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Mrs J Westley
Executive Headteacher
Chadsmoor CofE (VC) Junior School
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Dear Mrs Westley

Short inspection of Chadsmoor CofE (VC) Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 13 September 2017, 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 October 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Chadsmoor Junior School is developing an effective and purposeful relationship with Chadsmoor Community Infant and Nursery School. The schools have been federated since 2012.

Leaders and governors have managed a period of change and transition at Chadsmoor Junior. Your predecessor retired in December 2016. Prior to your appointment in April 2017, the federation of schools was led jointly by the deputy headteachers from the junior and infant sites. The junior school's journey of improvement has not been adversely affected by changes in leadership. Attainment continues to improve at the end of key stage 2 and progress is in line with national figures.

You have been quick to establish strong and purposeful relationships with the local community. Your leadership team and colleagues share your vision for school improvement and there is a keen sense of energy and ambition among staff.

The school is bright, welcoming and well maintained. Teaching areas have been enhanced to ensure that there is space to deliver extra support and challenge to small groups and individuals. The site and grounds are impressive. Pupils have ample space to learn and play.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Every child I spoke to said that they feel safe in school and enjoy their learning. Pupils are confident that there is always someone to talk to if they have any worries. There is a strong focus on learning in classes. Pupils respect their teachers and want to make progress. Staff enjoy working at Chadsmoor. They are proud of the community they serve.

At the last inspection, leaders and governors were asked to further improve the following areas: helping pupils reach higher levels in mathematics; making more teaching consistently good or better; giving the governing body and middle leaders more opportunities to check the school's strengths and weaknesses; and developing links with the newly federated infant school.

Attainment in mathematics has risen over the last two years and is now above the national average. Staff training and effective subject leadership have resulted in much improved outcomes in this subject. Importantly, the leader of mathematics has responsibility for standards across the infant and junior schools. This has supported developments in assessment. Teachers have had opportunities to moderate one another's judgements. This is resulting in greater consistency and shared expectations across the two schools. There is now scope to extend this key development in leadership to the wider curriculum.

The quality of teaching and learning is improving. There are some very capable and experienced teachers at Chadsmoor. Teachers have developed purposeful and well-organised learning environments. Activities are planned to meet a range of needs. Moreover, pupils' books show strong progress as a result of effective teaching.

The governing body and middle leaders are more involved in monitoring activities. Governors have an accurate view of the school's key strengths and weaknesses. Subject leaders are skilled and are passionate about their respective areas of responsibility.

Links with the infant school have evolved over time and have gained much more momentum in the last 12 months. Governors oversee the performance of both schools. A whole-school assessment system has been established and relationships between leaders are more formalised and purposeful. However, leaders and governors recognise that there is more work to do in sharing what works best across the two schools.

Though standards are improving and outcomes are broadly in line with the national average, leaders acknowledge that development plans must now have even greater precision. The desired impact of leaders' actions is not consistently clear enough in school documentation. Governors require a greater level of detail so that they can fully hold leaders to account. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and the most able also have scope for further improvement.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Arrangements to keep pupils safe are fit for purpose. Teachers whom I spoke to are clear about their responsibilities. Agreed processes are followed and any concerns are acted upon. Vulnerable pupils are well supported, including those who have social or emotional needs. Skilled learning mentors are on hand to support pupils who have any difficulties and help them stay on track. Fixed-term exclusions have fallen considerably since the last inspection. Pupils and parents say that they feel school is a safe place to be. We agreed during our meeting that it would now be beneficial to further align how records are compiled across the infant and junior sites.

Inspection findings

- I met with you and your leaders at the start of the inspection to review your self-evaluation and school improvement plans. As a result of our discussion, we agreed several key lines of enquiry to focus inspection activities. These included: examining the extent to which leaders are developing effective links between the infant and junior settings; reviewing the accuracy and use of assessment information; checking how well the most able pupils are challenged; and inspecting the use of pupil premium funding.
- Leaders are now routinely sharing information about their subjects and areas of responsibility across both schools. This has led to key improvements. The use of assessment information, and opportunities for teachers to moderate the judgements that they make about pupils' learning, have been enhanced considerably.
- However, not all subject areas have developed and improved at the same rate. The most effective aspects of leadership are not yet shared widely enough.
- Assessment systems are much more robust. Pupils are tracked using a bespoke system devised by leaders. Data about pupils' achievement is triangulated with work in books and other monitoring activities. These combined activities ensure greater levels of reliability. Leaders also meet with teachers every half term to discuss how pupils are progressing. Following meetings, additional support is established to help pupils catch up or provide further challenge.
- Teachers' planning and questioning take account of the most able pupils' needs. This group of pupils are well challenged in lessons day to day and also benefit from additional classes. Pupils' books and assessment information show strong progress. However, though the proportion of pupils attaining at a higher standard is improving year on year, it is not yet in line with the national average. The most effective strategies used by teachers to secure challenge are not routinely shared across the school and federation.
- Outcomes for 2016, and provisional data for 2017, indicate that disadvantaged pupils are not achieving as well as their peers. Though pupils' work and leaders' checks on learning show that the picture is improving, there is still more work to be done to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve at the highest possible standard. Leaders have devised special programmes of support to diminish any

differences. Governors regularly discuss the impact of funding and are aware of the differences that exist.

- The local authority has provided support to the school during the recent changes in leadership. Deputy headteachers have been well supported to ensure that school improvement work is maintained during the absence of a substantive headteacher. Support has also extended to developing subject leaders and the work of the governing body. The local authority has an accurate view of the school's effectiveness.
- All of the parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said that their child is happy and feels safe at school. One parent commented via free text: 'My child really enjoys coming to school and feels valued here. I feel that the school is helping him reach his potential with challenging and varied work.' This view was typical of many other responses received during the inspection. Some parents identified that they would welcome further developments in communication. Leaders and governors acknowledge this feedback and have implemented new systems.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- school development plans include further detail about the desired impact of actions so that governors can more fully hold leaders to account for school improvement
- the best teaching and most effective aspects of middle leadership are shared more widely both within school and across the federation
- the achievement of disadvantaged pupils remains at the forefront of development plans and monitoring activities so that any differences continue to diminish.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Keay
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher at the start of the inspection to review your self-evaluation and agree key lines of enquiry.

I reviewed the school's single central record and scrutinised a range of documents including: child protection files; attendance information; behaviour records; risk assessments; training records; and referrals. I discussed safeguarding procedures with leaders, learning mentors and class teachers.

I met with parents at the start of the school day, and reviewed the 37 responses to Parent View and the 17 comments via Ofsted's free-text service. I took account of 18 responses to the pupil survey and eight returns from the staff survey.

I undertook a learning walk with the senior leadership team and visited every year group. I reviewed the impact of teaching by checking on learning and rates of progress in a range of books. I focused book scrutinies on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils. These activities were undertaken jointly with leaders.

I met with five governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, and a co-opted governor who is also the deputy headteacher at the federated infant school.

I spoke with Staffordshire's commissioning manager for school improvement on the telephone.