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Sally Cowell  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Cowell

### **Short inspection of Shaw Ridge Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 September 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in July 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 and your staff have created a school in which everyone works together, driven on by the moral purpose of achieving the best possible outcomes for pupils. You have, in the last year, restructured the leadership of the school, establishing a core strategic group as part of a wider senior leadership team. Roles and responsibilities are now clearer than in the past and this reorganisation has had a positive impact on, for example, pupils' progress in mathematics at key stage 2.

In your work to improve the education provided by the school you are supported effectively by the governors, who display a sound knowledge of the strengths of the school and the areas that require further work. This enables them to carry out their role of strategic oversight successfully and to provide the necessary level of support and challenge to you and your senior staff. Your school, while remaining a stand-alone academy, is also a member of an 'umbrella trust', The Link Academies Collaborative Trust, along with three other primary schools in west Swindon. You are making effective use of this partnership as a vehicle for sharing best practice.

The culture of the school is firmly built on the principle of staff working closely with families and the local community in the best interests of all the pupils. Parents are very pleased with the education their children receive. In the online survey, Parent

View, the vast majority of them said that they would recommend the school and many added very supportive statements about their experiences. Comments focused in particular on how well you and your staff know the needs of each individual pupil. Moreover, most of the parents whose children have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and who took the opportunity to comment, spoke highly of the support that their families had received from you and your staff. Staff morale is high, with all those who responded to the staff survey indicating that they feel proud to work at the school. Overall, therefore, Shaw Ridge Primary School works well as a learning community in which pupils achieve well.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You, staff and governors have created a culture of vigilance based on a good understanding of each individual pupil's circumstances and needs. Coupled with a strong knowledge of the local community, this enables you to take swift action should any child appear to be vulnerable to any type of risk or danger. All staff have received regular and up-to-date training that helps them to support you in keeping children safe.

Your latest safeguarding policy takes into account the most recent guidance provided by the Secretary of State, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', (September 2016). You ensure that the necessary checks are made on all staff prior to their taking up their appointments. There were, however, a number of omissions in the single central register that records these checks, although these were promptly put right on the morning of the inspection.

### **Inspection findings**

- The reorganisation of the senior leadership team has enabled the deputy head to carry out his role of leading teaching and learning effectively, which has improved pupils' outcomes. You have made the special educational needs coordinator a full-time post to bring still greater focus to the support that families so welcome in their comments.
- The Link Academies Collaborative Trust offers added capacity across its partnership schools by introducing initiatives such as joint training days and common induction processes for newly qualified teachers. The collaborative sharing of good practice has proved fruitful for your staff and pupils.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics has improved as a result of initiatives introduced by you and senior leaders. Recently, school leaders have focused on developing teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics and, as a consequence, in the 2016 key stage 2 national curriculum assessments, more pupils reached the expected standard than the national average and more also attained a high standard.
- Pupils at Shaw Ridge make good progress in their literacy during the early years and at key stage 1. The proportion of children achieving the literacy component of the early years foundation stage profile remains higher than the national figure, as it has been for a number of years now. Similarly, the proportion of pupils passing the Year 1 phonics screening check also remains

higher than the national average.

- Pupils read well. I listened to a range of pupils reading, including the most and the less able, and also heard other pupils reading aloud during observations in lessons. All demonstrated the ability to use phonics to help them read fluently, especially when they encountered difficult or unfamiliar words.
- At key stage 2 in 2016, the proportion of pupils who reached a high standard in reading was well above the national figure, indicating that the most able make particularly good progress in reading. The outcomes for writing, which are based on moderated teacher assessment, were not as strong, and leaders understand the need to focus on this in the future. Nonetheless, scrutiny of current pupils' work across a wide range of subjects, including science and topic work in history and geography, shows that pupils do make good progress in writing. Furthermore, the school's high score in the grammar, punctuation and spelling test in the 2016 key stage 2 results demonstrates that the school has put the foundations for success in writing securely in place. This too was seen clearly in the work of current pupils across the curriculum.
- Taking the 2016 key stage 2 national curriculum assessment results as a whole, a higher proportion of pupils than nationally reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined. The scores for each component were all also above the national averages.
- Disadvantaged pupils at Shaw Ridge make broadly good progress across the curriculum. The school's own tracking of disadvantaged pupils' progress correlates well with evidence gathered on inspection and on the results of the national curriculum assessments. Scrutiny of the most able disadvantaged pupils' work in mathematics and literacy, for example, indicates that they make secure and good progress at key stage 2. In 2016 all the most able disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard in the national curriculum tests in reading, writing and mathematics. There is some fluctuation over time in the proportions of disadvantaged children achieving a good level of development in the early years or attaining the expected standard at key stage 1, but the results are based on small numbers of pupils and must be treated with caution. Nonetheless, work scrutinised during inspection indicates that broadly good progress is being made by these children as well.
- School leaders regularly review the provision for disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium (although the results of this evaluation for 2015/16 have yet to be placed on the school's website). Frequent reviews of pupils' performance throughout the year mean that the provision for these pupils is fine tuned. A combination of approaches both in and outside the classroom is used in the drive to diminish the differences between the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those of other pupils with similar starting points. In particular, the needs of the most able disadvantaged pupils are addressed effectively by providing opportunities such as music lessons or performing arts and book clubs, opportunities which many of these pupils regularly take up.
- Attendance continues to improve and is currently above the national average.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the teaching of writing rapidly adjusts to the demands of the new national curriculum at key stage 2 so that pupils' outcomes are as good in writing as in other subjects such as reading and mathematics
- further improvement in teaching leads to progress in mathematics that is as good at key stage 1 as it is at key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lee  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I began the inspection by meeting with you to discuss your self-evaluation of the quality of education provided by the school. I also undertook observations of learning in lessons with you. During these observations and at other times I took the opportunity to scrutinise the work in pupils' books. I talked to pupils and also listened to pupils with a range of abilities reading. I held meetings with members of the senior leadership team and looked at the school's own records of pupils' progress. I also met with members of the governing body and with two headteachers from other schools in The Link Academies Collaborative Trust. I spoke to parents at the start of the day and also took into account the 19 responses to the online survey, Parent View. I examined the 25 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

This inspection was focused, in particular, on the following key lines of enquiry:

- What actions are leaders and managers taking to ensure that progress in mathematics is good?
- What actions are leaders and managers taking to ensure that progress in reading and writing is good?
- How effectively are school leaders promoting the progress of disadvantaged pupils, especially the most able disadvantaged pupils, across the curriculum?
- How effective is safeguarding?