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Mrs Ruth Laing
Headteacher
The John Moore Primary School
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Dear Mrs Laing

Short inspection of The John Moore Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 25 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 January 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Following your appointment in January 2018, you quickly identified areas requiring further improvement. Together with strong support from your deputy headteacher and governors, you have taken decisive action to ensure that pupils make faster progress in English and mathematics. Standards in 2018 were high at both key stage 1 and key stage 2. You motivate and inspire staff to develop their skills to increase their effectiveness. Consequently, staff morale is high. There is a shared determination and ambition to raise standards of pupils' achievement still further.

Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school's work. They acknowledge the helpful changes you have brought about to improve their children's education. Since your arrival, parents feel more involved in school life and their children's learning. Changes to the start of the school day, providing more opportunities to talk to you and your staff, are examples of this. Parents say that you have brought 'happiness and sparkle' back to the school. Warm and effective relationships between staff and pupils help to ensure that pupils behave well and enjoy learning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning, which they say is 'fun but challenging'.

You have dealt successfully with the recommendations from the previous inspection by providing a wide range of training for staff to improve teaching. Better teaching is increasing pupils' ability to write in an interesting and engaging way and use

imaginative vocabulary. The clear and timely guidance that teachers give enables pupils to produce good work. The quality of pupils' writing in key stage 2 is much improved and, as a result, most pupils achieved the standard expected of them in 2018. In addition, you have taken effective action to raise the achievement of Year 1 pupils in phonics. By ensuring that teaching meets pupils' needs precisely, most pupils achieve the standard expected for their age and become fluent readers quickly.

A recommendation from the previous inspection was the development of middle leaders. You quickly established new systems to involve middle leaders fully in monitoring teaching and learning. You and your leadership team check carefully the implementation of new strategies to improve teaching. Middle leaders help teachers to plan effectively to meet pupils' varying needs. However, you are aware that sometimes middle leaders' evaluations of pupil's progress are not sufficiently precise. As a result, they are not able to judge which pupils are making weak progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

With your governors, you give safeguarding a high profile. There is a strong culture of vigilance. Policy and practice within school meet statutory requirements. You check that staff follow policies and systems and review them annually. Staff and governors receive appropriate training which enables them to identify possible signs of risk and harm. This includes guidance on how to keep pupils safe from the influence of extremism and radicalisation. Recruitment procedures for appointing new staff follow statutory guidance. The single central record is accurate. You and the governor responsible for safeguarding check the record regularly. Since taking up your post, you have started refining your record-keeping. However, some administrative records relating to safeguarding need further refining. A new system for reporting any concerns about pupils has increased staff confidence in how to identify any signs of possible abuse. Leaders are made aware of any issues promptly and can make early referrals to external agencies if necessary. You are tenacious in following up any referrals until you receive a satisfactory response.

Pupils' attendance is good because of your focus on promoting regular attendance. You follow up any absences diligently. The attendance of the small number of pupils for whom this has been a concern has improved.

You teach pupils how to stay safe, for example through lessons on e-safety. This enables them to understand and appreciate potential risks to their safety, including when working online on the computer. Pupils report that there is very little bullying or poor behaviour in school. They are very clear that the school is a safe and welcoming place. The majority of parents who responded to Parent View believe that the school looks after their children well.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, I met with you to discuss the school's progress since the previous inspection. We agreed the following lines of enquiry: how well leaders are increasing progress rates in writing to enable key stage 2 pupils to reach high

standards, especially boys of middle ability; how effectively phonics are taught in key stage 1 to enable lower-attaining pupils to make good progress in reading; how successfully middle leaders are helping to improve teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility; and how well the school keeps pupils safe.

- You were aware that the progress of pupils' in writing at key stage 2 was not as strong as their progress in reading and mathematics in 2016 and 2017. This was especially the case for boys. The new strategy for teaching writing that you have introduced enables teachers to pinpoint exactly what pupils need to learn next. Lessons build pupils' knowledge well on how to structure their work and how to use sophisticated vocabulary. Concentrating on developing clear, legible handwriting has improved pupils' fluency in writing as well as its presentation. Pupils talk with great pride about their work and identify where they have made noticeable improvements. Boys are particularly motivated to write well through studying high-quality texts that engage their interest. During my visit, we observed Year 6 pupils using vivid vocabulary to good effect when creating atmosphere in their 'suspense' stories. Looking at a range of boys' writing in books, it was apparent that they had made better progress over the past year. In the end-of-key-stage 2 assessments in 2018, most Year 6 pupils reached at least the expected standard for their age and more boys achieved at greater depth than previously.
- Pupils' achievement in the Year 1 phonics screening check declined two years ago and some pupils did not make the progress they should have in 2016 and 2017. In response, you have provided additional training in phonics teaching for teachers and teaching partners. As a result, pupils are more successful in phonics now. Teachers organise the learning of letters and sounds to meet pupils' needs precisely. They assess pupils rigorously to find out where they need additional help to catch up quickly. As a consequence of better teaching, most Year 1 pupils achieved the standard expected of them in 2018. Across key stage 1, pupils read fluently and with obvious enjoyment. They use phonics to read accurately and have a clear understanding of the texts.
- With the support of you and your deputy headteacher, middle leaders have developed a good understanding of what is working well and what needs to improve in their areas of responsibility. They work closely with the governors linked to their subjects and ensure that governors are well informed about teaching. They have grown in confidence and lead new approaches to improve teaching. They monitor teaching regularly and give teachers advice to improve their work. However, they do not evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' progress sharply enough. This would enable them to identify any pupils whose progress needs to accelerate to help to raise achievement further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of administrative records relating to safeguarding are rigorous always
- middle leaders evaluate sharply the impact of teaching on pupils' progress in order to raise achievement further.

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

Sandra Woodman
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher and discussed the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress and improvements since the previous inspection. Together, we observed learning in classrooms and looked at a range of pupils' work in books. We talked to pupils about their work in lessons. I listened to several pupils reading from key stage 1 and met with some key stage 2 pupils to talk about their experience of school life. I visited the playground at lunchtime and talked informally with staff and pupils. I held meetings with middle leaders and with four governors. In addition, I spoke to an external adviser who supports the school. I looked at a range of written evidence, including documents relating to safeguarding and attendance information. I took account of the written comments of 76 parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.