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Mrs Sharon Coles  
Headteacher  
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Bedfordshire  
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Dear Mrs Coles

### **Short inspection of Turvey Lower School**

Following my visit to the school on 20 June 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 July 2013.

#### **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 team have continued to preserve the caring ethos which is valued by pupils and parents. One parent stated that 'Turvey Lower is a nurturing, safe environment for our child and we feel the education that he receives is excellent.' Inspection evidence confirms that Turvey Lower School is a school in which pupils' personal development and welfare are provided for well.

Almost half of the pupils who go to Turvey Lower School are from outside the local village. The school's strong reputation for pastoral care has meant that parents with children who need additional support will choose Turvey Lower School in preference to schools nearer their homes. It is testament to your leadership that parents have purposely moved to the school to benefit from the school's support. Over the last two years, there has been an increase in numbers of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities entering the school.

You have ensured that staff are continually developing their practice so that they have the necessary skills to support pupils with many different needs. You use funding effectively to support staff training to establish an awareness of the many complex additional needs pupils have. Observations during the inspection demonstrated how teachers adapt their teaching significantly to meet the needs of the pupils. The school's 'steps to success' enable activities to be broken down into smaller, achievable tasks so that all pupils are able to access the learning.

Purposeful links made in lessons to pupils' prior learning engage those who find learning difficult. Parents commented positively to me about their appreciation of the support leaders and teachers have given to their children and families.

Pupils who are most vulnerable are well cared for. You are able to demonstrate the accelerated progress children have made, particularly in communication and language and in social and emotional aspects of learning.

Pupils behave well throughout the school. Leaders' monitoring, along with what I observed, demonstrates that behaviour in lessons is typically respectful and kind. Pupils respond well to clearly understood routines and are orderly and sensible when moving around the school. Pupils work well together in mixed-age classes and demonstrate confidence and maturity when speaking with adults.

As a small village school, you and other leaders are acutely aware of the need to seek support and professional development to keep abreast of latest initiatives and to continually develop teaching and learning strategies to improve outcomes for all pupils. You have established strong alliances with other schools through the school's partnership programme. This has enabled you to develop your own leadership further, as well as provide peer support for other staff members. This support, along with your own commitment to be ready for the move to primary school status starting in September 2017, is ensuring that plans are firmly in place for Year 5 this year and your first Year 6 cohort in 2018.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders, including governors, ensure that the school fulfils its statutory safeguarding duties. Every parent who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their child is safe, happy and well looked after at Turvey Lower School. Pupils told me that they enjoy and like everything about the school. They understood what bullying was and could not recall any recent incidents. They told me that they are confident that adults would deal with any concerns they may have. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and told me that they learn the dangers of the internet and could describe how they protect themselves from risks when online.

Appropriate safeguarding training has ensured that adults know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil's well-being. Leaders keep detailed records that document concerns and the swift actions taken to follow these up.

Governors ensure that policies are up to date and leaders carry out appropriate checks on adults working at the school. They make sure that they regularly review policies pertaining to safeguarding and that there is sufficient detail to ensure clear guidance on procedures to keep children safe in education.

## Inspection findings

- In my first line of enquiry, I looked to establish how well leaders monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This was because there was a significant fall in some pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1 at the end of 2016. This was particularly notable in girls' achievement in writing and mathematics.
- Using the school's pupil assessment information, you were able to demonstrate that pupils in Year 2 in 2016 made good progress from their varying starting points. Pupils' work and observations demonstrate that these pupils are being effectively supported to make good and better progress in Year 3. We observed teaching and learning in all classes. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure in both English and mathematics. Teachers adapt teaching and learning effectively to meet different pupils' needs, enabling them to make the progress they should.
- Your documentation about teachers' performance, and evidence from lessons and pupils' work, demonstrates that the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is effective. Pupils' progress, staff performance and staff training all closely align to the school's strategic plan. This ensures that key priorities for the school are a focus across all areas of teaching and learning. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment precisely focuses on pupils' different needs, ensuring that they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their different starting points.
- My second line of enquiry was concerned with pupils' underachievement in mathematics in 2016. I observed, with you, the teaching and learning of mathematics in all three classes. There are a wide range of significant pupil needs across the school, which require skilful planning from teachers. Teachers use what they know about the pupils to ensure that work sufficiently supports and challenges pupils, taking into account their different needs and starting points.
- In key stage 1, for example, pupils were engaged in different activities suited to their ability. During a lesson on capacity, pupils considered which container had the largest volume. Pupils used a range of resources to help them find out. They were encouraged to apply a systematic approach, in this case estimating the number of cubes it would take to fill each container. Having estimated, they were able to approach the task with confidence.
- The most able pupils are given tasks which provide sufficient challenge. Consequently, these pupils in key stage 1 make good progress from their starting points in mathematics. In the same mathematics lesson, for example, they were given several measuring containers and asked to estimate and record the number of cups of water required to fill each one. Pupils worked together collaboratively and sensibly. They were able to show their results from their recordings and organised the containers in order of capacity.
- In key stage 2, pupils were given a two-step problem which required them to calculate the remaining holiday fund after calculating the total of trips on a family holiday. Pupils were encouraged to use their chosen methods and explain to their

peers how they had calculated the answer. This resulted in some pupils recognising that they needed to recheck their calculations to finally reach the correct answer. The most able pupils were able to solve more complex problems requiring a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts. As a result, more pupils make good and better progress, with more pupils achieving at the higher standard in mathematics.

- Although pupils have a good grasp of fluency and reasoning, there is a need to ensure that pupils acquire the skills to approach problems which require a deeper knowledge and understanding. You have already identified this, and actions are already in place to develop the skills of teachers further.
- My final line of enquiry looked at how well other subjects are taught across the curriculum. This was an area for improvement in the previous inspection report. Pupils' work shows a range of topics covered which incorporate all areas of the curriculum over the course of the year. The school's curriculum inspires pupils to retain knowledge and transfer skills across different areas of learning. It is evident that pupils receive a broad and rich curriculum which enables them to make strong links across many subjects, embedding knowledge and skills.
- Pupils' work demonstrates cross-curricular links in history and geography. Year 4 pupils spoke enthusiastically about the Romans, Pompeii and the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Pupils' writing reflects factual knowledge woven into their creative stories, giving depth and credibility to their narratives.
- In Year 2, pupils could talk about flight and Leonardo da Vinci's inventions. In discussion, one pupil told me, 'Leonardo da Vinci inventions didn't work', and recognised that the Wright Brothers learned from him. Pupils shared their knowledge of George Stephenson's Rocket and linked it to children working in the coal mines. During the day, children enthusiastically launched their model 'Rockets' they had made. The school offers a range of sports and competes against local teams. Music too is prevalent. The school has a choir and pupils benefit from musical instrument tuition. Pupils attend orchestral workshops at the neighbouring school and play a key role in the village, performing to the local community. Pupils enjoy talking about their learning and are keen to share what they have learned. Pupils' knowledge and work demonstrate that they make good and better progress in subjects across the curriculum.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to develop pupils' mathematical deeper understanding so that more pupils are achieving the higher standards of attainment
- work continues to ensure that, as the school grows, teachers are well informed, pupils' outcomes are sustained and standards remain high.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools

commissioner and the director of children's services for Bedford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Cindy Impey  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

- During the inspection, I met with you, senior leaders and two governors.
- I visited all the classrooms. Examples of children's work from this year and last were looked at. I observed children's behaviour during activities and as they moved around the school.
- I spoke to pupils about their learning and safety and well-being.
- A number of documents were reviewed, including the school's records of monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, the single central record of employment checks, the school's self-evaluation, pupil assessment and progress information, and the school strategic plan.
- I also took account of the 32 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaires completed by parents, and 32 text messages from parents.