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Miss Joanna Martin
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Dear Miss Martin

Short inspection of Coteford Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 22 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 June 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 lead a welcoming, caring and vibrant school. With the support of other leaders, you have created an inclusive, compassionate and nurturing environment. Pupils attend well, enjoy school and are happy.

Senior leaders have worked hard to tackle the areas for improvement identified following the last inspection. You are not complacent and work continuously to improve pupils' outcomes. You have plans in place to improve the areas that need to be better. You realise that initiatives need to be fully embedded and robustly checked in order to have maximum impact. Governors visit the school regularly, and bring a range of experience to their roles. They provide an appropriate level of support and challenge to the school.

Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection were supportive of the school. The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey were positive about the school. As one parent commented, 'Coteford Junior is a great school with wide ranging provision. My child has thrived while attending.'

Staff who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive. They said the school is well led and managed, and they are proud to work there. Teachers work constructively with each other to improve the quality of teaching.

However, they do not routinely have professional development opportunities to work with outstanding providers.

On the day of the inspection, pupils were well behaved and respectful. Pupils spoken to, both formally and informally, were willing and confident to speak with me. They said behaviour is typically good in school, and they know the consequences for poor behaviour. Pupils said they get 'along well together'. For example, they spoke about the 'friendship bench' to support pupils, and the 25 acts of kindness they complete. Pupils spoke positively about the work of school council in promoting good mental health.

Safeguarding is effective.

Governors and leaders have received safer recruitment training. They ensure that the relevant pre-employment checks are made on the suitability of staff to work at the school. They are committed to providing a safe environment for pupils in their care.

Staff receive regular and up-to-date safeguarding training. They are clear about safeguarding arrangements. Staff know what to look for if they are concerned about a pupil, and how to report these concerns. The designated safeguarding leader keeps appropriate records, and liaises well with outside agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families.

All pupils who spoke to me said they feel safe in school. Older pupils are enthusiastic about the 'junior citizenship award', where they learn about road, online and personal safety. You and your leaders know the potential risks faced by pupils outside of school. For example, pupils have had talks about knife crime and what to do if your friend is carrying a knife. Pupils said bullying is rare but, if it does happen, leaders deal with it well. They spoke positively about how they can get help from a 'trusted adult' in school, if they are worried.

Inspection findings

- The first area of focus for the inspection was the development of writing. This is because outcomes for writing, in 2018, were average. There has been an improvement since 2017, but writing remains a priority for the school.
- Leaders have worked hard to ensure that pupils routinely have purposeful writing opportunities across the curriculum. The school has introduced several reading opportunities throughout each school day to support pupils to extend their vocabulary.
- Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their enjoyment of reading. Furthermore, pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar is regularly checked. Teachers produce examples of strong writing to encourage pupils to develop their writing skills. Attention is being given to the quality of handwriting, which, for most pupils, is improving over time.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work showed that most pupils in Year 6 make strong progress

in their writing. However, this is less consistent in the younger years because pupils do not have as many opportunities to write extended pieces. The level of challenge is not routinely high and, as a result, some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Leaders do not routinely check pupils' work to ensure that actions to improve pupils' writing have a positive impact.

- The second area of focus explored leaders' impact on the development of mathematics teaching. Over the last three years, pupils' progress in mathematics has been in line with national averages.
- Leaders have reviewed the mathematics curriculum to ensure stronger pupils' outcomes for some groups of pupils, particularly girls, disadvantaged pupils and low prior attainers. As a result, curriculum plans have been rewritten. They now include more opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning skills, and work is more challenging. Teaching groups have been restructured in Years 4 and 5 to raise pupils' aspirations. In addition, one Year 6 mathematics group ran for girls in the spring term, which was helpful in raising the confidence of girls.
- The majority of pupils' work seen shows strong progress over time. Pupils are confident to explain their mathematical thinking. Pupils develop their understanding by tackling difficult problems. Following detailed feedback from teachers, pupils have opportunities to correct mistakes and improve their work.
- The third area of focus was the progress of disadvantaged pupils. This is because while outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are improving over time, it continues to be a priority area for the school.
- Governors and leaders ensure that the impact of additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils is measured against their outcomes. Leaders have effectively identified the barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils. They have put in place a range of approaches to support pupils. These include such activities as a breakfast club, support for pupils' emotional well-being, daily reading with an adult, and academic interventions. Teachers regularly check pupils' learning and progress and record this information. This ensures that pupils are on track with their learning, and prompts further support if pupils fall behind.
- In most lessons, disadvantaged pupils make progress in line with their peers from similar starting points. The best progress is where teachers provide bespoke activities and precise feedback. Where teaching lacks challenge, the progress of all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, is limited. This is because some of the pupils' work lacks sufficient depth to extend their understanding. Current school performance data shows that the gap between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and their peers is closing. In addition, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is improving.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of teaching is sufficiently challenging to enable all pupils to make the progress of which they are capable
- teachers have increased opportunities for high-quality professional development

outside of the school

- leaders check pupils' work in a timely and robust way to ensure their actions have a positive impact.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Hillingdon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Parker
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspection began with a discussion of the school's self-evaluation with you and other senior leaders. Together, we agreed the key lines of enquiry for the inspection. I looked at school documentation, including behaviour and exclusion logs, and minutes of governing body meetings. I visited lessons, talked to pupils and scrutinised pupils' work with leaders. I met with middle leaders and you, as the designated safeguarding lead. I met with a group of pupils, formally and informally, at breaktime. I heard pupils read. I spoke with the chair of the governing body, and the CEO of the trust. In addition, I met parents, considered responses to the staff survey, and took account of Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, for parents.