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Mrs Paula Duynstee
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Dear Mrs Duynstee

Short inspection of Boughton Leigh Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 25 April 2018, 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 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Your clear vision and determination have contributed well to the recent improvements in the school. You were appointed to the role of headteacher in September 2016 and have since put in place a range of new initiatives. These changes have had a positive impact on pupils' learning and their personal development. During this academic year, significant and unforeseen staffing absence has been managed very well.

You have worked with pupils, parents and carers, and staff to ensure that your school vision lives out in pupils' everyday experiences. Your core school values of 'Supportive, Tolerant, Aspirational, Respectful, Successful (STARS)' are well known by pupils and evident in their behaviours. Relationships are nurturing and caring across the school. Consequently, pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. One particularly striking characteristic of the school is pupils' pride in their displayed work. High-quality and wide-ranging curriculum work is celebrated and shared in corridors and on classroom walls.

The quality of leadership is good, although there are some refinements that need to be made. You have successfully steered the school through a period of transition from three to four classes in each year group. In response to this, you restructured the leadership team and put in place year-group leaders. Three senior leaders have

been temporarily absent during this academic year. However, other leaders have stepped into their roles, enabling school improvement to continue. You are well supported by senior and middle leaders. Together, you have a good understanding of the priorities for the school. Improvement plans are focused and clearly outline when actions will take place and who is responsible for them. You evaluate the effectiveness of teaching on a regular basis and give teachers clear feedback on how they can improve different aspects of their classroom practice.

One area that requires further development is the evaluation of pupil premium strategies for disadvantaged pupils. There is a range of thoughtful initiatives in place. For example, some disadvantaged pupils who have emotional and social barriers receive positive additional support through the school's nurture provision. Attainment for disadvantaged pupils is rising, but is still not high enough by the end of key stage 2. The impact of additional support to improve their reading, writing and mathematics skills is not evaluated precisely enough. As a result, leaders and governors do not have a sufficient understanding of which strategies are proving most or least successful. Further work here will enable leaders and governors to channel the pupil premium funding into the strategies that are most likely to raise pupils' attainment.

Areas for improvement that were outlined at the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. Teaching, particularly in the lower part of key stage 2, has improved and is now consistently good. Teachers intervene effectively during lessons by questioning pupils to check or develop pupils' understanding. Pupils' mathematics books demonstrate that they use efficient methods for written calculations. Another area for improvement outlined at the previous inspection was to enrich pupils' creative skills. The array of pupils' art work displayed around school, coupled with the impact of the music specialist, demonstrate the positive actions that have taken place in this area.

You have worked well with staff to develop a rich curriculum. There is a list of curriculum experiences that all pupils will receive by the time they leave the school. Curriculum activities such as going to the theatre, doing something for the community and raising funds for charity, add value to pupils' personal development. A powerful part of the curriculum is the additional writing opportunities that pupils receive. Teachers find interesting ways to weave writing into the curriculum topics. This has positive impact on writing standards across the school and by the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected and higher standards in writing is above the national average.

Governors are passionate about the school and keen to secure sustained improvement. Each governor carries out visits into school with a focus on their specific area of responsibility, so that they can evaluate the quality of leaders' work. The governor who is responsible for safeguarding makes rigorous checks to ensure that the designated safeguarding leads are carrying out their statutory responsibilities. Governors' understanding of the impact of pupil premium strategies and the end of key stage 2 performance data is not strong enough.

A wide range of enrichment opportunities contributes well to pupils' personal development. Pupils thrive in the various leadership responsibilities that they are given. The head boy and head girl, along with other pupils, contribute to the school newsletter. The representatives of the 'houses of parliament' take an active role in the development of the school and instigated first-aid lessons being taught to pupils. Opportunities for physical activity and school sport are strong. Pupils enjoy carrying out smaller runs in school in order to contribute to completing the 'marathon challenge'. They also take part in a range of extra-curricular clubs and compete against other schools in different sports.

Safeguarding is effective.

The arrangements for safeguarding are well organised and thoroughly understood by staff. The capacity for the leadership of safeguarding is strong because a number of staff are trained to a senior level. All staff receive relevant and regular training, so that they have a good understanding of key risks, such as how to recognise different forms of abuse. The designated safeguarding leads have effective systems for monitoring and following through concerns raised by staff. Consequently, pupils are well cared for and safe.

Safety is taught well across the curriculum and enables pupils to have an effective understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are very clear about the risks associated with the internet and know that they must not give out personal details to people online. Pupils are also clear about the definition of bullying. They were keen to share that bullying is rare and when it does happen, staff quickly address it.

Inspection findings

- At the end of key stage 2 in 2016 and 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading was below the national average. In 2017, the progress score was significantly below the national average. You responded to this decline by putting in place several new approaches to improve the teaching of reading. The whole-class text approach stimulates good discussion between teachers and pupils. Pupils follow up discussion with activities to develop key skills, such as skimming and scanning, prediction and inference. Training for staff has improved their subject knowledge. This was typified in a Year 3 lesson seen during the inspection where pupils were enjoying reading the 'The Iron Man'. The teacher used skilful questions to build pupils' understanding of new vocabulary, such as 'gloomy', 'sheer' and 'dusk'.
- Pupils are developing a love of reading and know which authors they enjoy. During the inspection, pupils were excited to share that they like reading books by authors such as Agatha Christie, Roald Dahl and David Walliams. You have put in place a regular time in the school timetable for individual reading and a new '100 hours of reading' initiative to reward pupils for reading regularly. The system for pupils to login online and read books at home has enthused them to read beyond the school day. A positive culture for reading has been developed across the school, encouraging pupils to read widely and often.

- As a result of the wide-ranging reading strategies that have been put in place, attainment in reading is rising across the school. Your assessment information shows that the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standards for their age are higher than in previous years. The work in pupils' books shows that their comprehension skills are progressing well over time. You recognise that strategies need to continue to be embedded, so that pupils' improved attainment is reflected in the end of key stage 2 reading test.
- Additional provision to enable weaker readers to catch up is not as strong. You have put in place several interventions to support these pupils, but you do not have strategic oversight of which interventions are proving most successful. These interventions need to be reviewed for their effectiveness. Some weaker readers do not have efficient phonic strategies to work out tricky words. Consequently, reading progress slows for some low prior-attaining and middle prior-attaining pupils. While there has been some training for staff in the teaching of phonics, it has not been embedded deeply enough or spread widely enough among staff.
- In 2016 at the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected and higher standard in mathematics was above the national average. In 2017, the proportion achieving the expected standard declined and was below the national average. There were some complex needs within this cohort of pupils, as well as a number of pupils who entered the school during Years 5 and 6. This did have a negative impact on attainment. However, you have not used this as an excuse and identified that pupils' reasoning skills needed to be improved. Training for staff has developed their confidence and subject knowledge. Work in pupils' books shows that they are using appropriate mathematical language to give effective explanations for their mathematical thinking.
- Fixed-term exclusions have risen steadily over the previous three academic years and have been above the national average. By the end of the academic year 2016/17 exclusions were high. You have taken swift and successful action to address this. Pupils with complex needs are given good support to help manage their behaviour. By refining the use of behaviour support plans, nurture groups, learning mentors, and your work with parents, you have been able to bring about improvement. As a result, fixed-term exclusions have declined significantly during the current academic year. Since December 2017, there have been no fixed-term exclusions.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the impact of pupil premium strategies is evaluated more effectively, particularly relating to the additional support for disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics

- staff receive further training to improve the teaching of phonics to weaker readers, so that those pupils can read unfamiliar words accurately and confidently
- information about the impact of additional support for weaker readers is gathered together and evaluated, so that leaders know exactly how successful the support is being
- governors have a better shared understanding of end of key stage 2 test results for reading and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Matt Meckin
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, your deputy headteacher and other leaders. I also met with four governors. I spoke to pupils informally and formally. I made short visits to eight lessons with you and looked at a range of pupils' books. I spoke to parents at the start of the day and considered 48 free-text responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. I also considered the responses from the online questionnaire completed by pupils and staff.

I scrutinised various documents including the school's self-evaluation, the improvement plan and the documents that you use to check the quality of teaching. You shared with me the most recent assessments of pupils' attainment and progress. We discussed the national test results and assessments undertaken by pupils in 2016 and 2017. I also looked at the school's published information on the website, as well as minutes of governing body meetings and information about attendance, behaviour and safety.