment summed up the positive changes in school since your appointment: 'The headteacher's energy, passion, compassion and drive clearly filters all the way down through the school.'

At the last inspection, you were asked to ensure that all lessons provide tasks and activities which stretch pupils to achieve to the very best of their abilities, particularly the most able. Leaders and governors have made sure that teaching and learning are at the centre of school improvement. It is clear from visiting classes, talking to pupils and looking at their work, that learning activities meet the varied abilities of pupils effectively.

During the inspection, we discussed the aspects of the school's work that you have rightly identified as areas for further development. For example, that the recent improvements made to the quality of provision in the early years should ensure that a higher proportion of children achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception year. We also discussed the need to ensure consistently high standards across early years and key stage 1 in the way that phonics is taught.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Since your appointment, you have improved the culture of safeguarding. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and procedures for recruiting staff meet statutory requirements. Appropriate training for staff and governors is undertaken frequently and is up to date. Regular visitors, such as police, give safety talks to pupils around a range of issues, including personal safety and road safety. School assemblies are also used to provide information to pupils so they know how to stay safe.

You and your staff care deeply for your pupils, and pupils told me that they can rely on you and your staff if they have any worries. Pupils understand about different forms of bullying but told me that bullying is very rare in school. They appreciate the staff in school and told me that any issues are always dealt with. As a result, pupils feel safe on site.

### **Inspection findings**

- We agreed some areas of focus for this inspection. The first of these was to look at the actions taken by leaders to improve outcomes in phonics. Leaders recognise that this is an area of ongoing development because of newly implemented strategies. Daily phonics lessons accurately match pupils' needs. As a result, pupils engage well. Pupils read regularly to adults, practising their phonic skills. Observations, and written work, seen during the inspection, showed that the pupils are using and applying their phonic skills effectively across a range of subjects. Other initiatives have been introduced across the school to help all pupils with their phonic skills and to develop their spelling later on in key stage 2. We discussed the need to ensure consistently high standards in the way phonics is taught to ensure that all pupils make best

possible progress.

- The second area was to look at the actions taken by leaders to improve outcomes in early years. You and your early years leader regularly evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This ensures that the daily focused teaching activities are matched to children's needs. Assessment also allows teachers to quickly identify children who may need extra help with their learning. As a result, children make good progress from their starting points, developing skills including early reading, writing and mathematics. Although the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception is improving, it remains below the national figure. You have identified that the improvements made to the quality of provision in the early years need time to embed so that more children achieve a good level of development.
- We also looked at attendance. The attendance of some groups of pupils has been too low in recent years. You have identified the different reasons why these pupils have a high absence rate and are working closely with parents to improve their children's attendance. Good attendance is celebrated and you challenge unauthorised absences. Processes and procedures are well known by staff and you work closely with other professionals, such as education welfare support from the local authority, when appropriate. As a result of leaders' work, attendance has improved substantially for these groups of pupils and is now in line with the national average.
- The final area we looked at was how you are improving outcomes in science. Teachers are developing pupils' scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding. Pupils have opportunities to investigate and use practical skills that underpin scientific knowledge. Leaders use assessment information to determine how well pupils have grasped particular skills and knowledge as well as tracking coverage across the curriculum. Activities develop understanding of the processes and methods through different types of science enquiries. Pupils then apply learning in new contexts, answering scientific questions about the world around them. There is sufficient challenge for all pupils, which allows them to build on their prior learning. As a result, current pupils make strong progress in science.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the rapid improvements made to the quality of provision in the early years result in more children achieving a good level of development
- they continue to evaluate and review the effectiveness of the teaching of phonics to ensure consistently high 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 Cheshire East. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Hunter  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

Throughout the inspection, I spoke to pupils, both formally and informally, about their work and school life. I held meetings with you, your deputy headteacher and subject leaders to discuss improvements in their areas of responsibility.

I looked at work in pupils' books and reviewed documentation, which included your evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the school development plan. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day and considered 90 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.

I visited classes along with you to observe pupils' learning. I met with governors to discuss aspects of school leadership and management. I reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.