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Mrs H. Henson
Matlock All Saints Infants' School
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Derbyshire
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Dear Mrs Henson

Short inspection of Matlock All Saints Infants' School

Following my visit to the school on 20 January 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 June 2011.

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, you have worked very hard to inspire the staff to raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve in all year groups. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved. The school has a caring atmosphere. Pupils enjoy school and like their teachers. One pupil who said, 'The teachers are really kind. They care for us' typified this.

Pupils enjoy their learning and work well. In one class in Year 2, for example, pupils were very focused on completing division calculations with remainders. Once they had completed a calculation, they independently checked to see if it was correct by scanning the bar code on the question card using a tablet computer to reveal the answer. This was done with no fuss and pupils either corrected mistakes or moved on to the next calculation.

The standard of behaviour is good and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. In assembly, all the pupils were asked to stand up and find an adult to tell them about a gift which does not cost money. This was completed in an orderly manner, as pupils waited patiently for their turn. Pupils then sang enthusiastically, performing actions to their song in a focused manner.

The teaching of phonics has improved rapidly due to the comprehensive training for staff. Staff carry out regular checks of pupils' knowledge of phonics. Extra intervention groups are implemented to support any pupils who are at risk of falling behind. As a result, pupils are achieving well with their phonics skills.

At the previous inspection, the inspectors praised the school for the good rates of pupils' progress; the care, guidance and support given to pupils; and the accurate self-evaluation by leaders. These strengths have been maintained. The inspectors also identified, however, a need for pupils to produce work consistently with high-quality presentation. Pupils now present their work neatly in books and try hard with their handwriting.

You and your team have already identified that the teaching of science needs to improve. Pupils do not get enough opportunities to plan their own investigations and write up scientific conclusions. I have also asked you to improve the teaching of mathematics. Currently, pupils are not regularly asked to reason mathematically to solve problems.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders work well with a range of outside agencies to help to safeguard pupils. Records are detailed and stored away securely. Governors carry out an annual safeguarding audit to ensure that the school's policies and practices are updated as required. The behaviour at the school is good and the school's records of bullying show that incidents have reduced sharply. The school has recently received an award from the local authority in recognition of its anti-bullying work. The single central record is up to date and the school's safeguarding policy incorporates the latest guidance from the government. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

Inspection findings

- You have led the school very well during the last year. The school has been through a difficult time and, with the support of the governing body, you have managed the school well to ensure that pupils continue to receive a good quality of education. You have implemented a good programme of professional development for staff, which has included visiting other schools, to develop good practice. The newly qualified teacher is being supported well. You are determined that all pupils get the best start, receiving good-quality teaching within a caring environment. The two co-chairs of the governing body have provided good levels of support and challenge during this period and the school is well placed to continue its improvement.

- The teaching of phonics has improved greatly. The phonics manager is a very enthusiastic leader who demonstrates good subject knowledge and leads this area of the curriculum well. She regularly checks on the quality of teaching and leads by example. Staff continue to receive good-quality training and time at every staff meeting is dedicated to phonics teaching. As a result, pupils are making good progress in all year groups.
- Pupils' cultural development has been enhanced through the school's link with India. The visit by a teacher from India in September had a positive effect on pupils. They told me how much they had enjoyed learning how to count in Hindi, taste Indian food and draw rangoli patterns. Pupils have also been fascinated to learn from the return trip that one of the school's teachers made to India. They have realised that, for some Indian families, fruit is a luxury and pupils are thankful that they can have a choice of fruit at break time. In addition, pupils recalled their educational visit to a mandir in Derby with enthusiasm. In school, pupils have compared how Hindus celebrate Diwali with how Christians celebrate Christmas to develop their understanding of different religious festivals. As a consequence of such experiences, pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- The deputy headteacher has made a positive difference in the early years. The children are enthusiastic about their learning and were observed playing in the sand tray, discussing if dinosaurs were carnivores and describing the talons. In dance, children were enthused to replicate the movement of pterodactyls around the hall. Children observed how caterpillars change into butterflies and used the correct scientific vocabulary. Number lines were left out on the carpet and children were encouraged to count to 20 independently. However, there are some occasions when children are not focused well enough during activities and their learning slows. The progress that children make is checked on regularly and the next steps in learning are put in place. As a result, children are making good progress from their starting points.
- Most of the teaching is good and, as a consequence, pupils achieve well. In Year 1, pupils have written accounts of increasing length and punctuate their sentences well. In Year 2, pupils enjoy writing and are given opportunities to write in a range of genres, including writing a newspaper report on George Stephenson for the 'All Saints' Mercury'. In mathematics, teachers differentiate the work well to match pupils' abilities. Pupils have calculated money questions and looked at the properties of three-dimensional shapes. However, not enough opportunities have been given for pupils to reason mathematically and to use these skills to problem solve.
- In science, pupils have completed a limited amount of investigations. They do not have enough opportunities to plan their own investigations, or to write up conclusions. Pupils have studied scientific knowledge. They have researched about mammals and looked at different sources of light. The school has recognised the need to improve the science curriculum.

- The school promotes British values well. Displays informing pupils of the values are prominent around the school. Pupils have demonstrated democracy by electing members of the school council and take their responsibilities seriously through the roles of lunchtime leader, playground buddy and ECO-council member. They organise games at lunchtime, which the other pupils enjoy. Pupils have also had input into the school's anti-bullying policy. The school promotes equality well. Leaders have reviewed the progress of boys and girls to ensure that any differences in achievement are narrowed.
- Your determination to ensure that all pupils make good progress has made a difference to the achievement of those pupils who are in receipt of the pupil premium. The extra funding is targeted well and, as a result, this group of pupils is making good progress in all year groups. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are also making good progress. The school works well with other agencies, identifies the specific needs of pupils and puts good provision in place to ensure that those pupils make good progress.
- The governing body has supported the headteacher very well over the past year and it is astutely aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. The two co-chairs of the governing body have worked well to ensure that the governing body arrangements over the past year have benefited pupils. The governors have completed a skills audit to ensure that they have a good range of skills to support and challenge the school leaders. They carry out their leadership role effectively. School leaders have received good-quality support from the local authority and have also benefited from the advice from the Diocese of Derby to support school improvement.
- Almost all parents who expressed a view on Parent View (the Ofsted survey) said that their children are happy at school and are safe. The very large majority of parents said the school was well led and that they would recommend the school to other parents. All the staff who completed the staff survey said that the school had improved since the previous inspection and that the school is aspirational for all pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- pupils are given more opportunities to investigate in science, including planning their own investigations and writing up their conclusions
- pupils are given more opportunities to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Derbyshire local authority. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Martin Finch
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met you, the deputy headteacher, the phonics manager and the newly qualified teacher. I met with a representative from the local authority and the two co-chairs of the governing body. We carried out joint observations in every classroom and scrutinised pupils' work. I spoke to parents, observed pupils at break time and in the breakfast club. I met with a group of pupils from all year groups and ate my lunch with children from the early years. We viewed records about keeping pupils safe. I considered 81 responses from Parent View and six responses to the staff survey. I looked at your self-evaluation and your school improvement plan.