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20 April 2018

Mr James Edwards
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Edwards

Short inspection of Lee Common Church of England School

Following my visit to the school on 20 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 October 2013.

This school continues to be good.

You lead Lee Common Church of England School with clear resolve to ensure that all pupils achieve their very best. You assess accurately the school's effectiveness and know what it does well. You have also identified successfully what could be even better. You use this information productively to put appropriate plans in place to improve the school further. Governors support you well in delivering these plans, providing effective challenge that demonstrates their own determination to see the school go from strength to strength. Your team of committed teachers and support staff works hard under your leadership. Together, you have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They learn well because teaching is well planned and sparks their interest. Pupils share confidently their ideas and usually listen attentively in lessons. They are friendly and play cheerfully together at breaktimes. Parents and carers value the school too. The majority of those who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, would recommend the school to others. Many stated that they like the small class sizes, the 'family' atmosphere, and the nurturing way staff look after their children. A few, however, feel that communication between school and home could be better.

You have tackled successfully the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The teaching of phonics is well organised, taking into account pupils' different starting points. Consequently, it is suitably challenging for all. You have also introduced several effective strategies to teach, and improve, pupils'

handwriting. Pupils learn to take care in forming their letters and words, and clear development in writing presentation can be seen in their books over time. Finally, you have ensured that middle leaders' contribution to school improvement is effective. For example, they have had a strong impact in leading the school's strategy to embed British values throughout learning.

Current pupils are making rapid progress across the curriculum. Typically, most pupils achieve the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' achievement is typically highest in reading and mathematics, in which some pupils exceed the expectations for their age. Leaders are rightly working to ensure that more pupils exceed age-related expectations in writing. They are aware that pupils need to develop a stronger understanding of internet safety.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have created a positive culture for keeping children safe. Your single central record details accurately the appropriate recruitment checks you make when employing staff and volunteers. You keep accurate information on any child considered at risk, and you monitor their well-being closely.

You provide staff with appropriate training that keeps their safeguarding knowledge up to date. You check thoroughly that all adults know what actions to take to protect children. You work closely with the local authority and other child-protection professionals to protect children from harm. You rightly challenge other external professionals if the level of care they provide to vulnerable children is not good enough.

Pupils gain valuable insights into a variety of ways of keeping themselves safe. For instance, they have recently been learning about issues relating to appropriate and inappropriate touching. However, of those children I spoke to, only a few could talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe online.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we evaluated the effectiveness of leaders' actions to ensure that pupils achieve the highest standards in writing. We also scrutinised how well pupils achieve across the wider curriculum. Lastly, we focused on how effectively pupils learn about British values and develop their readiness for life in modern Britain.
- Children develop their writing skills well in the early years. The teaching of phonics is strong, and you link this successfully to nurturing pupils' emerging writing skills. You ensure that from the earliest stages children enjoy writing and practise their skills regularly.
- Learning is planned well, and teachers now use their good subject knowledge to challenge the most able writers. For example, pupils in Year 1 were writing informative fact sheets about Arctic animals using some very adventurous vocabulary. However, your work to ensure that pupils can achieve the highest standards in writing is not yet fully developed. You are aware that more needs to

be done to ensure that a greater proportion of pupils achieve highly in writing.

- The wider curriculum provides exciting opportunities for pupils to develop their thinking. In science, for example, investigations are carefully planned to develop pupils' ability to observe and record experiments accurately. For instance, during the inspection, pupils investigated the properties of ice, and successfully observed what happened to it under different heat sources and when floated in different solutions.
- You are rightly proud of your pupils' achievements in swimming. Last year, you ensured that pupils, particularly those in Year 2, exceeded expectations for their age. Additionally, you put your sports premium funding to good use. The extra gymnastics coaching helps pupils develop their physical strength and fitness.
- Pupils' creative achievements are of a high quality. Throughout the school, examples of their strong artistic talents adorn the walls. Pupils are provided with activities that develop their skills in using different media such as watercolours and pastels. Their pictures of the Aurora Borealis were particularly impressive.
- You ensure that pupils develop a strong understanding of British values. For instance, on a recent educational trip to study Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole, pupils learned about respect and tolerance. Imaginative learning opportunities ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Some pupils do not demonstrate a firm understanding of e-safety. For instance, they were unsure of what steps to take to keep their identities secure when accessing the internet. Leaders should strengthen this important area of learning so pupils know how to be safe online.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- more pupils, particularly the most able, achieve the highest standards in writing
- pupils develop a stronger understanding of how to stay safe online.

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

Yours sincerely

Dom Cook
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Together with you, I observed learning across the school. I spoke to pupils and examined their work and progress in their books. Meetings were held with you, and with the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). I met with two members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. I took into account the views of 36 parents, including written responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire. A range of documents was reviewed, including: the school's development plan; leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness; the school's single central record of recruitment checks made on staff; records of pupils' behaviour and attendance; and records of local authority monitoring visits to school.