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Mr David Blackwell
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Dear Mr Blackwell

Short inspection of Springfield Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 1 May 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.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Springfield Primary School has rapidly increased in size. It is now a larger than average-sized primary school. An enhanced resource facility for pupils with autistic spectrum condition opened shortly after the previous inspection. The school is a welcoming, friendly place to learn.

Relationships between adults and pupils are good. You have ensured that pupils enjoy their learning and are well cared for. As a result, pupils are happy and the vast majority of parents are supportive. Parents speak well of the quality of education and care that their children receive. For example, one parent stated that she would highly recommend the school to other parents due to the 'fantastic staff and fantastic pupils who are always polite and learn well'. Another parent explained that she was impressed with the 'approachability and flexibility of the teachers and teaching assistants and their ability to recognise children as individuals'.

You and your staff have created a positive, nurturing and inclusive environment through calm classroom spaces, inspiring displays and a stimulating curriculum. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance, including persistent absence, has improved. They are respectful, pay close attention in class and behave very well. Consequently, pupils are enthusiastic learners. For example, one Year 6 pupil told me how his class were reading the book 'Wonder' as their class text. He explained how his analysis of the central character in the story has helped him to 'think more about other people's feelings and emotions'. Another pupil in Year 4

explained how she enjoyed the creative homework her teacher set because she had an opportunity to, 'create something really imaginative.'

The governing body provides you with effective support and challenge. Governors are knowledgeable and know the strengths of the school and the areas that need improvement. Governors take part in relevant training and are ambitious to develop their effectiveness further. They place a particular focus on the school's support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for disadvantaged pupils. They are aware that recently implemented strategies to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils still need time to demonstrate impact. Members of the governing body visit school regularly to check on the progress of leaders' actions.

During the inspection, you and other leaders discussed with me the progress made by disadvantaged pupils across the school. You explained how you are addressing previous underperformance of disadvantaged pupils by identifying more accurately the barriers for learning. You are ensuring that strategies to provide additional support are more effective by being more focused and regularly evaluated. All staff are involved in additional booster sessions and clubs to enrich these pupils' academic and social and emotional needs. You realise that these measures need more time to demonstrate consistent and sustainable improvement for disadvantaged pupils across the school.

You have dealt effectively with the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. From my scrutiny of pupils' work and observations in lessons as well as discussions with leaders, it was clear that you have improved the teaching and learning of mathematics. There is now a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics across the school. Pupils get regular opportunities to use their skills to solve problems. These problems are often related to real-life situations and pupils are asked to explain their understanding. Pupils are given opportunities to edit and improve their work. However, you agree that across the school the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, can be more effectively challenged to deepen their knowledge and understanding of mathematics.

You have ensured that subject and middle leadership has been developed effectively since the last inspection. As a result, leadership in all areas of the school is now strong. Leaders have accessed effective training, some of which has been brokered by the local authority. Leaders share your vision and drive for continuous improvement. This good quality of leadership has been recognised by the local authority. Consequently, you and several of your leadership team, including governors, have successfully supported colleagues in other local schools to improve.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders have ensured that there is a good culture of safeguarding within the school. Staff and governors keep up to date with training. They know what to do to keep pupils safe. You and your safeguarding team are tenacious in your approach to ensuring that pupils are kept safe and families are well supported. You refer concerns in a timely manner. Staff are vigilant and are prepared to take decisive

and prompt action, when needed, to secure pupils' well-being. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

Pupils say that they are kept safe and are certain that they can talk to adults about any worries they may have. They say that incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are rare but when they do occur staff deal with issues promptly and fairly. Pupils are taught about potential risks and how to stay safe in different situations. These include how to use the internet safely and the dangers when using social media.

Inspection findings

- A focus for the inspection was the quality of the teaching of reading. For at least two years, the progress that pupils made in their reading by the time they left the school at the end of Year 6 has been in the bottom 20% of schools nationally. Leaders reviewed how reading was taught and took a number of actions which have resulted in improved standards. They accessed good-quality training for leadership and staff and introduced new strategies to ensure that the teaching of reading improved. There is now a consistent approach to the teaching of reading across the school. Consequently, standards improved in 2017 and a higher proportion of pupils attained the expected standards at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- Observations of pupils' reading, scrutiny of pupils' books and information shared by leaders indicate that current pupils across the school are making at least good progress in their reading. Nevertheless, the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, could be challenged even further so that more pupils attain the higher standards in reading.
- In 2017, the proportion of children who gained a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year declined. The leader for the early years shared with me compelling evidence which demonstrated that the majority of these children had made good progress from their very low starting points.
- The early years leader explained to me how she has reacted promptly to address the changing needs of the community from which the children who enter the Reception Year are drawn. For example, she has introduced a range of initiatives, including workshops, to work with parents and local nurseries to ensure that children are ready for school. In addition, teachers have adjusted their planning to ensure that children's needs are met more precisely in the first term of their time in school. These strategies are proving successful and greater proportions of current children are on track to achieve a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year.
- Shortly after the previous inspection, the enhanced resource facility was opened. It was clear during the inspection and from my discussions with parents, pupils and staff that the facility is a strength of the school. My scrutiny of pupils' work showed that pupils make good progress across a range of subjects. During our learning walk of the facility, I was able to see that relationships between adults and pupils are nurturing and positive. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to adapt learning to suit the needs of pupils. As a result, pupils are happy in school and enjoy their learning.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are sufficiently and promptly challenged in their learning, particularly in reading and mathematics
- the progress of disadvantaged pupils continues to be closely evaluated in reading, writing and mathematics, to ensure that greater proportions of these pupils attain at least the expected standards for their age.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephanie Innes-Taylor
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you and the deputy headteacher. I also met with the leaders for English, phonics, early years and the lead teacher for the enhanced resource facility. I discussed safeguarding arrangements with the safeguarding team. I spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day and I met with a group of pupils. I met with two members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.

You and I visited classrooms together, including in the enhanced resource facility. I looked at a range of pupils' work. We discussed the progress of different groups of pupils and the school's plans for improvement. I considered the responses of 38 parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I also considered the 21 responses of staff to Ofsted's online survey for them and the 39 responses to the pupils' survey. I scrutinised evidence from a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance, procedures and records for safeguarding and behaviour, information on how the pupil premium is spent and an analysis of attendance and a number of policy documents. I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.