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Mrs Carly Luce
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Dear Mrs Luce

Short inspection of Lydiard Millicent CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 September 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 predecessor 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. Effective teaching over time has produced consistently good outcomes. Pupils' attainment in all subjects is generally close to, or above, that of pupils nationally. A high proportion of pupils achieve higher standards.

You work closely with leaders, including those at Ridgeway Farm CE Academy where you are also the headteacher. You make effective use of their skills to enable you to evaluate teaching. As a result, you have a good understanding of the school's key priorities. For example, you have taken steps to improve teaching in mathematics at key stage 2, following a decline in attainment in 2017. You have also improved the teaching of reading at key stage 1. Your actions are paying dividends. Pupils are now better able to apply their reasoning skills in mathematics to solve a range of problems. Pupils are also developing their higher-order reading skills and comprehension. Your latest assessment information and pupils' work confirm that good teaching leads to the vast majority of pupils achieving well in all subjects. However, you do not routinely make the most effective use of the information that you hold about pupils. As a result, teaching for pupils working at standards below those expected for their age does not consistently help them to catch up.

Staff feel well supported by you and other leaders, which makes them feel respected and valued members of the school. Governors play an active role in school improvement. They ask searching questions and routinely visit the school,

which helps them to evaluate the effectiveness of your actions.

Pastoral provision is strong. You form close partnerships with pupils and their families, which ensures that adults in the school have a keen awareness of pupils' social and emotional needs. This helps you to implement appropriate support, particularly for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The additional help you provide is removing some barriers to pupils' learning and improving their engagement. However, it is not yet having sufficient impact on pupils' academic progress. As a result, pupils continue to work at standards lower than might be expected for their age.

Adults form caring and supportive relationships with pupils. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and are keen to learn. They typically comment: 'Teachers help you, but they don't give you the answers, they help you to unravel the clues.' Pupils know what is expected of them and, consequently, their behaviour in and out of lessons is impeccable. They respond politely and respectfully to instructions and settle to work without delay.

The majority of parents are overwhelmingly positive about the caring and positive ethos at the school. I was told, for example, 'I am literally over the moon with the school,' and 'The headteacher is wonderful and sets a great example to teachers.' Many parents also comment favourably on the way that you swiftly deal with their worries or problems. A minority of parents who responded to the online survey would like more information about their children's progress. A small number of parents feel that teaching does not sufficiently challenge their children.

Safeguarding is effective.

All staff understand that they are accountable for keeping pupils safe. You provide relevant updates to safeguarding training for all staff and, as a result, they know the procedures to follow if they have concerns about pupils. You maintain well organised and up-to-date safeguarding records. You keep these securely and routinely follow up your actions to ensure that they are making a difference.

You undertake the necessary checks to ensure that all adults working in the school are safe to work with children. You clearly record these details on the school's single central record. Staff are well trained to keep pupils safe in a range of situations, such as in the event of an emergency or when they are on trips.

The vast majority of pupils, staff and parents who shared their views confirm that behaviour is good at the school. Pupils say that they feel safe and typically comment that there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. A small minority of parents believe bullying is a problem. However, pupils do not believe this to be the case and say that adults swiftly sort out any breaches of the school's behaviour rules.

You support families to understand the importance of good attendance. As a result, pupils attend school regularly. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils

who have SEN and/or disabilities has improved over time. It is generally higher than that of other pupils in the school and pupils nationally.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was to determine how leaders are improving teaching at key stage 1, so that more pupils achieve greater depth in their learning. This is because, in 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving this standard was well below the national average. You have analysed your assessment information to identify how to improve teaching. For example, teachers consistently use probing questions to develop pupils' comprehension. Pupils read suitably challenging books and can work out the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary, such as 'victim' and 'prey'. They use their inference skills to good effect, which enables them to gain a deeper understanding of what they are reading. For instance, a pupil was able to work out and explain what was meant by people 'losing their heads'. In 2018, as a result of good teaching, one quarter of Year 2 pupils achieved greater depth in reading. This was almost double the figure of the previous year. Approximately half of Year 1 pupils achieved greater depth in reading.
- My second line of enquiry was to establish how effectively teaching helps pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to make strong progress and achieve well. This is because, over time, few pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities achieve the standards expected for their age. You, along with your special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), work closely with parents, pupils and staff. This has helped you to gain a good knowledge of the barriers to pupils' learning. As a result, you have implemented specific social and emotional support. Case studies that you presented for some pupils confirm that this extra help is improving their attendance. It is also building pupils' confidence and enabling them to persevere with their learning. You make effective use of additional adults who provide clear instructions and explanations, which help pupils understand what to do in lessons. However, teaching has not yet had sufficient impact on pupils' academic achievement. Consequently, pupils need to make stronger progress to catch up.
- Finally, I wanted to investigate the impact of leaders' actions to improve the teaching of mathematics at key stage 2. This is because pupils' attainment declined between 2016 and 2017 and progress in mathematics was not as strong as in other subjects. You have made effective use of the support provided by the senior education leader for the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust. This has enabled you to evaluate teaching and identify that you wanted to improve pupils' reasoning skills in mathematics. As a result, you have provided training for staff. Teachers model learning carefully so that pupils know what to do. They ask searching questions to assess pupils' understanding and deepen their thinking. Reviews of pupils' learning during the inspection show that pupils are able to apply their reasoning skills consistently well. This allows them to answer instructions such as 'explain how you know' so that they can solve a range of mathematical problems. Effective teaching has improved outcomes in mathematics. At the end of the last academic year, three quarters of pupils across key stage 2 achieved well. Approximately one quarter of pupils achieved higher standards. However, inspection activities reveal that teaching does not consistently pick up when pupils need further support or challenge to achieve

what they are capable of. For example, several pupils who have previously been working at standards below those expected for their age continue to do so.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they use their own information to greater effect to support pupils falling behind in their learning, so that they routinely achieve what they are capable of
- they provide well-focused support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities so that they make consistently strong progress and achieve well.

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

Yours sincerely

Catherine Beeks
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, your deputy headteacher, the SENCo and the subject leader for mathematics. I held separate meetings with the vice-chair of governors and the senior educational leader for the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust. I checked the school's single central record and we discussed your safeguarding procedures. We reviewed the school's latest assessment information and discussed the school's self-evaluation and development priorities. Together, we observed mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5 and looked at pupils' work in books. We jointly reviewed case studies of pupils with SEN and/or disabilities and looked at their work. I heard Year 2 pupils read and held a meeting with six pupils from different year groups, in order to gauge their views of the school. I also spoke with pupils in lessons and at breaktime and lunchtime. I talked to several parents at the beginning of the school day and considered 44 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, along with 18 additional freetext comments. I took account of 16 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and 20 responses to the online pupil survey.