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Mr Mike Welsh
Goddard Park Community Primary School
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Dear Mr Welsh

Short inspection of Goddard Park Community 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 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. You have successfully addressed the key issues identified as needing improvement at that inspection. For example, the checks made on teaching are more focused. Leaders use a range of information, including pupils' workbooks and information about pupils' progress, to give teachers feedback about strengths and areas for improvement.

Your vision for Goddard Park is ambitious and determined. A highly motivated leadership team, dedicated staff team and a committed governing body support you well. Leaders share your expectation of a community where 'Everyone learns, everyone cares.' Working in partnership with local schools, you provide your leaders with opportunities for professional development, which builds significant capacity in your team. Governors monitor the school's work carefully and provide challenge to leaders based on an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning continues to improve.

You are rightly proud that a greater proportion of key stage 2 pupils reached the standard expected in reading, writing and mathematics than the national average in 2017. You understand what needs to improve further. For example, you have identified that not enough pupils achieve the standards expected of them at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics, and that some disadvantaged pupils have not made enough progress. Leaders and governors agree that they must make sure that the quality of teaching in key stage 1 improves further and

that expectations of what all pupils can achieve continue to rise. Pupils told me that they value being part of the Goddard Park community. They appreciate the broad and imaginative curriculum and the range of experiences on offer. They speak highly of engaging opportunities for learning, such as practical science lessons, and competitive events such as the 'spelling bee' and competitions in mathematics. The variety of extra-curricular clubs that pupils can choose from, such as dance, football and gardening, extend their range of interests and are very popular.

Pupils are caring and thoughtful and their behaviour is good. They told me that rare incidents of bullying or poor behaviour are dealt with quickly and that they have every confidence that adults will keep them safe. Most parents who spoke to me or responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that pupils are happy and taught well. For example, a comment written by one parent said, 'I am comforted that my child is recognised as an individual.'

At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the key lines of enquiry to be considered during the day. These included: how well those pupils with low attainment are progressing with their reading in key stage 1; how well disadvantaged pupils are progressing in their writing and mathematics in key stage 1; how effectively leaders are ensuring challenge for the most able in mathematics in key stage 2; and how effectively leaders make sure that pupils attend school as regularly as they can. These key lines of enquiry are considered below under 'Safeguarding' and 'Inspection findings'.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are applied meticulously and that records are thorough and detailed. Leaders work with a number of outside agencies, which include social services and healthcare professionals. They consult these agencies with speed and persistence so that pupils and families receive support. Leaders are proactive in all aspects of safeguarding and regularly review procedures such as the quality of their record-keeping in order to improve further. Effective external support helps leaders and governors to understand the most up-to-date guidance and to know their roles and responsibilities.

Leaders make sure that all staff receive clear and comprehensive guidance on how to identify concerns. They check rigorously that adults understand this guidance and are vigilant. As a result, staff take prompt action to report concerns and to safeguard the most vulnerable. Leaders are aware of the importance of safe recruitment and of making checks of adults who visit the school. Their records show that staff are vetted carefully prior to beginning employment and that checks on visitors are robust. Governors carry out appropriate checks on safeguarding during the school year.

Pupils say they feel safe and trust adults to listen to them. A comment made by a pupil typified many views that, 'If you make a point it is going to be heard.'

Leaders and staff work relentlessly to improve levels of attendance. They have responded to a rise in the number of pupils who regularly miss school and have redefined the responsibilities of the inclusion officer. Consequently, pupils and families receive additional support, such as the opportunity to join the school's 'walking bus', to make sure that they attend regularly. Rates of attendance in the school overall now match the national average. However, you acknowledged that the number of pupils who are persistently absent remains high and needs to decrease further.

Inspection findings

- You have deployed a reading manager to oversee changes to teaching and have provided additional intervention to help individuals to catch up. These sessions give opportunities for pupils to receive frequent and intensive support which is based on a thorough assessment of their needs. As a result, these pupils make rapid progress in their fluency and show a good understanding of their reading books. We observed a session where a Year 1 pupil was able to read about and discuss a 'big hungry tyrannosaurus rex' with confidence.
- In class sessions, teachers and teaching assistants use carefully chosen materials to develop pupils' understanding of phonics. They make sure that learning builds on what pupils have learned previously. Teaching enables pupils to recognise common words and to build words using their knowledge of sounds and associated letters. Despite some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching that groups receive, this systematic approach is helping pupils to tackle unfamiliar words with greater confidence when reading aloud.
- Teachers now routinely focus on strengthening pupils' vocabulary and supporting them in inferring meaning from texts. This practice is already having a notable impact for some pupils. However, we agreed that those from lower starting points need more support to develop their vocabulary and understanding. They need to answer more challenging questions so that they can interpret what they read.
- You rightly identify differences in the way disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 progress in writing and mathematics compared with their peers. Work in pupils' books shows that they are making good progress in mathematics. Teachers use practical models and images so that pupils understand mathematical concepts. Consequently, pupils are able to solve written calculations and are now applying them to more demanding problems. Rates of progress for the group are improving in mathematics. Progress in writing is slower. While most have made progress in improving their handwriting, sentence structure and punctuation, their spelling is often weak. Pupils do not apply their understanding of phonics to their writing, and they do not use feedback well enough to prevent them from repeating errors in spelling. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are not making the accelerated rates of progress that they need to in writing.
- You have identified the achievement of the most able pupils in key stage 2 in reaching higher standards in mathematics as an area for development. You have recently begun a programme of professional development for staff. Leaders have recognised the need for most-able pupils to progress more swiftly in lessons so

that they do not repeat content which does not challenge them. My observation of lessons and pupils' work showed that the most able make strong progress in number and have opportunities to solve problems in most classes. However, typically, teachers do not give opportunities for the most able pupils to use mathematical reasoning. We agreed that new approaches to planning are in their infancy and that changes need to be embedded so that standards rise further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they give more support to pupils with low starting points in reading in key stage 1 to develop their understanding of what they read and to widen their vocabulary
- they embed further the work to extend pupils' mathematical reasoning and deepen their thinking, especially for the most able.

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

Yours sincerely

Claire Mirams
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke to parents at the start of the school day. I held meetings with you and your leadership team. We reviewed your plans for improvement and your own evaluation of the school's performance. We conducted learning walks together. I also met with members of the governing body and reviewed records of external evaluation of the school. I met with leaders who are responsible for standards in mathematics, writing and reading and together we scrutinised pupils' workbooks and information about pupils' progress. I listened to pupils read and reviewed their reading records. I met with a group of pupils and discussed their viewpoints on behaviour, bullying and keeping safe, including online. I scrutinised various safeguarding records as well as meeting with your safeguarding leaders, inclusion manager and the school's external adviser for safeguarding. I spoke on the telephone to the local authority's designated officer for safeguarding for Swindon.

I also considered 30 responses to the pupil survey, 45 responses to the staff survey and 25 parent responses to the online survey, Parent View.