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Miss Lynn Kelly
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Dear Miss Kelly

Short inspection of Oak Hill First School

Following my visit to the school on 27 February 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 January 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 set high expectations so that pupils at Oak Hill First school have the best possible start to their education and are well prepared when they leave to complete the end of key stage 2 at middle schools. You benefit from the support of an effective senior leadership team and a skilled and knowledgeable governing body.

You know the school and the community it serves very well. You make sure that the school adapts to changes in its intake of pupils, including the growing number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Inclusion is a notable feature of the school and pupils' well-being is a priority. As a result, while the school is much larger than average, pupils benefit from a high level of personal care and attention.

The relationship between pupils and staff is positive. The school is a cohesive community where pupils respect adults and each other. Staff share leaders' values and aspirations and support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils effectively.

Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the range of enrichment and extracurricular activities the school offers. While a few parents have expressed reservations about communication with the school via Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, many commented on the caring ethos of the school and on the fact that their

children look forward to an enjoyable time at school.

You are aware of what needs to be done to improve the school further. You have rightly identified that continuous professional development of staff is important to sustain the improvement of outcomes for children in the early years and for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. Embedding the successful strategies the school introduced to improve pupils' language and communication skills is also one of your key priorities.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding that is consistent with its caring ethos. The designated safeguarding lead ensures that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All members of staff receive up-to-date training and are regularly reminded of their duty to be vigilant. The school provides effective support to vulnerable children and their families. Leaders work well with external agencies to keep vulnerable children safe and make sure that any disruption to their education is minimised.

Pupils are taught how to keep safe in a range of situations. Pupils are taught about the risks involved in using social media and the internet. The school also provides information to parents about e-safety. Pupils are clear about what constitutes bullying and why it is not acceptable. The school records show that bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Inspection findings

- The early years provision is well led. The assessment of children's skills, abilities and needs when they join the early years is thorough and rigorous and informs subsequent teaching. Children's progress is recorded in well-kept learning journals. In each well-organised classroom and in the outdoor areas there are well-resourced activities designed to support children's independent development. Teaching in the early years is effective, especially the teaching of phonics and early numeracy.
- Many children join the early years with skills that are much lower than those typical for their age, especially in the areas of language and communication. Children make good progress from their starting points. However, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development is not yet in line with national averages.
- Leaders monitor closely the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They check that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making at least good progress. As a result, attainment gaps are closing by the end of key stage 1 and pupils' outcomes are broadly in line with national averages.
- To continue to improve outcomes in the early years and key stage 1, leaders are implementing a more effective approach to the professional development of staff. However, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching persist and require further attention.

- Leaders make sure that the curriculum engages pupils' interest and prepares them effectively for the next stage of their education. Pupils study a wide range of subjects at both key stages 1 and 2. Subject leaders plan the teaching of topics together so that all areas of the curriculum are covered in a coherent way. They also ensure that pupils practise their numeracy and literacy skills across the subjects they study.
- The school's new method of teaching mathematics helps the most able pupils to work at greater depth. Reading is taught well across the curriculum. New approaches to improve pupils' writing and oral skills are increasingly successful.
- Leaders have effective systems in place to smooth the transition for pupils when they leave at the end of Year 4 to continue their education in a middle school. Middle leaders, with their colleagues from the local middle schools, map out the progression of pupils from Years 3 to the end of Year 6. Year 4 pupils attend two days of induction in July in the middle school they are due to attend. Key stage 2 pupils also take part in enrichment activities that the school runs jointly with middle and high schools.
- Leaders are determined that pupils should attend school regularly. There is a rigorous escalation system in place to follow up absence. Unexplained and persistent absences are challenged and investigated thoroughly. The school works well with families and external agencies to support regular attendance. As a result, attendance is improving and is currently broadly in line with the national average.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school because they are fully aware of what is expected in terms of their conduct. The school's behaviour policy is applied consistently. Leaders' detailed records of behaviour incidents show that each incident is dealt with thoroughly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improved further by:
 - continuing the professional development of staff to improve children's progress in the early years and outcomes for pupils in key stages 1 and 2.
 - ensuring that the successful strategies currently being implemented to develop pupils' language and communication skills are fully embedded.

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

Patrick Amieli
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, senior leaders and subject leaders. I met with the chair, vice-chair and another member of the governing body. I had a discussion with a group of pupils and spoke to other pupils informally. I listened to pupils read. I observed teaching in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2 with you and other senior leaders. I observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime. I spoke to parents at the start and the end of the day and considered 31 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also considered 19 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

I scrutinised various documents, including the school's self-evaluation, its improvement plan and the documents that you use to check the quality of teaching. We discussed the national test results and assessments undertaken by pupils in 2018 as well as the current attainment of pupils. I also looked at the school's published information on the website, as well as minutes of governing body meetings and information about attendance, behaviour and safety.