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Mrs Carol Mason  
Cheswick Green Primary School  
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Dear Miss Mason

### **Short inspection of Cheswick Green Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 6 March 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 March 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 and your assistant headteachers have developed a strong ethos and lead a happy and inclusive school where pupils get on well together. You set high expectations for learning and for pupils' behaviour, and know the school well. Pupils work very hard in lessons and focus very well on their work. You have responded well to the concerns of parents and carers to support the emotional well-being of some pupils who are struggling in school. For example, I saw the use of relaxation and reflection techniques practised with pupils to help them feel valued and alleviate stress prior to work. The majority of parents and carers spoken to and who completed Parent View, agree that the school is supportive.

You have set out in your evaluation of the school the reasons why you judge the school to be good. Leaders have written a development plan to improve aspects of the school that are not as strong. This plan correctly includes action to increase the proportion of pupils who achieve good levels of progress, especially for middle-attaining pupils. It also focuses clearly on groups, especially boys and disadvantaged pupils.

Governors question leaders closely and challenge them to improve pupils' outcomes. They challenged the school over the recent decline in pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They visit school regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's work and monitor it regularly. This work is supported through the very

detailed information given to them by senior leaders and the local authority. Governors feel that the school leaders have worked hard to address barriers following 2016 and 2017 statutory assessments, and governors are now able to use this new system to keep a closer watch on the progress of different groups of pupils.

Following the last inspection, leaders were asked to make teachers' marking and feedback to pupils more effective by providing clearer and more accurate guidance for pupils on how to improve their work. You prioritised this in the professional development offered to teachers and, as a result, feedback on pupils' work has improved and pupils are provided with specific support to match their abilities. During the inspection, pupils spoke confidently about the next steps in their learning. This is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.

Leaders were also asked to help pupils to learn more about different cultural traditions. The displays of pupils' work in corridors and in classrooms around the school, along with conversations with pupils during the inspection, reflect a curriculum that promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils from different backgrounds get on very well together and learn to appreciate each other's cultures and traditions.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Staff are trained in all areas of safeguarding. New members of staff receive relevant introductory training and documents supporting the training. This is followed up by regular updates for all staff. This means that staff are well informed and know about the school's processes for keeping pupils safe. Leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Pre-employment checks and vetting and recruitment practices comply with regulations.

Pupils said that they feel safe. They are supervised well at play, and you make sure that the school site is checked frequently so that any safety issues are resolved without delay. Thorough risk assessments are carried out prior to any trips and visits. Pupils recall what they have learned in lessons that have a focus on safety. These lessons are part of the curriculum and cover activities such as water safety and keeping safe online. Pupils understand the different types of bullying that exist but said that there are few examples of it in school.

Governors regularly check the effectiveness of the school's work to keep pupils safe. Governors have completed safer recruitment training and put their skills and expertise to good effect during recent recruitment processes.

### **Inspection findings**

- My visit focused on the school's actions to improve the decreasing progress of pupils in reading and mathematics, especially for middle-attaining and disadvantaged pupils. You and the leadership team were quick to identify this and have introduced several strategies to secure improvements to outcomes in

reading. I found that you have raised the profile of reading across the school. Leaders make sure that all pupils read with adults very regularly. You have given more time in the curriculum to teaching reading skills. This has developed pupils' reading comprehension. As a result of improvements that you have made, standards in reading are rising.

- Achievement in mathematics has been inconsistent over the past three years. Your mathematics leader has introduced an effective approach to improving pupils' mathematical reasoning. It provides regular opportunities for problem solving, which pupils are undertaking with increasing levels of confidence. Your assessment records show that, across the school, more pupils of middle prior attainment are working at the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. This is not yet consistently the case across all classes and all subjects. You acknowledge that this remains an area for further improvement.
- The small numbers of disadvantaged pupils in each year group have made it difficult to identify trends over time in attainment and progress. Staff know these pupils extremely well and are effective in providing high-quality support to address their individual needs, especially for those at risk of underachieving. Many of these pupils have considerable gaps in their learning due to the disruptions in their schooling over time. From their invariably low starting points, they make good progress.
- During the inspection, I also looked at the school's evidence in relation to the underperformance of boys in relation to girls in reading and writing at key stage 2. You have created a detailed reading action plan. You have organised workshops for parents and purchased resource boxes linked to topics to develop comprehension skills. Additionally, you have made reading the focus of leaders' classroom observations. Your detailed tracking of reading shows that boys read well and show good comprehension and fluency that match their age and ability. As a result, current pupils make improved progress in reading.
- In writing, boys' progress is improving because of the clear instructions that they are given by their teachers. Work in pupils' books shows that opportunities to write at length across the curriculum motivate and engage pupils. As a consequence, all pupils have made good progress. The proportion of boys who are achieving the standards expected for their age in writing is improving and differences between boys and girls are diminishing. This was clear from your own assessment information and the progress I observed in pupils' books. Nevertheless, you recognise that despite some diminishing of differences, boys still underperform in relation to girls in reading and writing.
- The school has taken action recently to reduce the number of pupils excluded from school. This has been successful. Previously, the numbers excluded were above the national average, especially for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The school has worked with families and formed helpful partnerships with other providers of education to address the issues. As a result, some pupils are now in provision that most suits their needs.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- well-targeted teaching diminishes the differences between the achievements of boys and girls in reading and writing at key stage 2
- high-quality teaching is consistent across all classes, especially for middle-attaining pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Max Vlahakis  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and two assistant headteachers. I met with three governors, including the chair. I spoke with your local authority adviser over the telephone. I spoke informally to pupils in the playground and in lessons and to parents as they brought their children in to school. I looked at the responses to the Parent View survey and surveys of staff's and pupil's views. We visited lessons together. I looked at the work in a selection of pupils' books. I considered the school's self-evaluation and leaders' plans for development. I took into account evidence of pupils' standards of attainment and rates of progress. I read a range of school policies, including those for safeguarding and child protection.