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Mrs Colette Hatton
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Hatton

Short inspection of Lapworth CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 May 2016, 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 February 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have set a clear and ambitious direction for the school. Your commitment, drive and passion for the highest quality of care and education have ensured that pupils at Lapworth achieve well and are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils are very proud of their school. You and your staff provide rich and exciting opportunities to allow pupils to become inquisitive and confident learners. Pupils value the advice, guidance and support provided by their teachers and other adults in the school. They are articulate, polite and self-assured. When asked what they liked most about Lapworth, most pupils referred to the inclusive nature of the school; 'everyone here is really friendly' they said. Equally, parents hold very positive views about the school. Typical comments include 'I feel the school is ambitious and forward thinking' and 'this is a lovely school – warm, friendly, approachable staff with a strong sense of community'.

Since the last inspection there have been some staffing changes but you have ensured that all those joining the school are closely monitored and responsibilities allocated to ensure all staff contribute to improving outcomes for pupils. As a result, teaching and leadership have been strengthened. Pupils have continued to make good progress as they move through the school and standards have remained

above or well above average over time at the end of early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2.

Effective action has been taken to address the issues identified at the last inspection. You and other leaders have concentrated on accelerating the rates of progress for key stage 1 pupils in mathematics and, as a result, attainment has been well above the national average in three out of the last four years. Pupils' ability to use mental and calculation strategies has improved and teachers plan tasks which enable pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subject areas. Your own records of teaching over time show that 100% of teaching is consistently good with some which is outstanding. This was validated by the checks carried out during the inspection of the school's own data, pupils' books, discussions with pupils and observations of teaching.

Safeguarding is effective.

You take your safeguarding responsibilities very seriously and ensure that the safety of pupils is a collective responsibility. Record-keeping and systems in place are highly organised and efficient. Your own training as the designated lead for safeguarding is fully up to date and staff have also received recent training so that they know the procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child's well-being. You make sure that referrals are made to the relevant agencies in an efficient and timely manner where concerns are of a serious nature so that pupils and families get the support needed or investigations are carried out.

You and your governors are meticulous in the checks you make when recruiting staff to make sure they are suitable to work with children. Staff are familiar with the latest guidance on 'Keeping children safe in education' as this has been shared with them and information incorporated into school policies. The school site is safe and secure. Visitors are appropriately checked on arrival. Risk assessments are duly carried out when pupils go out of school so that all potential dangers have been considered. You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- Your evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement is honest and accurate. You and your leadership team examine data in great detail and systematically check the quality of teaching to determine where further improvements can be made. Precise action plans with quantifiable targets are in place to raise achievement further and improve outcomes. For example, following a dip in pupils' progress in reading in key stage 2 in 2015, a greater focus was placed on how reading is taught. New books were purchased, monitoring of reading lessons was conducted and additional support provided for pupils. As a result, pupils are now making better rates of progress across the school, but especially in key stage 2.
- Following the removal of national curriculum levels, you have successfully introduced a new assessment system. Teachers accurately assess which pupils are working at, above or below the levels expected for their age. This

information has been successfully collated by year group, subject and pupil group, including boys, girls, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs. However, you are still working on developing an effective system to record pupils' progress from their different starting points. You have made a good start on this and some information was presented during the inspection. However, the progress of the most able pupils is not yet included on the summaries produced. Plans are in place to share the new style of presenting progress information with the full governing body and determine the criteria to distinguish whether progress is 'expected' or 'better than expected'.

- Subject leaders make a significant contribution to maintaining the quality of teaching in the school and detecting where additional support is required to ensure pupils achieve well. They monitor teaching regularly and provide clear and helpful feedback to their colleagues. All areas of the curriculum are reviewed and you diligently check subject leader files and identify areas for improvement where appropriate. Subject leaders model good practice for colleagues and lead training to ensure teachers have the skills needed to promote good progress in all year groups.
- Governors are very knowledgeable and aspirational. They provide very high levels of challenge and support to you and other leaders to hold you fully to account. They regularly visit school to carry out monitoring activities with subject leaders to gain first-hand knowledge of priority areas. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school through leading assemblies, accompanying school trips and helping to run the school library. As a result, they have a good relationship with the pupils. They also gather parent and pupil views regularly to make sure that areas of concern are swiftly addressed. They send out termly newsletters to parents and have reintroduced an annual parent-governor report to maintain good channels of communication. Governors have a secure understanding of data and know which groups are attaining well. They acknowledge that the presentation of progress data is in its embryonic stage due to changes in assessment systems.
- Children make good progress in the early years because they are taught well. They join school with skills and knowledge which are broadly typical for their age. By the end of Reception Year, the large majority reach a good level of development with many exceeding this. Children build well on their basic skills as imaginative activities that excite and engage children are planned. These are often based on class topics and extend children's social, communication and literacy skills. For example, during the inspection, children made mini beasts out of playdoh and labelled them, while others hid their toy insects outside the classroom and wrote clues for other children to find. Children's language use is highly developed with words such as 'camouflaged' being used about the insects hidden. Teachers assess children on entry to Reception Year. However, assessments made are, on occasion, overly cautious. This is because teachers and leaders do not use all of the information available, for example evidence of home learning, records from pre-school settings, work in children's book and standardised tests to inform their judgement of children's attainment on entry.

- Published information shows that pupils make outstanding progress in mathematics as you and your staff have responded fully to the key issue raised at the previous inspection. Very high levels of challenge are presented for pupils and reasoning and problem-solving skills are developing well. For example, Year 6 pupils had to use a range of skills and strategies to work out the cost and weight of the ingredients to make a cake. Mental calculations together with problem-solving skills were required. Pupils skilfully worked out cost and weight and demonstrated confidence and good levels of mental agility. However, on occasion, some teachers introduce too many mathematical concepts into lessons and pupils become confused.
- Reading is strongly promoted across the school and many pupils love reading. Visits to the library, daily reading and a range of texts all help to encourage pupils to read widely and often. Pupils can discuss their favourite author and many spend playtime engrossed in their latest favourite novel. Pupils' writing has also been an area of focus for you and your leaders. High expectations are set in terms of content, presentation and accuracy. In accordance with the school policy, teachers pay due regard to pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling when marking pupils' books and provide helpful guidance and feedback. Pupils are able to write at length and books checked show that the quality of writing is equally good in other subjects, such as science and religious education (RE). The school's own information shows that standards are above average in reading and writing in all year groups.
- Teachers plan tasks which meet the needs of pupils with different abilities. Suitable tasks and additional support are provided for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs. This enables them to make equal progress to their classmates and prevents them from falling behind. High levels of challenge are presented for the most able, with older pupils often selecting their own level of challenge. All adults use appropriate subject vocabulary and terminology when teaching phonics, writing and mathematics so that pupils are familiar with the technical terms. Teaching assistants are used well and provide effective support wherever needed. Some make notes and gather information about pupils' abilities for assessment purposes, for example in the early years.
- Your pupils are a credit to your school. They are extremely polite, welcoming and friendly to visitors. They have exemplary attitudes to learning and apply themselves 100% to every task given. They show high levels of resilience and determination when work is demanding. They behave well in and around school at all times. They cooperate fully with each other in lessons and also share playground equipment sensibly. Pupils told me that teachers make lessons fun and that everyone gets on well together. They said that behaviour is always good and that there is no bullying because the 'behaviour ladders' in classrooms are used effectively. They particularly like the rewards in place for demonstrating good behaviour, for example the termly raffle to win a pub lunch in Years 4 to 6, or afternoon tea in Reception Year to Year 3. Pupils feel safe and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. They enjoy school and, as a result, attendance is above average.

- You ensure that pupils are fully involved in the community and that they are taught about the local history of the area. High-quality displays add to the school's bright and vibrant environment and help celebrate pupils' work. Classrooms also display helpful prompts to aid learning. All areas are clean, tidy and well looked after. Pupils are taught to respect adults and each other. They have a good understanding of those from other cultures and with different beliefs as these are well taught in RE. Pupils have a secure understanding of British values as these are linked to the school values, such as 'taking responsibility', and also taught in assemblies and lessons.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all available evidence collected about children's starting points in Reception Year is used to inform leaders' judgements about attainment on entry
- the system for tracking pupils' progress is developed further, including that of the most able pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Heather Simpson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you and your leadership team, groups of pupils and the chair and other members of the governing body. Together, you and I visited all classrooms and spoke to pupils about their learning. We looked at the work in their books. I spoke informally to parents as they collected their children from school and took account of the 33 responses to Parent View and comments made. Documents and records relating to pupils' achievement, teaching, leadership, attendance and safeguarding were scrutinised.