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Mr Chris Davidson
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Davidson

Short inspection of Wigmore Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 1 May 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 July 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You balance your high expectations with care and concern for pupils, staff and parents. One parent told me that she wanted 'to give a big shout out for the school because the staff are so committed and the headteacher is amazing' and other parents agreed with this view during the inspection. Staff who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire were very positive about your leadership. They said that they are proud to be a member of staff and that they enjoy working at the school. They feel that leaders are supportive of them. Your deputy headteacher shares your high expectations of what pupils and staff can do. This means she has continued the drive for ongoing improvement while you have been supporting another school. Your self-evaluation is accurate. It indicates that Wigmore Primary School is a good school and my inspection findings confirm this view.

You have worked hard with your governors to maintain the strengths identified at the previous inspection, such as making rigorous checks on teaching and encouraging pupils to show good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. At the time of the previous inspection, you were asked to make sure that teachers give pupils enough opportunities to write in subjects other than English. Displays around the school show clearly that teachers do this well. Pupils' topic books include, for example, writing instructions in design technology about how to make a plait and descriptions in geography of local towns and villages using previous learning in history. You were asked to make sure that teachers planned activities which challenge the most able pupils. In lessons, pupils are routinely given high

levels of challenge in some classrooms but you acknowledged that this is not yet consistent across the school. I looked at staff training records and there was not enough training specifically for meeting the needs of the most able pupils.

Parents I spoke with during the inspection were very positive about your leadership. The responses that parents made to Ofsted's online questionnaire were also very positive. They say you deal well with bullying. One parent wrote, 'The progress we see from our daughter in her... emotional education every term is fantastic.' They said that staff are approachable and this means that they feel able to raise any concerns that they have.

You have recently worked with staff on how pupils develop their skills during their time at Wigmore Primary School. This work is successfully supporting ongoing improvement. We saw examples of this in pupils' books. In Year 1, pupils recalled factual information about Queen Victoria from a given text. In Year 5, pupils wrote a newspaper report using the example of an account they had read. Leaders have also worked on a programme of enrichment activities which focuses on life skills. For example, in Years 1 and 2 sewing supports pupils to develop their resilience and organisational skills. In Years 3 and 4, working outside in the woodland area helps pupils with teamwork, social skills and problem-solving. In Years 5 and 6, the 'school of rock' helps them learn how to resolve conflict.

You told me that pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare remain a strength of the school. Inspection evidence confirms this view. Pupils display the school's values of tolerance, respect and cooperation while on the playground and around the school. They play together well. They know the playground rules and why they are important. They all said they have an adult to talk to if they are worried or concerned. Pupils are keen to learn and they participate well in lessons. They present their work neatly and this shows they take pride in their work. Along with their parents, they say that the school's work on mental health and well-being makes them feel safe. Activities in sports, such as competitions, support this work. Responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey were largely positive. Most pupils said they would recommend the school to a friend. They feel that they learn a lot.

Governors strike a happy balance of challenge and support. They share your high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Governors know the school well. They make regular visits, which celebrate successes. They challenge through their robust questioning, for example about the 2017 outcomes from national assessments at the end of key stages 1 and 2. Governors take their roles seriously and make sure statutory requirements are fulfilled. They ensure pupils' safety because they monitor the school's safeguarding processes effectively and they are involved in all appointments of new staff. Governors play an active part in evaluating the school's effectiveness. They work closely with you and your leaders to decide on priorities for improvement for the following year.

Safeguarding is effective.

This is a caring school where pupils are known as individuals. The strong culture of safeguarding sits at the heart of the school's work. You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are vigilant. They know how to spot changes in pupils' behaviour and appearance which might suggest a safeguarding concern. They understand well their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe.

Leaders carry out thorough checks when staff, governors and volunteers are recruited. Records of these checks are well maintained on the single central record. You and your designated safeguarding leads have ensured that all staff understand their responsibilities for reporting concerns. You are at great pains to make sure that record-keeping is accurate and robust. This enables you and your safeguarding team to follow up the concerns raised, including with external agencies and professionals where necessary, in an effective and timely manner.

Pupils say that bullying is rare but that adults deal with it swiftly when it happens. They say that racist incidents are very rare. If either occurs, you make sure that staff work with the culprit as well as the victim and this means that pupils regard the outcome of these incidents as being fair.

Inspection findings

- At our first meeting we agreed the areas of the school's work which I would look at in greater detail, to check whether the school remains good. Aside from safeguarding, the first area I explored was how well pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and some of the boys are supported and encouraged to attend school. Published information for 2016 indicates that these pupils did not attend as regularly as pupils nationally. Fixed-period exclusions and repeat exclusions had been above the national figure for three years.
- You and your governors have set the bar high for pupils' attendance. Leaders have worked hard to address this issue and you have been successful because the attendance figures for these groups of pupils are now average. You shared with me compelling evidence for marked improvements in attendance for pupils with whom you have worked very closely. A small number of pupils, some of whom have SEN and/or disabilities, still do not attend enough. You acknowledged this and are fully committed to continuing to work relentlessly to make sure they attend regularly.
- The rate of fixed-period exclusions has reduced significantly. During the inspection, I noted that pupils respond readily to adult direction and this indicates that the school's agreed system for managing pupils' behaviour is unobtrusive and effective. In addition, I saw that pupils who had been at risk of being permanently excluded from other schools were exceptionally well settled in class and learning well.

- The second area I looked at was the standards the most able pupils in key stage 1 reach in reading. This is because in 2017 too few pupils reached the higher standard, despite a sizeable proportion leaving the early years with a good level of development.
- Overall, the most able pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in reading. However, some do not make the rapid progress they are capable of because they are not moved on quickly enough in their learning. This is particularly true in phonics, where the most able pupils are given work to do that is too easy for them. You are aware of this and have started to address the issue.
- We agreed that other pupils' learning is also slowed, at times, because they are not moved on promptly. Where this is the case, teachers do not give pupils tasks to do which make them think hard enough in lessons. For example, during the inspection we saw some pupils 'marking time' by completing a very simple activity when they could have moved on to something much more challenging straight away. The work in pupils' books indicates that this is typical over time.
- The third area I considered was whether the most able pupils in key stage 2 were being challenged well enough. This was because in 2017 too few reached the higher standard in the national assessments. You and your leaders have correctly identified this as an area for more work and the impact of your efforts was evident during the inspection. The work you have done on developing pupils' skills systematically has been instrumental in making sure that the most able pupils do the very best they can.
- In pupils' books, we saw evidence of work at the higher levels in each year group in the key stage. For example, in Year 3 we saw pupils calculating remainders in mathematics. In Year 4, we saw examples of pupils using characterisation to make their creative writing more interesting. In Year 5, we saw pupils drawing 'the worst shape for a fish' and then explaining that it was the worst shape because water resistance would act on it. In Year 6, we saw pupils switching between formal and informal language in a leaflet about a zoo.
- During the learning walk, we saw teachers and teaching assistants in Years 5 and 6 using their strong subject knowledge to stretch and challenge the thinking of the most able pupils. Conversations with pupils and the work in their exercise books show clearly that this is typical. We saw teachers using questions which made pupils think hard about their learning. Pupils were grappling with tricky concepts such as calculating the area of compound shapes where key measurements were missing from the diagram. Pupils were given opportunities to explain their thinking. This was especially pleasing to see because you and your leaders have been working with staff recently on this aspect of learning.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide pupils with appropriate challenge, in a timely fashion, so that they make more rapid progress

- phonics teaching meets the needs of the most able pupils fully so that a greater proportion reach the higher standard in reading at the end of key stage 1.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Jones
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke with you, your deputy headteacher, your assistant headteachers, your safeguarding team and a group of governors. I also spoke to the school's improvement partner. You and your deputy headteacher joined me as I visited classrooms. Your deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers looked at pupils' exercise books with me. Four Year 2 pupils read to me. I spoke to parents at the start of the day and to pupils and staff during the day. I took account of 41 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View, and 38 responses from staff to the Ofsted online questionnaire for staff. I also took account of the pupils' responses to their Ofsted online questionnaire. I read the school's documentation, including the summary of self-evaluation, the school development plan, the documentation about the development of pupils' skills and notes from your meetings with your school improvement partner. I read your documentation relating to safeguarding.