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Mr Richard Vaughan  
Headteacher  
Twyning School  
Twyning Green  
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Dear Mr Vaughan

### **Short inspection of Twyning School**

Following my visit to the school on 17 July 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 June 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 provide calm and purposeful leadership that allows staff around you to develop their skills well. You have ensured the character and ethos of this small village school has been maintained at the same time as making changes to senior and middle leadership roles.

Pupils make good progress across the curriculum and attain well at the end of key stage 2. They are confident, articulate and well prepared to move on to secondary school when they finish Year 6. You introduced a new behaviour policy last year that gives pupils consistent recognition for their positive attitudes. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school site. Your staff model good relationships between each other. This sets the tone for pupils, who typically have respectful relationships with their teachers. Pupils particularly value the many sporting opportunities that are open to them at school, such as handball at lunchtime. These make a strong contribution to pupils' good health and well-being.

At the previous inspection you were asked to make sure teachers intervene quickly in lessons to help pupils and so maintain the momentum of their learning. Along with your senior teacher, you are developing a new approach to providing feedback to pupils about their work. Teachers now identify pupils' misconceptions swiftly and step in during lessons to support them successfully. You were also asked to give

pupils more practise at producing extended pieces of writing. Pupils' work demonstrates your success in this area. Pupils regularly write at length. Teachers ensure that this writing is purposeful and often addressed to a real audience. For example, pupils recently wrote to you to express detailed opinions about mobile phone use in school.

Pupils' progress in mathematics has been around the national average consistently in recent years. You are ambitious to improve pupils' progress in this subject so it matches the above-average progress pupils made in writing last year. Teaching is helping most key stage 2 pupils make better progress in mathematics. However, your efforts have been more successful in Year 5 than Year 6. Two years ago, a smaller proportion of Year 1 pupils than seen nationally were successful in the phonics screening check. Since then, you have improved phonics teaching in Year 1, and promoted reading effectively for older pupils. A large proportion of pupils now attain the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.

Children in the early years settle quickly and enjoy being at school. Teachers provide a stimulating environment for them and nurture their curiosity well. You have established good communication with local pre-school providers, but you recognise that deepening these links would improve children's transition when they start at school.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and your records are suitably detailed. You are diligent in making sure that effective policies and practices are in place to keep pupils safe. All staff are checked thoroughly before they are appointed to make sure they are suitable to work with children. Even though you make very few referrals to social services, you maintain a high level of vigilance. Your staff are well trained and so they are able to identify any signs of abuse. Staff training is regularly updated. As a result, staff are kept aware of particular risks or of changes to safeguarding legislation.

Pupils feel safe and secure at school. Parents agree wholeheartedly. Pupils say that bullying is rare and other inspection evidence confirms this is true. Pupils receive suitable guidance about potential risks in the local area and so they understand how to stay safe in a variety of situations. For example, pupils have recently been alerted to the dangers of swimming in rivers. Over the last year, you have made parents aware of the risks posed by pupils' use of the internet. Consequently, pupils and parents are well aware of the steps they should take to protect themselves when they are online.

Pupils describe you and your staff as caring and approachable. They know they can speak to their teachers if they are concerned about their welfare. You have established an open culture at the school that promotes safeguarding effectively.

## Inspection findings

- Senior leaders are able to track the progress of individual pupils closely in this smaller-than-average-sized school. They provide governors with accurate information about pupils' attainment. Consequently, governors have a good understanding of the performance of the school. They use this information to challenge senior leaders rigorously. For example, when key stage 2 pupils' progress in writing dipped two years ago, they instigated an action plan which led to a rapid recovery in this area.
- To decide if the school remained good, the first key line of enquiry focused on mathematics teaching. Key stage 2 pupils' progress in mathematics was in line with the national average in 2016 and 2017. A new leader of mathematics has established clear curriculum objectives this year and provided training for teachers. As a result, teachers have successfully introduced more reasoning and problem-solving activities into their lessons. Pupils have risen to this challenge well. Pupils in Year 5 have made stronger progress this year, but information supplied by the school shows that Year 6 pupils have attained similar outcomes to previous years. Some pupils have not developed a wide enough range of approaches to solving mathematical problems and so this has hindered their progress.
- The second key line of enquiry centred on the development of pupils' reading skills. In 2016, Year 1 pupils' phonic knowledge was not developed sufficiently. Senior leaders subsequently provided further training for staff in phonics teaching. This raised the quality of phonics teaching and has helped more pupils to reach the expected standard by the end of Year 1. As they progress through the school, pupils are successfully encouraged to read widely. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, are able to describe a wide range of authors and styles of writing. They read with confidence and enjoyment. Pupils were proud to show their reading records to the inspector to illustrate the amount of reading they do at home and the substantial involvement of their parents. Even so, pupils have not fully developed their higher order reading skills, such as making inferences and skim reading.
- The final key line of enquiry concerned the provision for children in the early years foundation stage. The majority of children start school with skills typical for their age. In recent years, the proportion of pupils that reach a good level of development by the end of Reception Year has been at least in line with or above the national average. During this year, staff have refurbished the outdoor space used by Reception children. The introduction of more construction toys for children to use was inspired by the building projects currently taking place in the local village. This has captured children's imaginations. Children have a wealth of opportunities for mark making and for recognition of numbers. Teachers have introduced a new system for recording and assessing the development of children's skills. Staff use the system well to communicate with each other and parents now receive timely information about children's progress.
- Teachers have developed good links with pre-school providers in the village. As a result, transition arrangements are effective. Nevertheless, a growing number of children are coming to the school with difficulties in speech and language

development. Senior leaders recognise the importance of identifying these children's needs early so they can be helped as soon as they arrive at school.

- The great majority of parents who replied to the Parent View questionnaire strongly support the school. One parent's comment was typical: 'Twyning is a very caring and community-based school, where it is clear the children come first in decisions made and the school supports them in every aspect of their personal and academic development.'

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are encouraged to use a broad range of techniques when they attempt to solve problems in mathematics
- teachers receive more training to help them develop pupils' higher order reading skills
- links with local pre-school providers are developed further so that early years staff have a deeper understanding of the needs of individual children when they join the school.

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

Paul Williams  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I held meetings with you, senior and middle leaders, the vice chair of the governing body and two other governors. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I spoke with pupils from the school council and the sports council. I spoke with many other pupils informally. I made observations of learning in all classes and looked at examples of pupils' work. I scrutinised documentation from the school on a range of matters, including safeguarding. I took account of 37 responses from parents to the Ofsted online survey Parent View, two emails and comments from several parents at the school gates. I also considered responses from 57 pupils and 14 staff to the Ofsted online surveys.