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Mr Ben Irving
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Dear Mr Irving

Short inspection of Beoley First School

Following my visit to the school on 15 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 September 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment as headteacher in September 2018 you have wasted no time in sharing your vision for the school with pupils, parents and staff. Your ambition for the success of the school is evident through the changes that you have begun to make and through your detailed plans for further improvement. You are determined to involve pupils, parents and staff in decisions about what happens at the school. For example, pupils have been asked to think about the values that they believe are important. So far this academic year, the chosen values of the month have included belonging, friendship and respect. Pupils model these values well because they are polite, well mannered and enjoy coming to school.

Pupils attain well in a range of subjects across the curriculum. The proportion of pupils who achieved greater depth in reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 was above national averages in 2017 and 2018. Your plans include a clear focus on writing to ensure that all pupils, particularly the most able, make the progress of which they are capable. In addition, your improvement plans include details of how the success of actions and new initiatives will be checked by leaders and governors.

Teachers have benefited from training on how to use questioning purposefully. They use questions to clarify what pupils have understood and to provide additional challenge.

Pupils share their answers confidently and respond well to being asked to justify their explanations. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in, for example, reading, writing and problem-solving in a range of activities across the curriculum.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They all agree that pupils are safe and that they behave well. Staff have confidence in your leadership and feel valued. Many parents who spoke to me during the inspection are very positive about the work of the school. Parents told me that it 'feels like a family' and that their children are happy to come to school where they make good progress. This was echoed by many parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, who are pleased with the changes that you have already made. Parents say that the changes have encouraged 'a more ordered environment'. However, a significant minority of parents do not agree that the school is well led and managed. In addition, they do not agree that their children are safe in school and they have concerns that bullying is not dealt with effectively. During the inspection pupils told me that there has been some bullying in school in the past. They said that they know what to do if they feel they are being bullied and they are confident that an adult will sort out any problems they have.

Governors have an accurate understanding of the schools' strengths and areas for improvement. They provide challenge and support for leaders through their link role with class teachers and through the questions they ask about information they receive on pupils' achievement. Governors understand their safeguarding responsibilities and undertake training to ensure they meet their statutory duties.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The pre-employment checks that are carried out on staff are thorough. All school staff benefit from training in child protection and they receive regular updates. They are knowledgeable about their responsibilities, including how to use the school's system for reporting concerns about pupils' safety and welfare.

Pupils told me that they feel safe in school. They explained that there are plenty of staff to look after them and they know that there are first-aiders who help them if they have an accident. Pupils said that they learn about road safety, about the dangers that strangers can pose and about how to stay safe when they are using the internet. In addition, pupils told me that they learn about healthy lifestyles, about the food they eat, and about keeping fit.

Inspection findings

- I wanted to find out about children's progress in Reception. Over the last three years the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development at the end of Reception has been in line with or above the national figure. Teachers plan activities that are linked to children's interests and the topics they are learning about.

As a result, children are happy to engage in tasks and many demonstrate good levels of concentration. The learning environment and evidence of children's work in photographs and in their books show that they experience a broad curriculum. In addition, children's books show that most tasks are planned to build upon what children already know and can do. However, children's books also show that some tasks do not provide sufficient challenge, particularly for the most able children. This means that some children do not make the progress of which they are capable.

- My next line of enquiry was about the quality of teaching and how well teachers build upon pupils' achievement at the end of the early years and key stage 1. You have introduced a rigorous system to check on the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, you have a thorough knowledge of what is happening well and what needs to improve. You provide clear feedback to teachers and use this information to plan professional development. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use this to plan lessons that are matched to typical age-related standards in each year group.
- Pupils' English books show that they have opportunities to write linked to the topics they are learning about. This means that pupils find tasks meaningful and can draw on the knowledge gained in a variety of subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 have produced information texts about what hospitals were like when Florence Nightingale was a nurse. Teachers expect pupils to use subject-specific vocabulary, and they encourage pupils to use their knowledge of punctuation and grammar when writing. However, expectations about the amount of work pupils should complete or how work should be presented are not as clear. As a result, some pupils do not work as hard as they could and do not take enough care with the presentation of their work. This affects the progress that some pupils make.
- Pupils' mathematics books show that they have opportunities to practise and refine calculation strategies. In addition, there is evidence that opportunities to solve problems in a variety of mathematical topics are increasing. Pupils respond well to questions asking them to explain their answers and many are developing good reasoning skills. Work in books shows that most pupils are building well on what they already know. Occasionally, tasks are too easy and the level of challenge, particularly for the most able pupils, is too low. As a result, some pupils do not make the progress they need to make to reach the standard of which they are capable.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is higher than the national average. The SEND coordinator knows the individual pupils who have additional needs well. She ensures that all teachers are aware of pupils' specific targets so that they can be reinforced in a variety of subjects. The process for identifying additional needs is thorough and involves talking to pupils, parents and, where appropriate, external agencies. As a result, the additional needs of pupils are met.
- Pupils enjoy the learning in different subjects of the curriculum. Teachers plan topics that provide opportunities for pupils to acquire subject-specific knowledge and skills. For example, older pupils learn about climate change and its impact on

the environment. Younger pupils told me that they particularly enjoyed the topic on dinosaurs.

- There are opportunities for pupils to write in a variety of subjects and clear links are made with reading. In addition, teachers plan a range of wider opportunities to broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding of what they are learning about. For example, pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 enjoyed finding out about different types of poetry when they attended the Cheltenham Literature Festival. Also, pupils look forward to the residential visit to Malvern in Year 4, where they take part in team-building activities. You are reviewing how pupils' work in the foundation subjects, such as history, geography and art, is to be assessed. This is to ensure that teachers know as much as possible about what pupils can do in a variety of subjects, so that all pupils are sufficiently challenged.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers in all year groups plan tasks that are sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils in a range of subjects across the curriculum
- they clarify expectations of how pupils should present their work
- they build upon the work started this term to communicate to all parents the school's vision and how the school manages the behaviour and safety of pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Jo Evans

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and the SEND coordinator, parents and governors. I spoke to a representative of the local authority. We visited classrooms and looked at pupils' work together. I also met with a group of pupils. I reviewed the school's website and documents, including the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks and child protection systems. I also reviewed the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, monitoring information and pupils' progress and assessment information. I took account of the 68 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and eight responses to the staff survey. There was one response to the pupil questionnaire.