

21 November 2018

Miss Elizabeth Brown  
Kyson Primary School  
Peterhouse Crescent  
Woodbridge  
Suffolk  
IP12 4HX

Dear Miss Brown

### **Short inspection of Kyson Primary 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 February 2015.

### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, your leadership team and governors have an accurate view of the school and provide clear direction and effective improvement planning. You have high expectations and this provides a strong sense of purpose which motivates staff and pupils to achieve well. Parents and staff alike recognise the good quality of leadership in your school.

You and your staff have created a welcoming school where all pupils' academic and personal development is equally important. Your staff know pupils and their families well. This, together with the high priority given to supporting pupils' personal development and welfare, continues to be a key strength of your school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive and expressed appreciation for the support given to their children, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

You have maintained the many strengths identified during the previous Ofsted inspection. You continue to ensure that a broad topic-based curriculum keeps your pupils interested. For example, pupils talked with excitement about their history days focused on the period they are studying. Music was cited in the previous inspection report as a great strength and continues to be so, with a high proportion of pupils learning a musical instrument.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about trips, including a residential outdoor pursuits trip. They participate in an extremely wide range of sports and clubs, including archery and pop-up art. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They take great pride in contributing to the school community and exercising democratic choices. Some pupils talked about their responsibilities as school councillors, digital leaders, road

safety leaders and sports councillors. Pupils express their views confidently. Their attitudes to learning are highly positive. This can be seen in their willingness to work together and in the good quality of presentation in books. The quality of handwriting is very high across the school.

You, your leaders and governors have acted decisively to address the areas for improvement cited in the previous inspection report. Targets set for staff are now closely linked to the development needs of the school. Your senior leaders regularly monitor the performance of teaching staff and offer good support and training to ensure that there is continual improvement. Staff value the quality of the support and training they receive. Governors hold senior leaders to account through well-planned, regular visits to the school.

Governors have found resources to equip the outdoor area of the early years to a high standard. It now fully complements the learning planned by staff indoors and is very well used by staff and children. Your early years leader has ensured that the environment is safe, stimulating and versatile.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. As the safeguarding leader, you place a high priority on keeping pupils safe and ensuring that staff are vigilant at all times. You check that records are detailed and accurate. All staff, governors and volunteers receive regular training and information updates and know how to alert leaders to any concerns that they have. Visitors are provided with the necessary information should they have a concern. You work with external agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe and families are well supported. Where there have been concerns, you have been tenacious in following these through.

Pre-employment checks on staff and records ensure that all adults are suitable to work with children. You take all aspects of health and safety seriously and there is good provision for pupils who have medical needs. Governors make regular checks on all aspects of safeguarding and health and safety. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Parents and staff who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, agree that children are safe.

### **Inspection findings**

- My first area of enquiry was about the progress disadvantaged pupils make during key stage 2. This was because, in 2017, this group of pupils did not make as much progress as others nationally. The previous inspection report also asked you to ensure that disadvantaged pupils were helped to reach higher standards by the end of key stage 2.
- Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are generally making good progress from their starting points. They make at least as much progress as their peers.
- The inclusion leader ensures that there is well-matched and wide-ranging support for disadvantaged pupils. The school has well-qualified, highly skilled, specialised additional teaching support staff.

- Leaders make good use of assessment information to adjust provision. They meet regularly with teachers and phase leaders to discuss strategies for supporting any pupils who are falling behind. Communication between class teachers and additional adults is excellent and very well organised. Senior leaders have ensured that class teachers have time to undertake one-to-one sessions with pupils in their classes.
- Leaders monitor participation in sports, clubs, music lessons and other events and support disadvantaged pupils to undertake a full range of experiences. Their participation is as good proportionally as other pupils and a high proportion learn a musical instrument.
- In 2018, the progress of disadvantaged pupils improved and for the first time they attained greater depth and the higher standard in their end of key stage 1 and 2 assessments.
- My second line of enquiry was to ask what leaders have done to improve outcomes for pupils in key stage 1, including the proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in their phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. From a very low base in 2017, key stage 1 outcomes have improved considerably and are now broadly average. However, leaders are not complacent and this remains a high priority in the school improvement plan, because outcomes in mathematics and phonics remain slightly below other subjects.
- Leaders took immediate action to address the decline in 2017. These included: introducing a new method for teaching phonics and beginning this earlier; training for all teaching staff in mathematics; a greater focus on reading, particularly small-group reading; and the use of immediate interventions.
- My third line of enquiry was to ascertain what actions leaders are taking to accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics between key stages 1 and 2. Although progress in mathematics is broadly in line with the progress that pupils make nationally, for the past two years pupils have made less progress in mathematics than in the other assessed subjects. In 2018 this gap closed somewhat. Attainment in mathematics by the end of key stage 2 is now well above the national average.
- Staff have been trained in new approaches to improving pupils' reasoning and problem-solving abilities and given a better understanding of how pupils learn in mathematics. This has led to a more consistent approach across the school. Leaders have invested in a comprehensive suite of mathematics resources and pupils make good use of these to work out problems for themselves. Pupils take responsibility for selecting their own level of challenge. Pupils talked about their enjoyment of the maths challenges. However, in some lessons pupils did not always select appropriately. This meant that there was less success in developing pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Finally, I looked at how well pupils make progress in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics. The school has many strengths, including music, physical education, dance and French. These subjects benefit from specialist teaching. In these subjects, pupils work on challenging tasks and there is a very clear focus on specific language and skills. However, in some of the topic-based lessons, skills are less well developed. In some topic books, work is not matched

closely enough to pupils' needs. Leaders have identified that non-specialist teachers are less confident in assessing pupils' progress in some subject areas.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils develop the relevant skills in topic-based work well matched to their needs
- non-specialist teachers become confident in assessing pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics
- they strengthen pupils' progress between key stages 1 and 2 in mathematics, by continuing to improve consistency in the teaching of reasoning and problem-solving.

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

Yours sincerely

Susan Sutton  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, senior and middle leaders, support staff, parents, governors and your local authority link officer. I visited all classrooms, and looked at pupils' work. I spoke with pupils and observed their behaviour around the school. I reviewed the school's website and documents, including curriculum plans, the single central record of employment checks, child-protection systems, the school's self-evaluation and external evaluations, improvement plans, management monitoring information, pupils' assessment and progress information. I also took account of 140 responses from parents, 94 responses from pupils and 15 responses from staff to Ofsted's online questionnaires, as well as 141 comments from parents by free-text message.