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Mrs Lynne Gerver
Mickleover Primary School
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Dear Mrs Gerver

Short inspection of Mickleover Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 June 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 your 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. Under your leadership, senior leaders form a cohesive team that knows the school well. This has contributed to the positive, caring school ethos that is shared by pupils, staff, parents and carers and the governing body. The staff are enthusiastic and committed to continued improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. You have developed collaborative networks with other schools, and this approach is helping to develop the expertise of leaders, teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils I spoke with were overwhelmingly positive about their learning and experiences at school. They particularly enjoy the themed days and weeks in which they take part. The pupils were particularly excited about the forthcoming 'world of work' week. They brimmed over with excitement about the various visitors coming in and the activities they will be doing. They feel that work is interesting and is usually at the right level for them although several said they 'really like hard work' and would like additional challenge in mathematics.

Governors speak knowledgeably about the school and are rightly proud of the community 'feel' and ethos that are evident around the school and in the actions of pupils and staff. Governors feel confident to challenge leaders about aspects of the school's performance. For example, when leaders identified a fall in outcomes in mathematics they were quick to question it and check that improvements had been made.

You and your senior leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. You understand your responsibilities at whole-school and key-stage levels. Leaders' and governors' plans for school improvement prioritise raising pupils' outcomes. However, these plans are not precise enough and that makes it difficult for leaders to fully assess the impact of their actions. Leaders and teachers do not use the school's in-house assessment system for measuring pupils' progress and attainment to its full effect. This further inhibits their assessment of the impact of their improvement actions.

A theme repeated by pupils, staff, parents and governors is that the school is a positive place to learn, work and be part of. Staff morale is high, and all 23 members of staff who responded to the staff survey are proud to work at Mickleover Primary School. The survey also highlights that staff feel well supported by you and your leadership team and enjoy working at the school. This feeling of community and a shared responsibility for every pupil was evident in the way in which pupils respond to one another. For example, at lunchtime, older pupils take responsibility for younger ones, sitting with them and pouring their drinks. They told me that this is an expectation but one they are proud to meet.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are maintained effectively and checked regularly by the safeguarding team. Staff carefully record any concerns, and there are processes in place to ensure that these are acted on.

Pupils are confident that adults will help them if needed and they feel safe. Pupils spoke with good knowledge about their personal safety, in terms of 'stranger danger', for example, and their understanding of the ways they can stay safe online. They are clear about the differences between bullying and friends falling out and they are adamant that there is no bullying in school. One pupil said that school is very 'inclusive because we all look after each other'. The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, stated that their children feel safe. One parent said that the school goes 'above and beyond to ensure my child is safe and feels cared for'.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have identified the need to teach mathematics in a consistent manner across the school to deepen pupils' understanding of different concepts. There is evidence that the school's new approach to the teaching of mathematics is being used across all classes. In some cases, teachers are not yet using their assessments of pupils' progress and attainment to identify clearly the next steps in pupils' learning. As a result, some pupils, particularly the most able, do not move onto more challenging work as quickly as they might.
- Leaders have acted to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Rates of pupils' progress in writing have increased. Pupils are given

many opportunities to write for extended periods in English lessons and in other subjects. Pupils' lower attainment in writing at the end of key stage 2 in 2016 has been addressed, and writing outcomes for 2017 were above the national averages at both key stage 2 and key stage 1.

- Leaders have identified that boys' outcomes in English sit below those of girls. A wide range of strategies and interventions is in place to address this. For example, the use of technology and the range of texts have been reviewed to increase the engagement of boys. Current school information shows that, in the majority of year groups, differences between the attainment and progress of boys and girls are diminishing.
- Leaders have introduced reading strategies to promote higher-order reading skills and increase the proportions of pupils achieving greater depth in reading, which is a key priority. Pupils I spoke to could confidently read to me and were able to explain the 'DERIC' strategy that the school has introduced.
- During the learning walk around the school, pupils were seen to be working diligently, without direct adult supervision. They were able to discuss how their work is improving their understanding of complicated vocabulary. Nevertheless, work in pupils' books shows that teachers do not consistently ensure that the most able pupils move onto more challenging work at an early enough opportunity.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- their plans for school improvement are precise in identifying who is responsible for overseeing actions, set clear timescales and demonstrate a clear view of the anticipated impact so this can be measured accurately
- teachers use assessment more effectively to guide the next steps in pupils' learning, particularly in mathematics, so that all pupils, and particularly the most able, make good or better progress from their starting points.

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

Gayle Bacon
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met you and the assistant headteachers and shared with you my key lines of enquiry. I also met with the special educational needs coordinator, school business manager, three members of the governing body, pupils from Year 5, and parents at the start of the school day. I considered the 60 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, a letter from a parent and responses to surveys of pupils and staff. We visited a sample of classes in the school together, spending a short time in each, and I looked at a sample of pupils' work with you and the assistant headteachers.

I viewed a range of documents, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, plans for further development, information about how the pupil premium funding is spent, minutes of meetings of the governing body and a number of policy documents, including those for safeguarding.