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5 April 2018

Ms Ruth Burbank
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Burbank

Short inspection of Stockham Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 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 December 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

This vibrant, happy school helps pupils not only to achieve highly but also to grow as young people in a wide range of ways. The school's motto, 'Soaring high', captures the ambition which staff instil in pupils. Many pupils I spoke to during the inspection could explain how they persevere to reach demanding goals, both in their work and their personal development. They thrive because teachers have high expectations and provide the guidance and support pupils need within the interesting, stimulating and wide-ranging curriculum. While all pupils exercise during the 'daily mile' every day, teachers and leaders regularly go the extra mile, determined to help pupils succeed in all they do. Your highly skilful, compassionate leadership has made sure that the school goes from strength to strength.

Pupils develop a strong appreciation of people with a range of backgrounds and beliefs. For example, one pupil commented, 'We all respect each other. We celebrate what's different about different people.' The high levels of care staff show for pupils underpin the strong family ethos of the school, reflected in the extremely positive views of nearly all parents and carers. There is a tangible sense of the school community working together, which often leads to special events, like the

'environment day' taking place in the near future, organised by the school council.

You ensure that your cohesive team of leaders and teachers take a disciplined, creative approach to making improvements. This means that the many strengths of the school noted at the time of the last inspection have flourished. Importantly, you have taken decisive and effective action to improve teaching and learning in mathematics. You are now applying the same verve and tenacity to accelerating pupils' progress in writing, which is clearly paying off.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are united in their unwavering commitment to keeping pupils safe. Policies and procedures are tight. Parents are right to recognise the school's effective work to prioritise their children's well-being. Staff are highly vigilant and put the effective training they receive into practice fully. Any concerns are spotted early and dealt with quickly and decisively, involving other agencies when necessary. Regular updates and discussions make sure that all staff are well informed about any concerns.

Pupils are taught, in lessons and assemblies and through events such as 'internet safety day', about how to keep themselves safe, including when on the internet. They feel safe at school because pupils behave well and bullying is extremely rare. They know who to go to if they have any concerns, but they are also very keen to help each other.

Inspection findings

- Leaders clearly demonstrate the ability to make significant improvements. Governors have an accurate understanding of the school and hold leaders to account well by carefully measuring the extent of any improvements. For example, leaders have built on previous strengths in reading so that pupils now make excellent progress. Many pupils are avid readers and individual support for pupils, for example to help them with phonics, is highly effective. Equally, leaders have improved pupils' achievement in mathematics impressively since the last inspection, including for disadvantaged pupils. A number of pupils spoken to during the inspection said that they enjoy mathematics more than ever before.
- Leaders and teachers are rightly focused on improving pupils' progress in writing because in the past this has not been as strong as in reading and mathematics. Leaders' well-rationalised approach is working. Some pupils across the school have made significant improvements in their writing. Pupils are enthusiastic writers and examples of their high-quality work are proudly displayed around the school. Although pupils' progress overall in writing is much faster now, it is not yet as rapid as in reading and mathematics.
- The school has a very determined focus on making sure that all pupils achieve well across the curriculum. This is typified by the highly effective, tailored extra support that disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities receive. Parents rightly praise this extra help, since it enables

these pupils to make good and sometimes very rapid progress.

- While the vast majority of pupils attend school very regularly, a small number of pupils have missed school too often in the past. Leaders' careful, well-judged actions have helped these pupils attend more regularly. Current levels of pupils' attendance are, overall, high and improving.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' progress in writing continues to accelerate so it matches their progress in reading and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Matthew Haynes
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, other leaders and five governors, including the chair of the governing body. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I spoke to pupils in lessons, around the school and in an arranged meeting, and considered 47 responses to the online pupils' survey. I observed learning in parts of five lessons. I took account of 41 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 41 free-text comments, and met with parents before school. I also took account of 25 responses to the online survey for staff and met a group of six staff members. I analysed a range of school documentation, including information about pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, safeguarding checks, policies and procedures, records of pupils' attendance and your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness.