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Mr Barry Yeardsley
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Yeardsley

Short inspection of Lyndon Green Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 6 November 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. Leaders and staff are successful in realising the ambitions of the school which are set out on the school's website, 'Partnership and communication are vital to achieve success'. Leaders and staff are successful in forging partnerships with other schools, including Colmore Partnership Teaching School Alliance. You and the deputy headteacher provide effective leadership and have gained the respect and trust of pupils, parents, staff and governors.

Leaders and staff have maintained warm and positive relationships with pupils and families. This is an inclusive school where pupils of all abilities achieve well, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The Puffins' class, which is specially resourced provision for pupils who have cognition and learning difficulties, is well managed and remains effective. Pupils of all abilities across the school achieve well and standards are improving. Assessments and pupils' work show that, in relation to their starting points, pupils make good progress in phonics, reading, writing and mathematics. However, some of the most able pupils who make good progress in reading do not do as well as they should in writing. There is scope now to improve the quality of pupils' handwriting and punctuation when they are writing independently.

The previous inspection reported some relative weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics. These are no longer evident. Assessments show that standards have improved markedly and consistently for the last two years. Improvements to the

teaching of mathematics in all parts of the school are helping pupils to achieve well. You and the staff team have also improved opportunities for pupils to work independently during lessons. This too was an area for improvement at the time of the previous inspection.

The school has maintained good teaching in the early years and key stage 1. There are pockets of strong practice and the restructuring of responsibilities to include year coordinators has further enabled teachers to share best practice. One focus for the inspection was how well teachers challenge and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Our joint lesson observations revealed that teachers and classroom assistants set consistent expectations for work and behaviour. Lessons are well planned and resourced. Pupils are well behaved and attentive to their teachers and support staff. Good use is being made of 'working walls' to support pupils' learning. These visual prompts on display in classrooms help pupils find information, key words in English lessons, or methods of calculation in mathematics.

We agreed that teachers could still do more to ensure that pupils' learning is not distracted by too many drawn-out class discussions. Some pupils find it difficult to concentrate for long periods of time during whole-class question and answer sessions. However, where teachers' questioning is sharper, whole-class discussions are very effective. They involve pupils more by making sure that they have time to share and generate ideas or answers. We also saw, and other school-based evidence indicates, that some teachers and support staff make better use of time in lessons, for example by adapting tasks to enable pupils to work effectively in smaller groups. This helps pupils in each group to keep up and make good progress, as well as maintaining a good pace to pupils' learning. There is scope now to build on what is working well in both small-group and whole-class teaching. Workbooks, lessons and assessments show that the most effective teaching extends and challenges pupils to reach higher standards or learn in greater depth.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff vetting is rigorous and includes systematic checks on visitors, volunteers, governors and supply staff. The indoor and outdoor areas are clean, safe and secure. Risk assessments of resources and school on-site and off-site activities are carried out routinely. Safeguarding and child-protection training for all staff is carried out systematically. Staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection and the safety of pupils. You and the staff team work closely with vulnerable or disadvantaged families. Actions taken to reduce persistent absenteeism have been successful. Most parents and staff, rightly, believe that pupils are safe in school.

Inspection findings

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including those in the Puffins' class who have cognition and learning difficulties, do very well. The teaching and support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities across the school are well managed.

Assessments are regularly checked to ensure that teachers and support staff provide the right interventions and tasks for pupils.

- Assessments in the early years classes show improving standards. Good provision has been maintained here. Both indoor and outdoor areas are used well to stimulate and interest the children. Standards are improving in Years 1 and 2. This is reflected in the most recent assessments. The proportion of pupils in Year 1 reaching the expected standard in phonics is in line with the national average and is improving year on year.
- The good start made in the early years and Year 1 is built upon in Year 2. Here again, standards in reading are improving because pupils are being taught well, including consistent methods to break down words into composite sounds when taught phonics. The proportion of pupils reaching the highest standards by the end of Year 2 in reading and mathematics is improving well. These are significant improvements since the previous inspection.
- Most pupils make good progress in writing. An increasing proportion reach age-related standards by the end of Year 2. However, too few reach the higher standard or write in greater depth. Part of the problem is inconsistent handwriting or use of punctuation. Leaders and staff are aware of this and are starting to adopt more consistent ways to teach handwriting and punctuation.
- Leaders and teachers are reducing the differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others. Improved teaching and use of assessment, including more accurate and regular checks on pupils' progress, contribute to this. Targeted programmes for disadvantaged pupils are increasingly being adopted in lessons. However, some of these programmes or interventions work better than others. For example, the SEN coordinator identified more effective ways to teach phonics for pupils who are both disadvantaged and have SEN and/or disabilities. Assessment information and progress measures were used to work out why the progress made by some disadvantaged pupils was stalling. There now needs to be a continued focus on using assessments to diagnose which programmes or interventions work best for disadvantaged pupils across the school.
- The school has maintained good pastoral care and welfare for pupils since the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy school very much and this is reflected in consistently good attendance and much reduced persistent absenteeism. Parents are pleased with what the school provides for their children. Some told me that they moved their children from other schools because of the good reputation you and the staff team have established. Comments that represent the views of most parents include: 'My children love forest school. They get up early and cannot wait to get to school' and 'This is a lovely school and my children are doing really well.'
- The partnerships with other schools help staff to see and share best practice. The school has maintained good teaching and a stimulating and broad curriculum that includes the creative and performing arts, fine art, sport, dance and physical education. This is reflected in the many displays that adorn every classroom wall and corridor.
- While teaching is effective, there are occasions when pupils find it difficult to learn in whole-class sessions if these are too long or drawn out. Most of the small

group work in lessons offers more opportunities for pupils to keep up and learn better. The most effective teaching strikes the right balance between the time given to whole class discussions and teaching in smaller groups.

- There are pockets of strong practice where teachers provide the right level of challenge, particularly for the most able pupils. This is not always the case when teachers do not adapt tasks or extend pupils' learning by offering more challenging work.
- There is effective governance and clear lines of accountability to manage the performance of the headteacher and staff. Governors challenge you and the staff to explain pupils' outcomes. Good governance has been maintained since the previous inspection.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they sustain improvements to pupils' achievement in writing by:
 - making sure that pupils in the Reception and Year 1 classes are taught a consistent form of handwriting
 - adopting more effective ways to teach pupils in Year 2 how best to punctuate their independent and extended writing
 - making sure that the most able pupils who achieve well in reading also reach higher standards in writing
- they continue to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - using assessment information to identify the best interventions to support the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils
 - sharing the best practice that exists in relation to the balance between whole-class and small-group teaching
 - adapting questions and tasks in lessons to challenge and extend pupils' learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and the deputy headteacher throughout the inspection. I also met with four governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. We

visited most classes and the Puffin class. I met with the teacher responsible for managing SEN provision and the Year 1 coordinator. I looked at samples of pupils' work in books and spoke to pupils during lessons. I spoke to some parents at the start of the day and considered the 74 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. I also considered the 23 responses from staff to Ofsted's online questionnaire. I scrutinised the school's improvement plan and leaders' evaluations of the school's work, as well as minutes of governing body meetings and headteacher reports to governors. I analysed national and school assessment information to consider pupils' attainment and progress. I checked staff vetting and safeguarding procedures with the school's office manager. I also met with the school's learning mentor to discuss the school's procedures and arrangements for safeguarding pupils.