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Mrs Danielle Darby
Acting Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Darby

Short inspection of Deyncourt Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 4 July 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. Since your appointment as acting headteacher in November this year, you have demonstrated your resolve to step up the momentum of school improvement. You have kept the focus on the school's ethos of helping children to try their very best, take on challenges and excel in learning. You have sought help and advice from a national leader of education and from a neighbouring outstanding school, and you have enlisted help from the local authority to verify the accuracy of your self-evaluation.

You have drawn up a detailed school development plan, based on accurate analysis of information from assessments and set about training staff to ensure that standards are maintained. This year's national test results show that the percentage of pupils attaining age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics has improved on last year's results, especially in reading in both key stages and mathematics in key stage 1. Pupils said that they enjoy reading because of the many new books that have been purchased. You have successfully ensured that the governors are well informed of your vision for the school and know about the school's strengths and areas for development. However, the school development plan does not contain measurable targets for governors to evaluate whether actions are having a positive impact on the progress of the different groups of pupils.

You are the third headteacher to have led the school since its last inspection in July 2013. A minority of parents expressed concern about the stability of leadership in the school.

Even though you are in a position of being the acting headteacher, you have improved communication with the governors, parents and staff and have brought about openness and transparency in why you are bringing in necessary changes. You are working on improving the website which, at present, has several omissions. Since the last inspection, you have ensured that teachers use MAD ('Making a Difference') time more effectively to help pupils to catch up on responding to comments made as to how they can improve their work.

Pupils' work demonstrates secure progress. You have commissioned an adviser from the local authority to train staff on developing their knowledge and skill in asking more specific and probing questions. This has had a positive impact on this year's test results in reading, which show an improvement in the proportions of pupils reaching age-related expectations.

The survey of staff reveals that morale is high, communication has improved and staff are clear about their next steps of improvement through regular appraisals and your rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. Parents said that they are made to feel welcome when they come into school and that their children eagerly talk about learning when they come home from school. They are particularly pleased with their children's good progress.

In our joint learning walks, we saw the need to tighten up on the presentation of pupils' work, especially for boys of low prior attainment and those receiving support for special educational needs and/or disabilities. In parts of mathematics lessons, in both key stages, teachers missed opportunities to push pupils to justify their answers. This prevented teachers from understanding pupils' minor misconceptions. Nevertheless, since the last inspection the proportion of pupils in Year 2 reaching age-related expectations in mathematics has now risen to 87%, compared with the 71% that achieved the expected level in 2016.

Historic data shows that pupils with low prior attainment, including those that were on the special needs register, identified as receiving support (but who were not identified as having education, health and care plans) were not making swifter progress. We looked at present systems used to evaluate the range of interventions that these pupils are accessing. Pupils are given appropriate learning targets and these are effective for their personal development, but their academic targets are not reviewed promptly enough and so are less effective. Pupils are not always moved on fast enough in their learning to acquire new knowledge. Disadvantaged pupils and those looked after by the local authority are well supported to reach age-related expectations and make secure progress over time, as do pupils of middle prior attainment. This is because you have spent monies wisely on helping teachers to pitch learning that meets their needs. You have effectively addressed the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection.

Your baseline assessments show that the vast majority of disadvantaged pupils in the Reception class over a period of two years had low starting points. While these pupils did not meet the expectations for their age in reading, writing, number, shape, space and measure, they nevertheless made good progress in relation to their low starting points. For example, in the Reception class, outcomes have improved this year, especially for disadvantaged children, because of the innovative ways that you have introduced learning

through the use of superheroes and learning basic skills in the Forest School. All groups of children have made particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.

You and your acting deputy have worked hard at ensuring that the curriculum meets the needs and interest levels of all groups of pupils. The use of 'stunning starts' (an interesting point of entry for a topic) has had a positive effect on pupils' behaviour and their attitude to learning. Pupils in Year 4, for example, went into the Forest School dressed up as people from the Stone Age. In role, they asked questions of their teacher, who was also in role, about the hardships that people suffered during that time.

You and the staff are ambitious for the pupils to develop the many skills and abilities that they need for their life in modern Britain. This is seen in the emphasis placed in every year group on ensuring that pupils have a wide range of opportunities to learn about different faiths and religious traditions, develop their enterprise skills and persevere in learning. Staff are getting better at identifying pupils' starting points and matching tasks to meet their needs. Lessons move at a brisker pace and, in key stage 1, pupils are given more opportunities to problem solve in mathematics.

Outcomes have remained good since the last inspection. From their different starting points, the majority of pupils in all year groups are making good progress and are working at the expected standards for reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils make good progress in their acquisition of developing sounds for reading as demonstrated by the increase in numbers that pass the national Year 1 phonics screening check year on year. You have ensured that an increasing number of pupils are moving towards greater depth in learning because of the recent training that staff have attended on using questioning that deepens pupils' understanding.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, your staff and governors are committed to keeping children safe. You enlist the help of the local authority to do spot checks of your systems and health, and your governors regularly carry out safety audits. Staff know the importance of pupils feeling safe in learning, and relationships throughout the school are warm and supportive. Support staff are vigilant and know what procedures to follow should they suspect that a child is unsafe or at risk of extremism or radicalisation.

Pupils said that they feel safe. They like coming to school as demonstrated by good attendance and punctuality. Your emphasis on personal development, which runs throughout all year groups, enables pupils to talk, write and draw about any concerns that they may have. Pupils said that they are encouraged to talk about any name-calling or bullying that they might experience and they are confident that peer mentors and teachers sort things out straight away.

You have updated all policies linked to safeguarding, and pupils are very clear as to what constitutes bullying and the steps that they need to take to use the internet safely. Pupils have been trained as 'digital ambassadors' and they help their friends use the internet safely. Your records of accidents, any behaviour issues and case studies on vulnerable

pupils, including those of pupils who are in local authority care, are meticulously kept and demonstrate timely actions taken as a result of meetings with a wide range of agencies. You have established close links with local pre-school settings and secondary schools to ensure shared information and continuous support.

All checks on staff, visitors, premises and planned activities are appropriately stored securely and regularly updated. Governors are trained in safer recruitment practices and understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. Parents are pleased about the amount of information that they receive on keeping their children safe on the internet.

Inspection findings

- You, your acting deputy headteacher and the governors have been successful in creating an ambitious culture where children are valued for their uniqueness and work hard to achieve well. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in all subjects was broadly in line with the national figure in 2016. Outcomes in reading were slightly lower. However, the 2017 unvalidated results demonstrate that this has been addressed, as a higher proportion of pupils are reaching age-related expectations in reading. The proportions of pupils working in greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly in line with national figures. Your 2016 results demonstrated that all groups of pupils achieved well in writing, and those eligible for pupil premium funding made good progress in relation to their starting points.
- The inspection had a focus on the progress in reading and mathematics of disadvantaged pupils, those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, those with average prior attainment and pupils with low prior attainment, including boys. Generally all groups are making secure progress. While there are improvements in the progress that pupils of average prior attainment are making, those pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with low prior attainment, especially boys, still struggle with forming their letters correctly. Their writing is not neat and this slows their progress in lessons because they cannot keep up with their peers.
- You have recognised that, when learning in intervention groups, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities spend too long on repeating skills that they already know. This is because in many instances the impact of interventions is only evaluated termly. You have recognised that this is a practice that requires change.
- You have ensured that there is an increased level of challenge for pupils of middle and high prior attainment, by improving teachers' knowledge of the expectations of the curriculum and their questioning skills. You have improved tracking systems, which clearly identify the starting points of different groups of pupils, and this has helped teachers to plan tasks to meet pupils' needs.
- Following your appointment, you introduced training for teachers to improve their teaching of reading skills, and you and your governors purchased 'boy-friendly' books. This has had a positive impact on this year's reading results, which are higher than those of last year.

- You have reviewed the way in which you teach mathematics and have come away from using a published scheme. In the early years and key stage 1, you are now relying more on pupils' understanding number by using photographs of themselves to represent a given amount. This helps them to remember the values of digits. You are aware of the fact that occasionally teachers miss opportunities for pupils to explain how they have reached a particular mathematical conclusion.
- The introduction of regular problem solving in lessons is giving pupils the opportunity to apply what they have learned in lessons to real-life problems.
- You have maintained high standards in writing. Pupils write at length in a range of different subjects. For example, in the older classes, they give lengthy explanations in science as to the importance of eating healthily and they write about the lifestyle of Egyptians and the treasures found in the pyramids.
- Pupils are well prepared to go to secondary school. They are confident learners who know what to do when something appears to be too difficult for them.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers place greater emphasis in lessons on helping pupils of lower prior attainment and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, especially boys, to form their letters correctly and to write neatly
- timely reviews are undertaken of interventions aimed at pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they can move onto new learning at a faster rate
- the school development plan identifies clear success criteria so that governors can evaluate the impact of their spending decisions
- the school website complies with statutory recommendations.

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

Yours sincerely

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, your acting deputy headteacher, your middle leaders with responsibility for reading, writing and mathematics and your special educational needs coordinator. I also spoke to four parents at the start of the school day. I reviewed 39 parents' questionnaires

submitted onto Parents View and subsequent comments. I met with the school improvement adviser, the chair of the governing body and three governors. You, your acting deputy headteacher and I observed parts of lessons together, heard pupils read and spoke to them about their experiences of the school. I considered responses from 20 members of staff.

I took account of the school's self-evaluation, your school development plan, your monitoring of teaching and learning and documentation pertaining to progress since the last inspection. I read various policies, including those for safeguarding, attendance, child protection, curriculum and behaviour.