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8 October 2018

Mrs Helen Harper
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Harper

Short inspection of Cam Woodfield Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 26 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 the school was judged to be good in March 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Recently, an unexpected fall in pupil numbers led to the school reducing to five classes. You planned this change with pupils' welfare and achievement at the heart of your decisions. Consequently, although there are now some mixed-age classes, pupils are taught in groups, which support their emotional maturity as well as their learning needs. To strengthen the reorganisation, you have reviewed the curriculum. It is well planned to ensure that pupils are taught skills and knowledge expected for their age.

Your deep commitment to, and respect for, the community the school serves lies at the heart of your leadership. You have been instrumental in developing very supportive links with the junior school so that pupils at both schools benefit from continuity across their primary years. You have developed a staff team who share your commitment and ensure that school is a purposeful and positive experience for the pupils. Parents have great confidence in the school and how their children are taught. A parent typically expressed this as, 'My child comes home buzzing every day about what she has learned.' Pupils enjoy school and behave well. They learn in bright, well-resourced classrooms where their work is proudly displayed.

At the time of the previous inspection, you were asked to increase pupils' achievement in mathematics. You have developed the teaching of mathematics and now support pupils' progress with additional teaching so that they can achieve their potential. Standards have risen year on year. Now more of the most able pupils are

reaching the higher standard in mathematics. Nonetheless, we agreed that reviewing the progress of current pupils in mathematics would still form part of this inspection. This reflects your ambition to strive further to raise pupils' achievement.

You have recently developed the teaching of reading and writing through good professional development for teachers and teaching assistants. Standards in reading have risen considerably this year, with a good proportion of pupils reading at the higher standard. Standards in writing have also risen. However, there are still groups of pupils whose progress in writing is not as strong as in their reading.

The priorities identified in the school development plan for the current year are based on secure self-evaluation. Governors have recently strengthened their skills in strategic planning and are well placed to offer all school leaders support and challenge to take the school forward.

Safeguarding is effective.

Through your own commitment to pupils' welfare, you have placed safeguarding at the heart of the school's work. Staff have regular and effective training. They conscientiously use the school's effective system for recording concerns that a pupil may be at risk. You are confident to seek advice from other agencies to secure support for vulnerable pupils and families. The recent appointment of the parent support adviser means that advice is followed through with additional guidance for parents who seek help. Recently you have focused the work of the parent support adviser on supporting pupils' emotional well-being.

You have ensured that the checks to ensure adults are safe to work with pupils are robust and securely recorded. Governors regularly review this aspect of the school's work and support leaders with health and safety matters.

Parents are highly positive about the welcoming school staff and the nurturing environment the school provides for their children. This is particularly the case for parents of children who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Pupils feel safe in school. They say other pupils are kind. Pupils can sit on the 'friendship bench' and receive help from trained 'playground pals' if they have any problems in the playground. When writing about friendship, a pupil wrote, 'We say "welcome" and "would you like to play with us?"'

Inspection findings

- We firstly reviewed the teaching of mathematics. This was to ascertain if pupils' skills in solving problems and describing their mathematical understanding were consistently well developed. The pupils' workbooks from last year showed that Year 2 pupils had regular opportunities to deepen and develop their understanding of mathematics. This was reflected in the progress pupils made and the higher standards they reached.
- The teaching of mathematics has been supported by a new scheme of work. This has secured teachers' understanding of the expectations of the current

mathematics curriculum. Workbooks show that pupils have a good knowledge of arithmetic. In class, pupils were seen efficiently carrying out an investigation into number facts to identify the patterns when multiplying by 10. Most pupils quickly grasped this concept. Some could have applied this knowledge sooner than was planned and made more progress. You recognise that pupils' opportunities to explain their thinking still need to be further developed for improvements to be built upon.

- Next, we reviewed the teaching of writing. In past years, boys and disadvantaged pupils have not progressed as successfully in reading and writing as they have in mathematics. You have identified that this relates in some cases to specific cohorts of boys where a high proportion had SEN and/or disabilities. Progress in reading is now good. However, even with the much higher standards of writing seen now, boys' writing is not as strong as their reading. Disadvantaged pupils are making secure progress in reading and writing.
- I reviewed boys' writing workbooks from last year and this. They show that teachers help pupils develop punctuation and spelling to good effect. Writing books from last year show that pupils who could write at the expected and higher standard developed their ideas in a clear sequence and used lively vocabulary. Currently, some boys lack the vocabulary and ideas to support them in extending their writing. Teachers promote pupils' interest in writing through well-chosen stories and developing writing across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 2 were seen handling a real fish to suggest adjectives for the writing task. There are instances where both boys and girls have gaps in their vocabulary. However, it is particularly boys who lose concentration in tasks where they lack the vocabulary to contribute their ideas.
- We looked next at the progress of children in early years. You and governors have identified further improving children's progress across the Reception classes as a priority. Standards have fluctuated and have been below national levels over recent years. You sharply analyse the assessments made when children enter the Reception classes. You have accurately identified that the skills of the majority of children are a little lower than those typically found. The most significant gaps for many children are in aspects of speaking, self-confidence and general knowledge, such as the world around them and its communities.
- Children in the Reception class engage willingly in the tasks prepared for them. They learn and play well together. During the inspection, the taught sound of the day was 'm' and staff referred to this sound when reading and writing both inside and outdoors. Children's first attempts in using the sound to write the letter showed that many are at an early stage in their knowledge of reading and writing. Early assessments from last year show the necessity of your plan to focus on increasing children's skills specifically in reading, writing and number. This you did effectively. However, you recognise that the curriculum has been less focused on broadening children's experiences, vocabulary and general knowledge. Consequently, some children still lack language skills and confidence as learners when they move into Year 1.
- Finally, we looked at pupils' attendance. Most pupils attend school well, but in 2017 the proportion who were persistently absent appeared high because of the

extended absence of a few pupils. Last year, the level of persistent absence was much reduced. Currently, attendance is improving for those pupils who previously had poor attendance. This has been achieved by both good engagement with parents and appropriate challenge and support to help them bring their children to school regularly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- action taken to develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics leads to pupils' consistently strong progress across all year groups
- pupils' achievement in writing is strengthened, particularly for boys, by developing pupils' vocabulary so they can express their ideas more effectively
- teachers in the early years plan activities across all aspects of the curriculum which build children's knowledge of the world, language skills and self-confidence.

I am copying this letter to the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Gloucestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Marriott
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher. Together, we made two visits to all classes to see pupils at work. I observed a group of children in Reception reading with their teacher. I reviewed the work in a sample of pupils' books from last year and this. I met with members of the governing body and had a separate meeting with the governor for safeguarding. I considered the quality of the school's self-evaluation and the planned priorities for the coming year. I scrutinised documents relating to the school's safeguarding procedures and spoke to several members of staff to ascertain their understanding of these. I met with a group of Year 2 pupils and spoke to others in their classes and at lunchtime. I spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day and took account of the 43 responses and 17 written comments recorded in questionnaires. I also considered the views of 16 staff expressed in their questionnaire.