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Mr Simon Robson
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Robson

Short inspection of Manor Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 March 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.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

Since the previous inspection, there has been a complete change of teaching staff and deputy headteacher. This has been very challenging for you and your governors. You have now established a stable team who all share your commitment to ensuring that pupils receive the best possible standards of education. Relationships between pupils, parents, carers and staff are positive. The vast majority of parents who shared their views during the inspection are happy with the quality of education their children receive and how well informed they are about their children's learning. Staff feel well supported and respected by leaders and that their well-being is important.

Pupils' good behaviour makes a positive contribution to an orderly and relaxed learning environment in and out of lessons. Their attitudes to learning are mostly positive, although in lessons where pupils are not sufficiently challenged or supported, they sometimes become distracted and lose interest. The work in pupils' books shows that they take pride in their work and want to do their best.

The recommendations from the previous inspection report have been partly achieved. You have strengthened provision in mathematics by ensuring that pupils are provided with more opportunities to develop and apply their problem-solving skills. You have improved pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar skills and increased the opportunities they have

to write at length, including across different subjects. These actions, however, have not resulted in increased progress for pupils.

You and your deputy headteacher are reflective. You carry out regular checks of teaching and learning, and your improvement plans show that you have used the information you gather to identify appropriate priorities. However, your improvement plans do not provide clear enough explanations as to how these priorities will be achieved or how they will impact on the quality of teaching and learning and the progress made by pupils.

Leaders have created a broad, rich, engaging curriculum which provides plenty of opportunities for pupils to enjoy a range of experiences. However, leaders are not ensuring that the curriculum enables pupils to retain the core skills and knowledge they need well enough to ensure that they make strong progress over time. In addition, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve during lessons.

Overall, despite the actions taken by leaders, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have not risen sufficiently since the previous inspection. Many pupils are not making the progress in these subjects that they are capable of making.

Governors are diligent, understand their roles well and hold leaders to account for some aspects of the school's work. However, because some of the information they receive from leaders does not explain clearly enough how well pupils are progressing in reading, writing and mathematics, they are currently not challenging leaders on this aspect of the school's performance robustly enough.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and the school website contains the required information. The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, and written records are sufficiently detailed and of good quality. Appropriate procedures are followed during the recruitment of staff. You have established an effective safeguarding culture, ensuring that all staff and governors undertake appropriate, up-to-date training. As a result, your staff are knowledgeable about the procedures for keeping children safe and know what to do if they have any concerns.

Pupils say they feel safe in school. Parents agree. You work well with parents, ensuring that those who are experiencing challenges are supported appropriately. You seek support and advice from other professionals where necessary. Referrals are made in a timely way.

Pupils demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of some of the potential risks they face and how to avoid them. The pupils I spoke to had good knowledge about how to stay safe when using the internet. They also have an age-appropriate understanding of a range of different types of bullying and what to do if it happens to them. Pupils say that bullying is very rare and that staff deal with it quickly and effectively when it happens. The school's behaviour logs support this.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is consistently above the national average.

Inspection findings

- In recent years, leaders and those responsible for governance have not secured consistently high academic standards for pupils. The school's published outcomes have generally been in line with the national average. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards in reading and writing at the end of key stage 2 is below that found nationally. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard in mathematics at the end of 2018 was in line with national expectations.
- Pupils join the school in Nursery and Reception with skills that are broadly typical for their age. Throughout the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils make average progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Very few pupils make progress that is better than this.
- There has been a complete change of teaching staff since the previous inspection. The deputy headteacher has been in post for just over two years, and several members of the governing body only took up their positions in September 2018. This has presented a significant challenge to you, particularly in your aim to develop consistently strong teaching and learning across the school. Despite this, you have managed to implement some initiatives that have strengthened provision during this time of change. For example, you identified from your monitoring that pupils were not developing their problem-solving and reasoning skills well enough in mathematics. In response to this, you provided training and support for teachers and teaching assistants and adapted the curriculum. This ensured that pupils were given appropriate support and more opportunities to develop these skills. This resulted in improved progress in mathematics in 2018, with more pupils attaining the higher standards than was previously the case. Progress in mathematics, however, remains average.
- Following a sharp decline in progress in writing in 2017, you implemented a range of initiatives to strengthen teaching in writing and develop pupils' skills, including providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length. While these initiatives contributed to pupils performing better in writing in 2018, progress still remained below the national average.
- The school's own assessment information shows that the progress of pupils currently in the school in reading, writing and mathematics matches that seen in previous years. This means that the actions taken by leaders that were intended to bring about improved outcomes for pupils have not had the desired effects.
- Together with your deputy head, you have devised a curriculum that is broad, rich and well balanced and ensures that all aspects of the national curriculum are covered. You enhance pupils' enjoyment of learning by providing engaging experiences, including trips and themed days linked to the topics being taught. You have made some adaptations to the curriculum to respond to pupils' learning needs. For example, in order to develop pupils' resilience, you ensure that all pupils complete a course of forest-school activities aimed at developing their confidence when confronted by challenges. The long-term plans for foundation subjects are detailed and support teachers well, showing clear progression through each subject area.
- Evidence gathered on inspection, however, suggests that leaders are not using the assessment information available to them well enough. Consequently, they do not ensure that teaching in English and mathematics focuses sufficiently on the core skills

that pupils need to develop in these subjects. Furthermore, teachers are not consistently providing effective challenge and support to pupils during lessons. As a result, pupils are not securing and retaining the skills and knowledge they need in order to make better progress and achieve the higher standards. This was particularly evident in the mathematics lessons observed, where many pupils found it difficult to recall previous learning.

- The school's development plans identify appropriate improvement priorities. However, some of them are too general and do not have a clear focus. In addition, some of the measures for success lack precision. Therefore, there is no clear way of measuring the success of actions taken. This makes it difficult for leaders to check how these actions are impacting on outcomes for pupils or for governors to hold leaders to account.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers increase their expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons so that, over time, more pupils achieve the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics
- the school's English and mathematics plans are based on accurate assessments of what pupils need to learn in order to achieve the standards of which they are capable
- improvement plans focus on the most important priorities and clearly show how they will improve teaching and outcomes for pupils
- the governing body is provided with appropriate information so that it is able to hold leaders robustly to account for the progress made by 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 Staffordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janet Satchwell
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

With you, I visited classrooms and looked at examples of pupils' work. 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 deputy head. I discussed safeguarding policies and procedures with you. I met with three members of the governing body, including the chair. I considered the 34 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 25 comments sent via free text. I also reviewed the responses to the staff

survey. I spoke to pupils and observed their behaviour throughout the school day. I reviewed the school's website.