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Mr Daniel Eaton
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Dear Mr Eaton

Short inspection of Leigh Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 2 October 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 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. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection will be a section 5 inspection.

You and your leaders are dedicated to ensuring that all aspects of the school are as strong as they can be. You pursue this aim with determination and focus. As a result of your clearly articulated vision, all pupils are supported extremely well and thrive in your school. Staff, parents and carers, and pupils are fully behind you and your leadership team, in whom they display trust and confidence. Parents value the community feel and nurturing ethos of the school. A parent writing on the Ofsted survey, Parent View, typified the views of many, saying, 'They know the children very well and care about them all.' Parents' contributions to the school are valued. Their feedback is considered carefully. For example, following feedback from parents whose children had gone on to secondary school, modern foreign languages have been further developed in the curriculum.

You have an in-depth knowledge of each pupil's individual strengths and weaknesses. You work closely with all staff to ensure that pupils' needs are fully met. Pupils love their school. They know that their voice is valued and listened to. They are resilient learners who enjoy the challenge provided by teaching which is

well matched to their needs. A pupil told me about solving a mathematics problem. 'I thought I'd got it – I was wrong. But I got there in the end.'

Teachers, support assistants, leaders and those responsible for governance all have extremely high expectations of pupils' achievements and work. Teaching staff demonstrate strong subject knowledge, enthusiasm and skilled questioning; these enable pupils to reach their potential. Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel supported and valued by the leadership team. Teaching across the curriculum is exciting and innovative. Subject-specific knowledge is developed well. However, developing the consistency of pupils' enquiry skills is rightly a focus for you. Currently, the depth of understanding demonstrated in Year 6 does not build sequentially across key stage 2.

You have successfully tackled all the areas for improvement from your previous inspection and strengthened the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Outcomes across the school are high. Pupils' attainment and progress in the 2017 national assessments at the end of key stages 1 and 2 were above the 2017 national averages. Provisional outcomes for 2018 are similarly high. The books of current pupils and school tracking information indicate a consistent pattern of high attainment in relation to age-related expectations across the school. Disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress from their starting points. This progress is often stronger than that of their peers. The attainment gap is closing between this group and other pupils nationally. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported by skilled staff and appropriate learning activities. As a result, they too make good progress across the curriculum from their starting points.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff and governors are trained well in safeguarding pupils and know the key factors that may put pupils at risk. Leaders and governors have ensured that regularly reviewed risk assessments are in place for using the additional space provided by the village green. In this way, they ensure that risks are appropriately managed.

Leaders know the school and the community well and this allows them to spot when things are not as they should be. A wide range of support is available for pupils and their families when needed. This helps to ensure that needs are met, and pupils are kept safe.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we worked closely together and looked at writing across the school. Leaders have been highly effective in raising the standards of writing. Pupils write well at length and for a range of purposes across the curriculum. The rich vocabulary evident in their reading is transferred into their writing and built upon through skilled teaching. A range of punctuation is used correctly and

consistently. Handwriting and presentation have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils across the school form letters carefully and take great pride in their work. Pupils in key stage 2 relish the opportunity to use handwriting pens in their work. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education. A current focus on developing pupils' accuracy with spelling is also helping to broaden vocabulary usage. Pupils told me how they use their weekly spellings in their writing 'because that's the point of it!'

- Opportunities to develop English and mathematical skills across the wider curriculum are plentiful and meaningful. Expectations are also high across the curriculum. You know, however, that in some aspects of the curriculum, such as science, pupils do not fully develop their enquiry skills as they move through key stage 2. Nevertheless, in other successful areas of the curriculum, learning is planned well in meaningful sequences which build inter-related skills as pupils move through the year groups.
- Art is a particular favourite of the pupils. Eye-catching displays already adorn the classrooms. The Year 6 art gallery celebrates a wide range of high-quality artistic skills. Sketch books contain some detailed and careful drawing. Topic books demonstrate excellent work inspired by the study of artists such as Van Gogh and Salvador Dali. The curriculum is extended and developed effectively through a wide range of well-attended school clubs and trips. Particularly memorable for pupils was the key stage 2 trip to Ypres in Belgium which traced the history of young men from the village who fought in the First World War. Pupils told me how well this helped their historical learning to be meaningful.
- During the inspection, I also looked at the effectiveness of governance. Governors are familiar with a wide range of information about the school. They supplement this with regular visits to see things for themselves. As a result, they have a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors conduct regular reviews to ensure additional funds, such as the pupil premium funding, are being spent effectively. They have attended relevant courses and have compared how other schools use funding. Governors link spending to outcomes, ensuring value for money.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- planning to ensure the systematic development of pupils' enquiry skills across the curriculum in key stage 2 is strengthened.

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

Yours sincerely

Deborah Gordon
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, we met regularly together. I also met with members of the governing body and with staff. I spoke to a member of the local authority on the telephone. I reviewed documentation including information about pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. Together, we visited classes across the school. In lessons, I observed pupils learning, looked at their books and spoke to pupils about their work. I had a meeting with pupils to gather their views of the school. I took into account the views of parents I met at the school gate, and considered 53 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 30 free-text responses. I also considered 14 responses to the Ofsted staff survey and 52 responses to the pupil survey.