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Mrs Joanne Derrer
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Derrer

Short inspection of Claverley CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 May 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 July 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 have established a culture of high expectations for staff and pupils. With the support of dedicated staff and effective governors, you make sure that pupils are well looked after and receive a well-rounded education.

The school serves a rural and socially diverse community. It is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. The caring ethos and strong sense of community that prevail at the school were praised by parents and pupils during the inspection. Parents' comments included: 'The school has a warm and friendly feel and younger children are supported by both staff and older children.' This comment reflects the views of the vast majority of the parents who responded to the Ofsted survey, Parent View, and of those I talked to during my visit.

In spite of its size, the school provides a wide range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities. There are many trips and visits related to the topics that pupils study. Every year, Year 6 pupils take part in a week-long residential stay where they do a range of outdoor activities. Pupils can take part in sport, music, art or drama at after-school clubs. These varied opportunities contribute greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Relationships between pupils and staff are harmonious and pupils behave well in

lessons and around the school at breaktime and lunchtime. Attendance is above national averages for all groups.

Leaders and governors have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Work in pupils' books and the school's records of the monitoring of teaching show that pupils are routinely given problem-solving activities that challenge them. There is also clear evidence that teachers check pupils' learning in lessons and are alert to the need to promptly address misconceptions.

With the support of governors, you are devoting more resources to support staff development. For example, staff benefit from dedicated time for closer collaboration with the local network of schools. Participation in this network provides teachers and teaching assistants with a range of training and professional development opportunities. These include curriculum development meetings, moderation of pupils' assessments meetings, and participation in the 'maths hub'.

You are aware that the teaching of phonics still needs developing further in order to secure more accelerated progress. This is why you and your colleagues have decided to adopt a different scheme to teach phonics, which is to be implemented in the next academic year.

There has been an increased focus on providing a higher level of challenge for the most able pupils. However, new approaches for developing the most able pupils' skills in writing across the curriculum still need to be embedded to have a sustained impact.

Safeguarding is effective.

The safeguarding culture of the school is consistent with its caring ethos. You share the responsibility, as designated safeguarding lead, with another member of the senior leadership team. Together, with the support of governors, you make sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff receive regular training and are clear about their responsibility to be vigilant. All safeguarding issues that are raised receive your full attention. You and your colleagues work well with families and external agencies to protect vulnerable pupils when they are at risk.

Pupils trust adults at the school to keep them safe and to listen to their concerns. The school provides a range of information and activities to raise pupils' awareness of risks. These include comprehensive information about e-safety as well as road safety activities. Although bullying is rare, pupils are made fully aware of what constitutes bullying and why it is unacceptable.

Inspection findings

- The early years provision is well led and managed. The school has a thorough and effective induction programme for children to ensure that they all have a positive start to their education. The school encourages parents to be involved

during the induction period and throughout the year. Staff assess the skills and knowledge of children during the first few weeks of the Reception Year. Children's learning needs are clearly identified and their progress is recorded rigorously in their learning journals.

- Typically, the majority of children join the Reception class with skills and abilities that are in line with or above what can be expected for their age. The early years curriculum provides them with a rich diet of independent and adult-led learning activities. Effective teaching allows children to develop their literacy and numeracy as well as their social skills. As a result, pupils make good progress towards the early learning goals. The transition to key stage 1 is made easier by the fact that the Reception Year children and Year 1 pupils are taught in the same class.
- Because of the small size of the school, pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes. There are four classes: Reception and Year 1; Year 2 and Year 3; Year 3 and Year 4; and Year 5 and Year 6. Thanks to effective leadership and the hard work and dedication of the members of staff, these arrangements are well managed and pupils are taught well.
- Teachers and support staff plan their lessons together carefully to ensure that each year group is taught at an appropriate level. On occasions when pupils in different year groups are taught together, the learning activities are planned so that younger and older pupils in the class benefit from each other's interactions. As a result, pupils make good progress. Historically, attainment at key stages 1 and 2 has been consistently high. School data on pupils' progress shows that the attainment and progress of current cohorts of pupils remain high in both key stages.
- The current priority for leaders and staff is to develop pupils' writing across the curriculum, especially for the most able pupils at key stage 2. Pupils are expected to produce extended pieces of writing in all the subjects they study. Teachers set success criteria for these writing tasks with additional challenges for the most able pupils in terms of sophistication of vocabulary and grammatical structures. This new approach is starting to have an impact on the quality of writing overall, but still needs to be embedded to sustain an increase in the number of pupils regularly producing higher-level writing.
- Leaders and governors pay particular attention to the appropriateness of the curriculum. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to support the development of the teaching of phonics at key stage 1 through the implementation of a new scheme
- the new successful approaches introduced to support the progress of the most able pupils in writing across the curriculum are fully embedded.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Hereford, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Shropshire. 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 teachers. I met with the chair and three other members of the governing body. I also met with a representative of the local authority. I had a discussion with a group of pupils and spoke to other pupils informally. I listened to pupils read. Together with you, I observed teaching in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2. I spoke to parents at the start and the end of the day and considered the 41 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 38 free-text responses received during the inspection. I also considered the 12 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.

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