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Mrs Marion Lloyd
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Dear Mrs Lloyd

Short inspection of Longlevens Junior 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 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 lead the school with unwavering determination and care for all aspects of pupils' education. Parents and carers, pupils, staff and governors all have confidence in your leadership. You acted decisively in response to disappointing outcomes in 2016 and targeted the identified areas of weakness with rigour. You work particularly effectively with your team of leaders whom you support to make much stronger contributions to the improvement of teaching. As a result, the progress that pupils make has improved and is now in line with that of other pupils nationally. You and your leadership team continue to use your knowledge of the school's effectiveness to bring about further improvements to teaching, learning and assessment. This is particularly evident in improvements to the teaching of writing.

The school continues to provide a range of exciting learning opportunities and to support pupils' personal development extremely well. This is appreciated by parents and carers, who are mostly positive about the school. For example, one parent stated on Parent View: 'Teachers go above and beyond what is required. A truly fantastic school filled with happy and talented staff.'

Pupils enjoy school and they attend well. Most pupils display exemplary attitudes to learning and show resilience when they find learning difficult. Their workbooks are particularly well presented, demonstrating the pride they take in doing their best.

The school environment is inspiring and promotes high standards of learning. Art is used very effectively to motivate and enthuse pupils, and the quality of work which fills the school's classrooms and corridors is impressive. Pupils told me that they enjoy learning across a range of subjects. They enjoy extending their scientific knowledge through practical activities and the frequent opportunities for learning outdoors. They told me that they appreciate the way in which their learning is 'customised' by teachers in mathematics so that they receive the right level of challenge.

At the previous inspection, leaders were asked to improve the quality of teaching so that the most able pupils made even better progress. Over time, good teaching has led to a high proportion of pupils achieving the highest standard in reading, writing and mathematics. You recognise that, in some classes, the most able pupils still require more challenge in their writing. We agreed that the progress of the most able and middle-ability pupils in writing would be a line of enquiry for the inspection.

At the start of the inspection, we agreed three further lines of enquiry. These were: how well leaders are improving progress for disadvantaged pupils, especially the most able, in reading; how effectively all leaders, including governors, are raising standards of teaching, learning and assessment; and how effectively leaders make sure that pupils are safe and maintain high levels of attendance. These aspects are reported under 'Inspection findings' and 'Safeguarding.'

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are maintained to a high standard. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of current safeguarding practices. Records show that they are swift to refer to safeguarding leaders in school when concerns arise. Leaders work with outside agencies and liaise quickly to arrange support for pupils and families. Furthermore, leaders act with persistence if they are not satisfied with the responses to their requests for help. Pre-employment checks on staff are thorough. Governors have good understanding of safeguarding requirements and use their expertise well to monitor documentation and to check how well staff understand how to keep pupils safe.

Pupils said that they feel safe in school and that bullying is extremely rare. They trust adults to resolve any bullying or poor behaviour quickly and fairly. They feel well informed about how to stay safe on the internet and appreciate the school's work to help them stay safe when cycling or near roads. Leaders' work to ensure good school attendance is effective. Rates of attendance are higher than the national averages. Additionally, the number of pupils who miss school regularly has declined and remains low.

Inspection findings

- In previous years, the most able disadvantaged have not made as much progress as other pupils in reading. I heard a number of pupils read and talked with them about their reading. I reviewed the school's information about current pupils' progress, as well as their workbooks, and I spoke to the leader responsible for progress in reading.
- Leaders have reviewed and improved the quality of teaching of reading, particularly for the most able pupils. As a result, pupils develop a wider vocabulary, which supports their understanding of more challenging texts. In addition, teachers ask more challenging questions, which require pupils to draw inferences and make predictions. Pupils benefit from reading frequently with adults and are motivated by the school's 'reading treat', which rewards them for regular reading out of school. Teachers assiduously use their assessments of pupils' reading to plan tasks which challenge the most able readers. Pupils' workbooks and the school's information on current pupils' progress show that the most able disadvantaged pupils now make strong progress in reading.
- In recent years, the progress that middle- and high-prior-attaining pupils make in writing has not been as strong as in reading and mathematics. It has also been below that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points. We visited lessons together, and reviewed pupils' work and information from the school about current pupils' progress. I also met with the leader responsible for progress in writing.
- You have implemented a number of improvements to the teaching of writing. For example, you have improved the quality of texts used to inspire pupils' writing and enrich their vocabulary. Pupils write for a range of purposes and in a range of styles. Teachers plan wide-ranging opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum; this helps pupils to master more complex grammatical structures and punctuation. Since the beginning of the year, pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 write with increasingly imaginative word choices and sentence structures. For example, Year 6 pupils demonstrated their ability to use language judiciously when writing stirring, persuasive speeches to deliver.
- Pupils' spelling and handwriting are of a high standard across the school, and teachers provide precise feedback on how pupils can improve their work. Pupils edit and redraft their work extensively and, as a result, make good progress over time. However, in some classes, progress is not as strong for the most able pupils and those of middle ability. This is because opportunities to write at length and to the highest standard are sometimes not frequent enough. This inconsistency in teachers' expectations prevents this group of pupils from making rapid progress in writing.
- You have reorganised leadership roles and responsibilities and provided strong professional development for subject leaders. They, in turn, have introduced new methods for teaching reading, writing and mathematics, and make regular checks to ensure that teachers use these methods consistently. Your reorganisation of roles includes a more definitive role for team leaders. These leaders also make regular checks on teachers' plans and use information about pupils' progress to

help teachers plan tasks which challenge and engage pupils. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) carefully evaluates the needs of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and makes sure that the support they receive is tightly focused.

- Governors are committed and knowledgeable about the strengths of the school. They challenge school leaders about the progress pupils make and use their visits to school to provide them with information about the impact of leadership and their funding decisions. However, the school's improvement plans do not help governors to measure improvements for groups of pupils, or to hold leaders to account for meeting targets. This is because the plans lack detailed expectations and outcomes.
- Leaders' plans sometimes lack precision about how actions are expected to improve pupils' outcomes across the school. This prevents all leaders, including governors, from being able to target their monitoring activities effectively. This limits leaders' effectiveness and slows the progress of some pupils, including the most able.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide pupils of middle ability and the most able with appropriately challenging tasks so that pupils' progress in writing continues to improve
- plans for improvement identify precisely how leaders' actions will improve the quality of teaching and, consequently, outcomes for 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 Gloucestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Claire Mirams
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke with parents at the start of the school day. I held meetings with you and your leadership team. We reviewed your plans for improvement, information on current pupils' progress and your own evaluation of the school's performance. We conducted learning walks and heard pupils read together. I also met with members of the governing body and scrutinised minutes of governing body meetings.

I met with leaders who are responsible for standards in mathematics, writing and

reading, and reviewed records of their checks on teaching. I met with a group of pupils and discussed their viewpoints on the curriculum, behaviour, bullying and keeping safe, including online. I scrutinised various safeguarding records and current information about school attendance. I spoke to a representative of Gloucestershire local authority.

I also considered 114 responses to the survey for pupils, 36 responses to the staff survey and 72 responses from parents to the online survey, Parent View.