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Mr Paddy Macey
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Macey

Short inspection of Gomeldon Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 8 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 September 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 maintained a steady and stable staffing team, which you state has been of great benefit. While this has provided consistency, it has also enabled you to pinpoint key strengths and areas for improvement. To ensure collaboration, you work closely with a teaching school alliance, which has provided leadership training for staff as well as opportunities to embrace research. This has resulted in your staff designing a bespoke intervention for pupils.

Since the last inspection, you have continued to harvest the benefits from a school community which feels like a family. Pupils have strong relationships with one another, regardless of age, and play a key role in each other's development as a learner. In order to provide further opportunities across the school, you have introduced 'hubs' which are proving to be popular with pupils at break times. Pupils participate in reading, writing and creative hubs with enthusiasm and value these chances to further their learning. As a result of all this work, behaviour is a clear strength. Pupils are kind, courteous and great ambassadors for your school.

You have an active governing body whose members are avidly involved in their roles and responsibilities. They also help to enhance the learning offer for pupils in your school. They use their links with local health organisations to provide pupils with chances to find out more about different health topics such as 'epidemics'. These excellent links have captivated the pupils in a fun, yet informative way. Pupils learned about how disease spreads through a 'sticker epidemic', which produced learning opportunities not only in science, but also in mathematics. You and your governors remain outward looking, keen to maintain strong links with local

organisations to further enhance the curriculum. As one of your governors stated, 'we will absorb opportunities like a sponge'.

At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed the lines of enquiry that I would be considering during the day. The first of these explored how middle-attaining pupils made progress across key stage 1 in reading. Second, I considered how teaching, learning and assessment provide opportunities for pupils to reach expectations for their age and the higher standard in mathematics in key stage 1. Lastly, I explored how leaders' actions have resulted in strong progress in reading across key stage 2. For the last two years, that progress has been significantly higher than achieved nationally.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that recruitment checks are thorough and these are recorded on the school's single central register. Through a strong induction process, staff are ready to follow the school's approach to safeguarding. They are familiar with key policies, systems and processes, as well as being aware of their statutory duties. Training for staff is ongoing. Staff are well versed in the 'Prevent' duty, for which you are a trainer. You, alongside your deputy lead for safeguarding, also attend local authority refresher training to ensure that you both stay up to date with key changes and initiatives.

When staff raise concerns about the welfare of pupils, leaders of safeguarding consider them carefully and pass them on to external agencies when necessary. Although concerns are not frequent, you have created a culture of high vigilance. You treat concerns, however minor, with the same haste and importance as any other concern. You deal with concerns in a proportionate way, according to the severity and alongside your insightful knowledge of each pupil in your school.

Inspection findings

- In 2016, although the proportion of middle-attaining pupils that met the standard expected for their age was in line with national averages, there were no pupils working at the higher standard. Furthermore, in 2017 the proportion of these pupils reaching the standard expected for their age was below national averages and, once more, none of these pupils was working at the higher standard. Leaders and governors monitor this group of pupils closely and are increasingly aware of their performance.
- When children start in the Reception Year, they immediately receive regular reading opportunities both at home and in school. Adults not only develop children's ability to read words but also to understand what they have read and the meaning of words. Children's reading records show that children read daily and cover a range of books. Children get off to a flying start in the Reception class. As pupils move into key stage 1, this intensity continues. Pupils read every day. While some read independently, others benefit from reading to an adult or even an older pupil in the school. These sessions are focused; pupils are engaged in their books and the buzz of reading cascades beautifully across the classroom. Older pupils are skilled at listening to these pupils read and also at

questioning their understanding. Pupils in key stage 1 read to someone frequently and receive high-quality support. The school's assessment information shows that the proportion of pupils working at standards expected for their age has increased from when they left the Reception class.

- In 2016, the proportion of middle-attaining pupils reaching expectations for their age in mathematics by the end of key stage 1 was below national averages. In 2017, this trend continued. In the Reception class, children get off to a flying start and expectations of what children can do are high. Staff expect children to reason about numbers. These opportunities are intricately designed, fun and engaging. Children explain their understanding and do so with confidence. Furthermore, staff are highly skilled in developing children's mental strategies, which results in less reliance on physical resources to reach an answer. As a result, children are well prepared for key stage 1.
- In key stage 1, teachers provide pupils with lots of opportunities to develop their fluency when working with numbers. They grow increasingly confident when recalling key facts, because they practise frequently. You have correctly identified that opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning skills were few. Since September, pupils have opportunities to reason more regularly, but this is still in its infancy. Pupils find explaining what they have done in mathematics difficult, but the increasing number of methods they have at their fingertips helps their resilience. Pupils do not give up and, although they may not be correct, as reasoning becomes more developed across the school, their accuracy is developing further.
- In lessons, teachers are skilled in developing pupils' understanding in mathematics. They explain concepts clearly and, where misconceptions occur, staff support pupils effectively. Pupils value the support provided. This is due to huge levels of mutual respect between pupils and staff. Occasionally, there are times when activities do not closely match pupils' emerging needs in key stage 1. Some of the work is not challenging enough, which results in some pupils finding the work too easy. You have correctly identified this as an area to develop and plans are in place to bring about change. Furthermore, both you and governors are monitoring this group of pupils closely.
- Over the last three years, reading progress has improved dramatically, with the school performing significantly above national averages. From pupils' starting points, the proportion of pupils working at expectations for their age has increased over time.
- Reading across key stage 2 is a real strength of the school. Pupils read daily and staff provide high-quality opportunities for pupils to understand what they have read, and develop reading fluency and, more importantly, a love of reading. Leaders have created a culture where reading is truly valued. Even at breaktimes, a 'reading for pleasure' club gets together to sit in a calm, quiet environment to read a book of the children's own choice. Pupils value this opportunity and regularly attend. You model reading to the pupils and they reciprocate. Each attendee shares an appreciation of reading. Furthermore, the school community's love of reading has been recognised on a national scale. The school achieved second place in a national competition, which resulted in a prize

of £5000-worth of books. These were greatly appreciated by your pupils.

- Pupils read widely and often; they read across a range of authors and genres as well as maintaining a breadth of both fiction and non-fiction. Due to this growing experience of a repertoire of books, pupils hold meaningful conversations about books they have read and are confident both in offering opinions about what they have read and in listening to their friends' ideas. Some pupils are at the stage of appraising the work of authors, running a fine toothcomb over authors' use of language and the impact that it has on the reader. In short, pupils in this school are a tough audience to please! Through wider reading, pupils apply wider, more ambitious vocabulary in their writing. Pupils experiment with word choice to great effect, often poring over a range of similar words to ensure maximum impact on the reader.
- Reading is truly valued at your school. You have created a community of readers who savour every reading opportunity on offer. As a result, pupils are keen to communicate their love of reading and embrace every book on offer. Pupils are avid readers. When reading opportunities come to an end, they seize the final moments of time to read one last sentence... prolonging the magic of the book for just a little longer. It is clear why progress across key stage 2 in reading has been strong.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the approach to developing reasoning in mathematics is embedded across the school so that more pupils work at the standards expected for their age and the higher standard
- teachers provide activities in mathematics across key stage 1 which match the emerging needs of pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Nathan Kemp
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I spoke to you, your deputy head and the coordinator responsible for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. I met with representatives of the governing body. I also met with a group of pupils to determine their attitudes to reading. You and I made visits to lessons across the school to observe pupils and capture your approach to teaching, learning and assessment. We also scrutinised the work in pupils' books.

I looked at a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's self-evaluation and the current school development plan, considering the impact of leaders' actions on areas of school improvement. Additionally, I scrutinised various safeguarding records, including those relating to the suitability of staff to work with children and training opportunities for staff. I also met with the designated safeguarding leader. I took account of 28 responses to the Parent View online survey, 2 responses to the staff survey and 49 responses to the pupil survey.