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Louise Jones
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Jones

Short inspection of Lakey Lane Junior and Infant 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 February 2014.

This school continues to be good.

You and your leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You lead with passion. Your commitment to ensuring that every pupil is able to access a high standard of education, regardless of their background, is at the heart of everything you do. With the support of governors, senior leaders and staff, you have established a happy, welcoming school community. Learning is fun at Lakey Lane and every child has the opportunity to meet the school's aim of being 'safe, secure and successful'. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils show extremely positive attitudes to their learning.

Following the school's previous inspection, you recognised the need to enhance leadership and management further by establishing a wider senior leadership team. This has resulted in the school now having an effective system of distributed leadership. However, there is more to do to further develop the skills of governors.

You have successfully addressed the areas for improvement recommended in your previous Ofsted inspection. You have improved the overall quality of provision so that teaching is more effective. You are determined to improve this further by providing opportunities for teachers to share strong practice and support each other to become the best teachers they can be. You are accurate in your evaluation of the school's performance and in the improvement priorities that you have identified. This has been key to the continuous improvement of the school.

You have made improvements to the teaching of reading and provide more opportunities for pupils to read, for example through your 'stop at 3' initiative and weekly early morning reading sessions. During mathematics lessons, you ensure that work is appropriately matched to individual learning needs, including providing appropriate challenge for the most able pupils.

As a result of the improvements made to the quality of teaching and learning, pupils now make stronger progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Skilful teaching and a solid grasp of the requirements of the early years curriculum ensure that children get off to a flying start in the early years. They quickly acquire the skills they need so that, by the end of their Reception Year, the majority of children achieve a good level of development and are working at the level expected for their age. This good progress continues through key stages 1 and 2 because pupils access strong teaching.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding is a strength of the school. You see safeguarding the welfare of pupils as a priority and have ensured that all of the school's arrangements are fit for purpose and procedures are robust. The training staff receive means that they are effective in recognising and responding quickly to signs of concern. Several members of the leadership team and governors are trained in safer recruitment. You have close working relationships with a number of outside agencies, including children's social care. You are tenacious in ensuring that vulnerable children and their families get the support they need. As a result, children receive timely, effective support. Governors are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and monitor the school's work in this area closely.

Pupils say that they feel safe and well looked after and the majority of parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted survey, Parent View, agree. Pupils say that bullying is rare and, when it does happen, it is very quickly dealt with. The majority of parents feel that staff respond well to any concerns they raise and take appropriate action to resolve matters.

The school's comprehensive personal, social and health education curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities to ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils are taught how to stay safe when using the internet. They are taught about road safety and how to identify and manage risks. Consequently, pupils talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations.

Inspection findings

- With the help of your skilled and knowledgeable senior leaders, you are constantly reflecting on the strengths of the school and identifying areas where further improvements need to be made. For example, you plan to strengthen the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that governors are confident

to use available information to provide robust challenge and support.

- Leaders have established a robust system of monitoring that enables them to check the progress made by individual pupils. Leaders use this information well to inform their improvement planning, staff training and staff appraisal systems. This information shows that currently, in all year groups, pupils make consistently strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), those who speak English as an additional language or who are eligible for support from pupil premium funding.
- Provisional data for 2018 indicates that at the end of key stage 1, fewer pupils achieved the expected standard in writing than in reading and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in writing was below that found nationally.
- Having identified on entry to Year 1 that this cohort's writing attainment was very low, you and your leadership team adapted the curriculum to rectify this. This included providing additional writing sessions and a relentless focus on improving pupils' writing skills. The impact of these actions is evident from the rates of progress made by these pupils in writing throughout key stage 1, according to the school's own assessment information. This significant progress is also evident in the pupils' books. However, there is still more work to be done to ensure that more of these pupils attain the expected standard in writing.
- There was a dip in progress for pupils at the end of key stage 2 in 2017. Published data indicates that progress in reading, writing and mathematics fell below the levels of progress seen in 2016 and 2018.
- You were able to provide reasons for this dip in results, including the numbers of pupils in this cohort joining or leaving the school during key stage 2 and a significant number of pupils narrowly missing achieving greater depth in reading. You and your leadership team implemented several improvements following this set of results, including making your system of monitoring individual pupils' progress much more rigorous. This ensures that you are able to more rapidly identify pupils at risk of falling behind and provide timely and effective interventions to support them. The impact of these actions can be seen in the progress made by pupils at the end of key stage 2 in 2018, as well as the school's own current progress and attainment information for all pupils.
- Provisional data indicates that progress in reading for pupils at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 was not as good as progress in writing and mathematics. You explained that reading has been a major improvement priority for several years, and continues to be a focus for the school. Developing pupils' reading skills is an important aspect of your whole-school curriculum. You and your leadership team constantly monitor the teaching of reading and make improvements. You have implemented a number of initiatives to raise the profile of reading. You have provided training for teaching staff and strengthened the reading curriculum by ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to read. You provide support to parents to enable them to support their children's reading at home. You have also devised intervention groups specifically aimed at developing pupils'

comprehension skills.

- While reading remains an area for improvement, there is clear indication that the actions you and your leaders have taken have had a positive impact on the progress made by pupils in reading. Throughout the school, the proportion of pupils who are working at the expected standard in reading is above the national figure. In addition, the proportion of pupils making strong progress in reading is increasing.
- You have a clear understanding of the needs of your pupils and their potential barriers to learning. You and your staff have designed a broad, rich, engaging curriculum that successfully enables pupils to overcome their individual barriers to learning, make strong progress and be well prepared for the future. For example, you make sure that by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 they have been able to enjoy a breadth of opportunities and experiences. These include trips to the theatre, ballet and botanical gardens, as well as a residential visit in Year 6. Topics are chosen and designed specifically to meet the needs and interests of the pupils in each year group. In addition, pupils contribute their ideas to the planning of these topics. This ensures that your curriculum is relevant, engaging and meets the needs of pupils and the requirements of the national curriculum. The curriculum also encourages pupils to develop tolerance and respect. The pupils I spoke with were very clear about the importance of treating people equally and with respect.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers are provided with opportunities to share good practice so that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to strengthen
- governors are supported to play an even greater role in challenging and supporting leaders, by using the range of information available to them to hold the school fully to account for pupil outcomes
- progress in reading across the school continues to improve to match the above average progress made in writing and mathematics.

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

Janet Satchwell
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Together, we visited every classroom. I examined a wide range of documentation, including the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation document and records of safeguarding. Throughout the inspection, I held discussions with you and your senior leadership team. I met with five members of the governing body, including the chair.

I took into consideration the 60 responses to the pupils' survey and the 37 responses to the staff survey. I considered the 15 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including nine comments sent via the free-text facility. I spoke to pupils and observed their behaviour throughout the school day. I reviewed the school's website.