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Dear Mrs Akers

Short inspection of Robert Piggott CofE Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 26 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 the school was judged to be good in January 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Despite changes to staffing and working practices, you and your head of school have worked tirelessly with staff and governors to ensure that all pupils are taught well and that they make good progress across the school. You have built a dedicated team that strives to provide pupils with the best possible start to their education. This was the view of many parents, and was reflected in the comment made by one parent who wrote on free-text: 'I feel that Robert Piggott Infant School has given my daughter the best possible start to her education. She is inspired every day. This year she has learned about an amazing range of things from number bonds to big band music, from diagraphs to dolphins.'

You have addressed the issues for improvement identified in the previous inspection report so that pupils make good and sometimes better progress, particularly in writing. However, you have not been complacent, and have constantly looked for new ways to make the quality of education exciting and enjoyable for pupils. You took the opportunity offered by the revision of the national curriculum to review the way in which subjects are taught. You have extended the provision for access to the forest school so that all pupils have the opportunity to learn valuable skills outside of the classroom. You have also further improved communications and working partnerships with parents. Consequently, the curriculum that you offer is stimulating and inspiring for pupils. It allows them to use a variety of skills, including numeracy and literacy, when learning other subjects, and so reinforces and develops these skills. One parent commented: 'This is a remarkable, vibrant school that educates

pupils brilliantly and that serves as a crucial hub for the wider community. We feel very lucky that our daughter attends this school.'

From a pupil's point of view, they could not be in a better place. They are warmly welcomed into a delightful learning environment where they feel safe, happy and well looked after. Staff take care to create bright and attractive learning areas where pupils' work is displayed, reflecting the high value staff place on pupils. All pupils are made to feel that they matter, regardless of background. The school's values of grace, courage and friendship permeate all aspects of the school's work, and are embedded in the way in which adults model these values to pupils. Pupils love their school and talk enthusiastically about their learning and their teachers. They say that adults help them and will take time to sort out any problems or difficulties that they may have. Pupils particularly enjoy the opportunities offered through outdoor learning, where they learn about the world around them.

You and your head of school know the school well. You have an incisive understanding of what the school does well and where further improvements are needed. Your plans for development are tightly focused on continuing to raise standards in writing and mathematics through establishing clear actions for improvement. You know that, although the quality of writing has improved, more can be done to improve pupils' basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation, and that the presentation of work in pupils' books can be improved. You also know that there remain some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders and governors have created a culture whereby the safety and well-being of all pupils underpins their work. There are meticulous systems in place to ensure that pupils are safe in school. Leaders carefully check the identity of all visitors to the school site, and all necessary checks are made on staff, governors and all others who work with pupils. The school business manager maintains a highly effective system to record all training undertaken by staff and governors relating to pupils' health, safety and welfare. By doing this, she ensures that all staff and governors are fully up to date with new initiatives.

In addition to providing annual safeguarding training for all staff, you provide regular updates so that all staff are fully trained in what to do should they have a concern about a child. Staff say that they feel fully confident that they know the correct procedure to be followed in the event of a concern. The school's policy and procedures for safeguarding are robust and fit for purpose. All records are detailed and thorough. You have established good relationships with other professionals to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families receive the right support in a timely way.

Governance of safeguarding is diligent. Governors visit the school regularly to check that all procedures for keeping pupils safe are followed. They keep fully up to date by attending training, and are in a strong position to ensure that the school is

compliant with the most recent guidance. There are very few reported incidents relating to pupils' behaviour, and pupils' attendance is above average. All parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, agreed or strongly agreed that their children are happy and safe at school and well looked after.

Inspection findings

- In addition to evaluating the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils, we also agreed to follow these key lines of enquiry:
 - the extent to which the school has maintained the high standards set in previous years
 - how good teaching is and how the wider curriculum helps pupils to reach high standards
 - the impact of leaders, managers and governors in sustaining high standards, and the action that they have taken to continually improve the quality of education.
- For the past two years, pupils reached standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. According to provisional data held by the school, standards have dipped slightly in 2018 but remain above average, representing good progress for pupils. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics is consistently above average, and this provides them with a secure base to further develop their reading skills. Pupils write across a range of subjects and have plenty of ideas that they express with increasing fluency. They have a wide vocabulary that they use to engage the interest of the reader. However, they do not all have a good enough grasp of basic skills, including neat handwriting, spelling and punctuation, and this slows the progress that they make.
- In mathematics, pupils carry out a lot of practical activities that are meaningful and related to real-life situations. There are increasing opportunities for them to use their number skills to solve written problems and to develop their reasoning and understanding. Consequently, pupils across the school make good progress. Work in pupils' books shows that they do not always present their work neatly, and this can lead to errors both in spelling and calculations.
- As a result of the review of the curriculum, teachers provide interesting and imaginative activities for pupils, and this inspires pupils to want to learn. In the Reception classes, children have a range of activities that enable them to share, take turns and learn from each other. For example, a small group of boys created a shelter for an imaginary rabbit to protect it from enemies. They worked together as a team to find materials, including logs and stones, that would make the shelter bigger and stronger. They discussed where these materials would be best placed to strengthen the shelter. They worked with resilience and perseverance until they were satisfied that their project would be successful
- In key stage 1, teachers provide activities that link subjects together to ensure that pupils gain a better understanding of what they are learning. Teachers are skilled at questioning pupils, probing and developing their understanding and extending their knowledge. Lessons are well planned. For example, in a Year 2

geography lesson, pupils created an imaginary seaside plan linked to their current topic. They used coordinates to plan the location of the various items, such as lighthouses, ice-cream vans and cafes. They had to decide which of the things found at the seaside were natural or man-made. This activity called for a variety of skills, including aspects of geography, science, art and mathematics, as it developed pupils' understanding of time and place.

- The relationships between teachers and pupils are warm, and teachers encourage pupils to do their best. Consequently, pupils enjoy responding to teachers' questions and have the confidence to take risks and 'have a go'. This was seen in a Year 1 class where pupils cut out illustrations of fish that they measured to compare their lengths. The teacher made sure that pupils gained in their knowledge and understanding of how the biggest fish was not necessarily the longest. However, not all teachers provide pupils with enough guidance about how they need to present their work, and this leads to some untidy work that lacks a systematic approach to recording.
- Leaders, managers and governors have worked closely together to continue to provide a good quality of education for pupils. Through a programme of monitoring and support, you and your head of school have ensured that teaching remains good across the school. You have ensured that leaders are skilled and able to play a key role in supporting you to lead on key improvements. Leaders know the school well, and they ensure that staff follow agreed policies. For example, the head of school introduced mixed-ability teaching, and she offers guidance and support to other staff to help them to implement this change. Leaders carry out joint lesson visits and offer feedback to staff to help them to become even better teachers. Teachers benefit from training that is often carried out across the federation, so that pupils have continuity of provision when they transfer to the junior school.
- Governors visit the school regularly and know the school well. They review their own working practices to ensure that they provide a good level of professional challenge to school leaders. Governors play a significant role in ensuring the appointment of high-calibre staff to replace those who move on or who retire. They receive high-quality reports from the headteacher, and this gives them a good overview of the performance of the school. Governors' minutes show that they are well organised and meet all their statutory responsibilities, including those related to safeguarding pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching is consistently strong across the school
- pupils learn and apply basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation and that pupils' work is presented to a high standard.

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 Wokingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Joy Considine
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I visited all classrooms with you to see how well pupils were learning. I looked at work in pupils' books, and listened to six pupils from Year 2 reading. I spoke to pupils in classrooms, and held a more formal meeting with a group of Year 2 pupils to seek their views. I met with you and other school leaders. I held meetings with governors and a representative from the local authority. Among the documents that I scrutinised, were your own evaluation of the school and your plans for further improvement. I took into account the views of parents by analysing the 46 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and by taking into consideration the written responses on free-text.