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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



21 November 2018

Mrs Sarah Eaton
Headteacher
Leighfield Primary School
Newtown Road
Uppingham
Oakham
Rutland
LE15 9TS

Dear Mrs Eaton

Short inspection of Leighfield Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 13 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 your predecessor 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. The school joined the Discovery Schools Academy Trust in February 2017. You and the executive headteacher joined the school in November 2017. Since this time, you have accurately analysed the strengths and weakness of the school and have quickly put in place strategies to bring about improvement. You have worked with staff to develop their skills and have been central to driving change and bringing about necessary improvements.

At the last inspection, you were asked to improve the progress that pupils make in mathematics, with a particular focus on developing the confidence of girls. You and the leaders for mathematics have made sure that the development of pupils' mathematical skills is a priority. With support from the trust, you have developed the teaching of mathematics across the school. Teachers ensure that pupils have a good mathematical grounding and fully understand concepts before they are moved on with their learning. As pupils move through the school, their skills and knowledge are built upon systematically to enable them to problem solve and reason with confidence. Input from pupils has been central to changes in classroom practice. Following feedback from pupils, class management systems have been changed to help girls to participate more during lessons.

You were also asked to further improve the quality of teaching. Since your arrival, you have worked together with teachers to ensure that they have a secure understanding of how they can improve. You have provided staff with training to

develop their skills to help pupils make progress. Teachers I spoke with said that this recent professional development has helped them to look at their teaching in a different way and has invigorated them to try different things to make their teaching better.

Staff understand and appreciate the significant changes since the school joined the trust. All those who completed the online staff questionnaire felt that the school had improved since the last inspection. Staff I spoke with said they felt well supported by leaders and the trust. Staff who hold leadership responsibilities said you have empowered them to have greater involvement in the development of their subject across the school.

Most pupils join the school achieving at or above the age-related milestones. Occasionally, teachers' expectations of pupils are not high enough and, as pupils move through the school, some are not challenged to achieve at greater depth or the higher standards that they are capable of. In writing, some boys are not challenged effectively, and they do not make as much progress as they should.

Pupils are happy, enthusiastic and articulate. They enjoy coming to school and are more than willing to talk about their learning. Pupils believe that their teachers encourage them to challenge themselves. They appreciate choosing their own challenge task in their lessons but know that teachers will make sure they are working on the right task. They say that teachers provide them with interesting opportunities to learn across the curriculum. They particularly enjoy science and the chance to carry out experiments. For example, one pupil explained how they learned how to decontaminate water by sifting, filtering and heating.

Pupils say there are very few incidents of poor behaviour and, if anyone falls out, staff deal with incidents quickly. Staff use the 'behaviour ladder' consistently to promote positive behaviour. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in a way that is appropriate to their age. For example, children in Reception explained how to cross the road safely, while older children explained the dangers of building sites and around railway tracks. Pupils understand the potential dangers of social media and online gaming.

Teachers provide pupils with many opportunities to learn outside the classroom. This includes participation in the Forest Schools programme. Pupils participate in many sporting activities, and the school has achieved the School Games award at gold level. Staff organise trips and visits to enhance the curriculum, for example by visiting different religious centres or the National Space Centre.

The local advisory board has a good understanding of the school's areas for development. Its members are confident in using assessment information to ensure that the school's areas for development are improving and that pupils make better progress than they have made in previous years.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and the designated safeguarding leaders have a secure overview of safeguarding at the school. Together with the trust representative for safeguarding, you have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You have ensured that staff receive regular training and briefings in safeguarding procedure. You provide regular updates for staff about vulnerable pupils.

Staff in different roles pass on concerns about pupils and you and the other designated safeguarding leaders record these carefully, using the school's systems. Thorough records show that you follow up safeguarding concerns promptly and seek external support when necessary. While there are very few safeguarding concerns at present, you and your staff are vigilant and know that concerns or incidents could happen at any time.

Inspection findings

- You and the staff have responded quickly to the fall in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics in 2018. You have introduced the trust's 'No Limits' approach to developing teaching and learning, focusing initially on pupils' acquisition of knowledge and developing effective learning journeys for pupils. Your assessment information shows that attainment is rising, and pupils are making stronger progress than they have made in the past.
- You and the leadership team have high ambitions for pupils and are aware that some pupils should be making more progress than they are making. Together with subject leaders, you have developed teachers' understanding of how pupils learn, and how to structure learning. Teachers are providing pupils with targeted support to enable them to make the progress they are capable of.
- Since your appointment, you have introduced an assessment system to track the attainment of pupils through the school. You and the leadership team monitor the progress of pupils to ensure that pupils' attainment from the early years is built on into key stages 1 and 2.
- Teachers are now using assessment information more sharply to ensure that pupils make strong progress. Together with teachers, you identify those pupils who begin to fall behind. Teachers quickly rectify gaps in learning, so pupils continue to make progress.
- Pupils' workbooks show that teachers frequently provide pupils with appropriate challenge. Teachers assess pupils' understanding carefully and move them on with their learning. However, occasionally, teachers' expectations of pupils are not ambitious enough and some pupils who could achieve at greater depth or the higher standard are not challenged to achieve more.
- Leaders, teachers and governors are aware of the historical gender imbalance in pupils' outcomes and have recognised that this continues to be an area of focus. You and the staff have redesigned the curriculum to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. The engagement of all pupils has been at the heart of this change

and has driven the curriculum content.

- You have analysed the possible reasons for the gender imbalance across the school. This has included speaking with pupils to understand why some aspects of the curriculum have not produced high levels of engagement. Despite your attempts to understand and reduce the gender imbalance, the school's own assessment information shows that the proportion of boys working at the school's expected standards in writing in some year groups is below that of the girls.
- Teachers use the wider curriculum to provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to develop their skills across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 2 were using their geographical skills to write directions to London landmarks.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers' expectations of pupils are sufficiently high to enable more pupils to achieve at greater depth or the higher standard
- a greater proportion of boys achieve the expected standard in writing.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Rutland Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Helen Williams
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and the executive headteacher. I spoke with the trust adviser for governance and the chair of the advisory board. I spoke with the mathematics and English leaders, the early years leader and the deputy headteacher. I spoke with a group of pupils from Reception to Year 6, as well as with pupils in lessons. You and I toured the school together and observed learning taking place during the morning.

During our tour of the school, I scrutinised a selection of pupils' workbooks. I examined a range of the school's documentation, including the self-evaluation document, improvement plan and documents relating to safeguarding. I considered published and internal information about pupils' attainment and progress.

I considered the views of parents and carers, gathered by speaking with them before school. I also considered the 63 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I analysed the seven responses to the staff survey.