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Michele Johnson  
Headteacher  
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Dear Ms Johnson

### **Short inspection of Green Lanes Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 12 December 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 June 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Green Lanes Primary has retained the positive, aspirational vision that was identified at the previous inspection. Pupils develop strong academic skills and understanding alongside empathetic social skills. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of education provided for their children at the school. This is evident in the many positive comments made in Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Parents wrote of the 'warm caring school', the 'fantastic staff and leadership' and the 'well-rounded curriculum'. One parent's comment that the school is a 'model example of how a school should be run' was echoed by many others.

Clear and consistent leadership, including that of governors, has ensured that the school has continued to improve. You have a very informed understanding of the school's strengths. Similarly, the areas for development are firmly in the school improvement plan and the plans are already being enacted. Your vision for the success of all pupils is clearly shared by staff, parents and pupils themselves. Governance at Green Lanes is strong. The governing body is well led, providing challenge and support in equal measure. Governors are equally as ambitious for the success of each pupil. Governors visit the school regularly to gather information to inform their understanding of the school's strengths and the improvements that are taking place. Governors use this information to challenge and commend leaders on the quality of education provided.

Pupils behave extremely well, both in class and around the school at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils are respectful, courteous and supportive of the learning of others. They talk enthusiastically about tasks in class and share their ideas to support each other's understanding. Pupils respond very well to teachers' high expectations. You have ensured that pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their skills, understanding and knowledge. The curriculum supports pupils' understanding of the roles and responsibilities of 21st century British citizens. For example, pupils learn about the importance of protecting the environment through geography and ecology lessons. Pupils democratically elect their peers to represent them in the eco-council which oversees the ways in which pupils care for the school environment and the wild wood.

You correctly judge writing to be a strength of the school. Strong leadership has ensured that pupils across the school have a good understanding of how to craft their writing. Pupils use their understanding of how language works and their rich vocabulary to ensure that their writing meets the needs of specific audiences, purposes and text types. As a result, pupils at both key stages achieved significantly above the national average in 2016. In 2017, key stage 2 pupils achieved above the expected standard and the proportion of pupils who achieved greater depth was above the national average.

You and your leaders take effective action where you consider improvements are required. For example, as a result of your work to improve the achievements of disadvantaged pupils, outcomes in reading at key stage 2 improved sharply and were above the national average in 2017. You recognise that there are still areas for the school to improve. For example, disadvantaged pupils do not achieve consistently well in every area of the curriculum. You have a clear strategy in place but it is too early to judge its impact. Additionally, although most pupils make good progress, you know that the proportion of pupils who make rapid progress is inconsistent across the curriculum.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Pupils told me how they felt safe and cared for at the school. They explained to me that if they had a concern, they knew who to go to and they were confident that staff would help them. Parents who responded to Parent View unanimously stated that they were certain that their children were safe, well looked after and happy at school. Pupils are very aware of the possible dangers of the internet and are well informed about how to keep safe.

Pupils understand the many forms that bullying can take. Most pupils told me that they were adamant that it did not take place at Green Lanes and all pupils insisted that if it were to happen, staff would resolve the issue quickly, firmly and effectively.

Leaders, including governors, ensure that all safeguarding procedures are effective. Records, including the checks made on adults who work at the school, are carefully and securely maintained. Inspection evidence demonstrates that when pupils are in

need of support, staff act swiftly and effectively to ensure their safety.

Adults are well trained in safeguarding. They follow the school's system for reporting concerns. Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that pupils receive the most appropriate support and protection.

## **Inspection findings**

- To ascertain that the school remained good, one of my key lines of enquiry was about disadvantaged pupils' achievements across the curriculum. These pupils' progress in reading was above the national average in 2016 and 2017. Similarly, at key stage 1, disadvantaged pupils achieved well in reading, writing, phonics and mathematics in 2016 and 2017. However, key stage 2 disadvantaged pupils did not achieve in line with other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics in 2017. At both key stages, these pupils did not achieve in line with the national average for science in 2016. You have acknowledged the issue and put in place improvements to the teaching, learning and assessment at both key stages.
- You draw on evidence-based research to inform your strategy to ensure that pupils receive the most effective approaches. As a result, disadvantaged pupils receive additional mentoring and tutoring to address learning and social issues and to accelerate their progress. Although progress is evident in many areas at key stage 1 and in reading at key stage 2, it is too early to evaluate the impact on pupils' progress across the curriculum.
- My second line of enquiry was about how leaders are ensuring that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, receive a broad and balanced curriculum. The previous inspection report praised the ways in which pupils developed their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding in many areas of the curriculum. Inspection evidence demonstrates that the curriculum continues to develop pupils' critical thinking skills and understanding of a range of subjects and issues. For example, I observed Year 2 pupils writing instructions for travelling to fairyland by drawing on their understanding of the moral complexities of the characters who inhabit myth and fairy stories, such as giants and wolves.
- You and your leadership team continually monitor and review the curriculum offered to all pupils. Consequently, you and your leaders have established a strong curriculum. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of areas. For example, pupils learn to speak French and develop public speaking in every year group. Pupils told me that they enjoyed their subjects because they were 'fun'. I observed a Year 4 science lesson where pupils enthusiastically hypothesised about the effect of simple circuits, tested out their theories and evaluated what happened.
- You have also ensured that every subject and key stage has an effective leader to drive improvements. Leaders are provided with both time and pertinent resources to ensure that the teaching, learning and assessment of their

respective subjects are effective and engaging. Pupils told me how much they appreciated the many extra-curricular opportunities the school offers. For example, you have provided an impressive range of sports clubs and events, such as turbo cricket and regular mile-long walks.

- Leaders have drawn on both internal and external support. Leaders participate in frequent moderation processes to be assured of the accuracy of their assessments. They are also able to draw on the support of the local authority subject advisers. Although pupils make good progress across the curriculum, a proportion of pupils do not consistently make rapid progress.
- Pupils develop strong reading skills across the curriculum and make good progress at both key stages. However, pupils do not consistently make rapid progress in reading. For example, pupils develop a strong understanding of the language features of texts but do not evaluate the impact on the reader with the same level of sophistication.
- I also sought to establish how well key stage 1 pupils achieved across the curriculum. The previous inspection report noted areas in which the key stage 1 curriculum could be strengthened. The proportion of pupils who achieve well in the phonics screening check in Year 1 has improved rapidly. In 2017, this was above the national average for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, thereby helping pupils to access the curriculum more successfully.
- Determined leadership in the early years has ensured that most children are well prepared for learning in Year 1. A firm focus on developing children's critical skills of early reading, writing and mathematics has resulted in improvements in the number of children who attain a good level of development and their subsequent success at key stage 1.
- Leadership of English is strong. Teachers skilfully support pupils' understanding of how to structure their writing. I observed Year 1 pupils enthusiastically using ambitious vocabulary and punctuation to write a Christmas story. Key stage 1 pupils achieved significantly above the national average in writing in 2016. However, pupils do not make rapid progress in every area of the curriculum.
- My final line of enquiry was about how well pupils keep themselves safe, both in and out of school. Pupils behave very well in class and around the school. The school is both a harmonious and an enjoyable place for most pupils. As a result, attendance for all groups of pupils has improved.
- Pupils learn about democracy and freedom of speech through elections to the school council. Pupils are thoughtful and considerate of the views of others. They demonstrate fundamental British values, such as tolerance and understanding of the rights of others.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils in every area of the curriculum
- pupils make rapid progress across the curriculum by:
  - ensuring that foundation subjects provide sufficient challenge
  - ensuring that teachers provide effective guidance to accelerate pupils' skills, understanding and knowledge
  - ensuring that pupils consider the impact of language features in texts on the reader.

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

Yours sincerely

Susan Aykin  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

- During the course of this inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior and middle leaders, and two governors.
- I met with a representative of the local authority.
- I spoke with pupils informally in classrooms and when walking around the school site. I also met formally with a group of 26 pupils.
- I visited a range of classes across key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- I undertook a scrutiny of pupils' work in their books and folders.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined along with the school's record of checks carried out on staff working at the school.
- A range of documents were analysed or discussed, including: the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans; documents relating to pupils' achievement; information on attendance and behaviour; minutes of governor meetings and curriculum plans.
- I considered the views of 157 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the 143 views that parents expressed via the free-text service.
- I analysed 37 staff views expressed via the staff questionnaire.