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Mrs Nancy Darby
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Darby

Short inspection of West Witney Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 15 January 2019, 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 previous inspection. You lead the school well and are ambitious and determined that pupils achieve their very best. Your strong focus on improving the quality of teaching has led to year-on-year improvements in pupils' achievement. You are fully supported by other leaders and the staff team who share your vision and commitment. Pupils' well-being and care is at the heart of the school's work and is a strength.

The school is a happy, purposeful community. Pupils enjoy coming to school and talk with enthusiasm and pride about their school. They behave exceptionally well, have positive attitudes and are keen to learn. Pupils say that other pupils are kind and that everyone at West Witney is treated with respect. Pupils particularly appreciate the many opportunities they have to take on extra responsibilities, such as being house captains and sports or digital leaders. They also value the way teachers help and support them and make learning interesting.

Parents are delighted with the quality of education and care that their children receive at West Witney. As one parent commented: 'My child is very happy at school and has developed well under the guidance of the teachers. I feel there is a strong sense of values encouraged at West Witney and that being kind and thoughtful is as important as academic ability.'

You have taken effective action to address the areas for improvement highlighted by inspectors during the previous inspection. Teaching has continued to strengthen,

as has pupils' achievement. In 2018, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard at the end of key stage 2 was well above the national average. Achievement in the early years has also improved. There has been a significant rise in the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standards in the Year 1 phonics screening check.

You are wisely continuing to develop the work of middle leaders so that they can play an even greater role in strengthening learning across the wider curriculum. You recognise that standards in science have not been as strong as in reading, writing and mathematics. You have well-judged plans to strengthen this aspect of pupils' learning. You are also continuing to strengthen governance. Due to recent changes in the governing body, many governors are inexperienced and new to their roles. Although highly committed and enthusiastic, at present they do not have an incisive or deep understanding of the impact of the school's strategic work or the achievement of all groups of pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at West Witney, making sure that pupils' safety and well-being are given the highest priority. You maintain meticulous records of any concerns and the actions that you have taken to ensure pupils' safety. Checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are completed diligently and recorded systematically. Comprehensive, regular training ensures that all staff are knowledgeable and confident in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities.

The school's curriculum supports pupils' understanding of safety and awareness of risks. Pupils are very knowledgeable about online safety such as the importance of not sharing personal information or photographs. Pupils feel safe at school and say that any incidents of bullying are very rare and that any concerns are dealt with swiftly by teachers. The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, agree that their children feel safe at school.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection we focused on specific aspects of the school's work, including: safeguarding; leaders' actions to improve key stage 2 pupils' progress in writing; boys' and disadvantaged pupils' progress in key stage 1; and the science curriculum and pupils' learning in this subject.
- Leaders have 'shone a light' on pupils' writing and taken timely action to improve pupils' writing progress in key stage 2. Leaders' regular checks on progress and teachers' assessments enable them to have an accurate picture of pupils' learning. As a result of leaders' good work, current pupils are making good progress.
- Pupils now have many more rich opportunities to learn new vocabulary to enliven and enhance their writing. When reading, pupils are encouraged to 'read as a writer'. For example, pupils learn how different literary devices, punctuation and vocabulary choices contribute to the quality and impact of writing. During our

visits to classrooms we saw many examples of good-quality writing. Over time, pupils become competent writers and confidently write for a range of purposes.

- Leaders and teachers capitalise on pupils' learning in the wider curriculum, providing meaningful contexts for writing. The many attractive displays in the school show examples of pupils' thoughtful and interesting writing based on their topic work. When learning about the Second World War, pupils reflected on soldiers' experiences and feelings when going into battle. One pupil wrote, 'Two petrified armies stood cold and scared, ready to fire.'
- In key stage 1, boys and disadvantaged pupils are currently making good progress. Leaders keep the progress of these groups of pupils 'under the spotlight', intervening quickly if any pupils are at risk of falling behind. Additional support is in place for those pupils who need extra help. Leaders have also adjusted the curriculum topics so that they are as appealing to boys as to girls.
- The science curriculum is well planned and appropriately broad. Each aspect of science is planned out carefully and sequentially, enabling pupils to build on their previous learning. The curriculum includes a focus on scientific enquiry, so that pupils develop their skills of investigation such as planning and carrying out experiments. However, currently pupils' achievement in science is not as high as it is in some other subjects and have wisely included this as an area of focus for staff training this year. Leaders also recognise that the most able pupils' work in books does not consistently reflect a depth of learning.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they implement their plans to strengthen pupils' achievement in science and ensure that the most able pupils are more consistently challenged
- they develop the role of governors so that they have a more incisive understanding of the school's strategic work and a deeper understanding of pupils' achievement.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Cox
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you to discuss the school's self-evaluation. I also had meetings with you

and the deputy headteacher to discuss pupils' progress. Together, we visited classes in key stages 1 and 2 to observe pupils' learning, talk to pupils and look at work in their books. I also met with a group of 12 pupils from key stages 1 and 2 and with two members of the governing body, including the chair of the performance and standards committee.

I considered a wide range of safeguarding information, including the school's pre-employment checks for staff. I also reviewed other school documents and policies, including the school's self-evaluation, the strategic development plan and the minutes of governors' meetings. I considered the views of parents through the 105 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and their free-text comments. I also talked with parents at the start of the school day and considered a separate letter from a parent. I took into account the 49 responses to Ofsted's confidential staff survey and the 115 responses to the pupil survey.