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Mrs Tracey Wilson
Headteacher
Lumley Infant and Nursery School
Great Lumley
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Dear Mrs Wilson

Subject inspection of Lumley Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to your school on 30 January 2020, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. The findings do not change the overall effectiveness judgement of outstanding from the last section 5 inspection.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for a no formal designation inspection of schools. The inspection was carried out to enable Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to understand better the quality of education in specific subjects provided by outstanding primary schools.

Main findings

Strong leadership has had a positive impact on the planning and implementation of the geography curriculum in your school. Carefully planned and well-sequenced curriculum planning enables pupils to grow their geographical knowledge and develop the skills of being a geographer. However, some areas of your planning are not as well developed, such as the planning for fieldwork and mapping skills. Sometimes, plans do not emphasise specifically the geographical vocabulary to be taught across year groups. You have already started to work on these aspects. Teachers implement the planned curriculum effectively and adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers use a range of strategies to check pupils' learning. They spot gaps in pupils' learning and revisit and recap to embed learning where needed.

You and your deputy headteacher, who is the school's curriculum leader, have reviewed the school's curriculum over the past three years. This focus on overall

curriculum improvement is clearly seen in your ambitious approaches to teaching geography. Your geography subject leader and international schools coordinator have established detailed well-structured plans for geography. These plans have clear sequencing of knowledge which builds on learning in the early years through to the end of Year 2. While there is evidence in pupils' books of the development of geographical fieldwork skills, the school has not fully developed this aspect of geography. Leaders are currently reviewing planning for and teaching of geographical vocabulary specific to each year group. This is linked to your focus on developing pupils' oracy skills generally.

My review of the geography planning, alongside the geography subject leader and the international school's coordinator, found that the geography curriculum is ambitious and at least matches the content of the national curriculum. The school's work on developing pupils' understanding of global issues strengthens and enriches the school's geography curriculum. The school's links to a school in Uganda develops pupils' understanding of places and people.

Your geography curriculum leader is knowledgeable. Training alongside a local authority adviser has developed her skills to monitor geography. You ensure that the subject leader is provided with time to check the implementation of the geography plan. This 'capture time' as it is known in the school, ensures that the subject leader knows the strengths and areas for development well. She informs teachers of the strengths in geography teaching and gives them guidance for further improvements. The work in geography is well supported by the curriculum developments implemented by your international schools coordinator. Leaders are keen to have improvements in your geography curriculum recognised and they are currently collating evidence for an externally validated quality mark.

Teachers build on pupils' prior learning and take account of pupils' interests. They mostly teach important geographical knowledge effectively. At the same time, if pupils show an interest in areas of geography outside of the planned curriculum, teachers encourage them to research and 'find out more'. Teachers use a range of strategies to check pupils' learning. This enables teachers to revisit key knowledge to address any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Teachers adapt their approaches to successfully meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Support from teaching assistants and the use of practical resources ensure that these pupils cover the core geographical knowledge through relevant learning activities.

In the early years, children's work seen in lesson visits and in their 'learning journeys' shows that they are developing their knowledge in understanding the world. During this inspection, Reception children were learning about the differences between countries. Children were engaged fully in a range of appropriate activities linked to this planned learning. Nursery children, who had searched for mini-beasts outdoors, were building their knowledge about animals and the different environments where mini beasts live. Staff in both these lesson visits used

questioning effectively to encourage children to observe carefully and look for similarities and differences.

During our lesson visits in Years 1 and 2, pupils were developing their understanding of aerial views and maps successfully. Overall, teachers' approaches were well matched well to pupils' needs, including pupils with SEND. Where pupils need support, concrete and practical apparatus is used effectively to help them access learning. Teaching assistants provide strong support to help pupils where required. In Year 2, the most able pupils showed a growing understanding of simple grid references which built on their prior learning. Although there is a sequence to the development of pupils' understanding of map skills, you agree that the planning of this work could be more sharply defined. This will help pupils build on the knowledge gained in Year 1 as they work in Year 2.

My discussions with key stage 1 pupils and scrutiny of their topic and homework books demonstrates that pupils are growing their geographical knowledge. Year 2 pupils are secure in their knowledge, such as the continents and oceans of the world. Similarly, Year 1 pupils are knowledgeable about the countries and capital cities in the United Kingdom. This is because teachers revisit the core geographical knowledge regularly. In some areas, pupils' knowledge of important geographical vocabulary was less secure. This was noticeable when discussing geographical physical features. This highlights the need to identify explicitly in your planning when certain vocabulary is taught and emphasised.

Teachers link their teaching of geography with other curriculum areas effectively. Pupils love geography. They sang the school song enthusiastically. This song celebrates your links to a school in Uganda. Your international school link enhances pupils' cultural capital, increases their geographical knowledge and develops their citizenship skills. Books are available to support learning throughout classrooms and staff make good use of books and online resources to support teaching. Teaching in geography is enhancing early reading.

Evidence

I met with you and your deputy headteacher, who has overall responsibility for curriculum. I later met with your subject leader for geography and the international schools coordinator. During this second meeting we reviewed your geography curriculum plans. Together we visited lessons in the early years and key stage 1. I spoke to a group of pupils to discuss their learning in geography lessons. I looked at a selection of pupils' geography work in books and samples of Reception children's learning journeys. Finally, I met with teachers to discuss the lesson visits and their approaches to teaching geography.

Context

Lumley Infant and Nursery School has 173 pupils on roll. The vast majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils and the proportion of pupils with SEND are slightly lower than the national averages. Pupil numbers are very stable; few pupils move in and out of the school. Similarly, the teaching staff is stable over time and there has been little turnover of staff.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Reeves
Her Majesty's Inspector