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Mrs Lynne Weir
Headteacher
West Rise Community Infant School
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Dear Mrs Weir

Short inspection of West Rise Community Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 5 June 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. West Rise Infants is a welcoming school, with a vibrant, caring and inclusive learning environment. Pupils' well-being is at the heart of the school and takes priority. You are proud to describe the school as a 'well-being first school'. Pupils say that they feel cared for and listened to. This is because you and your staff are committed to ensuring that every child receives appropriate support which is tailored to their individual need. As a result, the personal development and welfare of pupils are exemplary.

Your strong and purposeful leadership has enabled West Rise to flourish. Your vision for the school is clear, and all staff share your high expectations and uncompromising drive for school improvement. Governors have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They provide school leaders with effective challenge and useful guidance. Aply supported by your deputy headteacher, you lead the school with strong conviction. Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel motivated and committed to ensuring that pupils receive the very best education. You take staff well-being seriously. As a result, staff feel cared for and respected by leaders.

Pupils are happy in school. They behave exceptionally well and apply themselves diligently to their learning. They spoke with enthusiasm about their curriculum. Inspired by a high-quality text in English, I observed pupils in one class excitedly exploring the adventures of their 'tiny thing' in the outdoor learning environment. All

pupils were fully immersed and engaged in their learning. It is clear why pupils describe learning at West Rise as 'fun and exciting'.

Parents that I met with were highly complimentary about the school. They described the school as a 'big family', which is 'approachable' and 'caring'. One parent said that the school had gone 'above and beyond' to help their family and they 'could not praise the school enough'. Parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were also extremely positive about the school and your leadership. All parents said that their children are happy and well looked after in school. Almost all parents reported that the school is effectively led and managed and would recommend the school to other parents.

School leaders have maintained the many strengths that were identified in the previous inspection. One area for development was to ensure that pupils' ability to interpret and understand text improved, so that more pupils reached the expected standards at the end of Year 2. As a result of your work, a higher proportion of pupils achieved and exceeded age-related expectations in reading in 2018. Leaders were also asked to review the rates of children's progress in the Nursery, so that it matched the rapid progress that children made in Reception. Children in the Nursery get a strong start to their education. Teachers ensure that children have a range of opportunities to explore activities and develop their skills. This prepares them well for Reception. In 2018, more children achieved a good level of development compared to the national average.

You are keen to continue developing all aspects of the school. Your action plan for school improvement rightly identifies writing as a priority. You are currently focusing on improving the teaching of writing in the early years and key stage 1, so that more pupils than previously meet the expectations for their age in Year 2.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and thorough. Effective recording systems are in place for the recruitment and vetting of all staff. These systems are regularly monitored by the designated safeguarding governor.

You lead annual training for all staff so that their knowledge is kept up to date. As a result, staff are quick to report concerns that they may have about pupils. Your conscientious work with other professionals further secures the safeguarding of pupils.

You and your deputy ensure that paperwork for all pupils for whom you have concerns is detailed and comprehensive. For the most vulnerable pupils and families, you keep extremely high-quality records of referrals and actions, and what impact these have had. Parents that I spoke with said that they feel that their children are safe in school. They are confident that their children receive effective support when it is needed.

Inspection findings

- You and your deputy have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result, in recent years, much improvement can be noted. This is because you work effectively with all staff and leaders to improve the quality of teaching and learning. For the last two years, a higher proportion of pupils exceeded the expectations for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Since the last inspection, more pupils have achieved age-related expectations in reading and mathematics. However, pupils' progress in writing has not been as strong as it has been in reading and mathematics. As a result, fewer pupils achieve age-related expectations in writing. You correctly acknowledge that writing across the school needs to improve. As a result, you are currently investigating a new approach to the teaching of writing. However, it is too early for this change to impact significantly on the quality of pupils' writing.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils. Teachers' planning accurately targets the needs of this group, and additional adults provide high-quality support in class. The wide range of interventions in place for disadvantaged pupils provides useful opportunities for them to recall and practise their knowledge, skills and understanding. Additional teaching in the 'learning lounge' provides supplementary support for disadvantaged pupils and helps them to catch up if they have fallen behind. As a result, the gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils in the school is diminishing. School assessment information indicates that most disadvantaged pupils make good progress.
- Parents with whom I spoke who have children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) report that their children receive excellent support in school. Pupils with significant additional needs thrive in the 'learning lodge', where they receive specialist provision, individualised for their specific learning requirements. Carefully planned intervention and support for all pupils in the school with SEND ensure that this group of pupils make strong progress from their starting points.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers' planning meets the needs of all pupils in writing so that at the end of Year 2, a higher proportion of pupils achieve age-related expectations in writing.

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

Yours sincerely

Luisa Gould
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with a group of governors. I had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. I discussed the key lines of enquiry with you and your deputy head. We discussed the school's assessment information about outcomes for current pupils, your plans for improvement and your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. Together, we observed learning in the early years and key stage 1. I evaluated a range of pupils' English and cross-curricular workbooks. I considered 55 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also talked informally to 11 parents of pupils in all year groups, after they brought their children to school. I analysed a range of school documentation, including policies and procedures, minutes from governing body meetings and reports from the local authority adviser. I met with your school business manager to review the safer recruitment practices. I checked other safeguarding documentation and procedures.