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Mrs Vanessa MacDonald
Acting Headteacher
Cannon Park Primary School
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West Midlands
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Dear Mrs MacDonald

Short inspection of Cannon Park Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 February 2018, 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 November 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Teaching has continued to be effective, pupils behave well and parents and carers express confidence in the school's work. The early years provision prepares children well for learning in Year 1 and there is plenty of attention paid to the teaching of reading. The proportion of children reaching the expected standard for their age in the Year 1 phonics screening check compares favourably with the national figure.

Further up the school, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2 are usually above average, with mathematics edging ahead of English both in terms of progress and attainment.

Leaders have attended to all the areas for improvement identified by the previous inspection, with some marked successes. For example, in all classes, teachers have created a calm and purposeful learning environment where there is mutual respect between pupils and adults. Pupils are engaged in their learning and given plenty of opportunities to apply their knowledge and practise their skills. Teachers use questioning skilfully to encourage the pupils to work, think hard and do their best.

In other areas, such as work to increase the progress of the most able pupils in writing, leaders know that there is still further to go and the work they have started is beginning to have impact. You are also aware that the progress of disadvantaged pupils lags behind that of other pupils and that some pupils miss too much school.

Pupils are proud of their school and talk enthusiastically about the things they do. They behave well and have a good understanding of the school's values.

You, your team and the governors have a well-informed understanding of the school's performance and purposeful plans for ongoing school improvement.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school's procedures for ensuring that pupils are kept safe in school are fit for purpose. Pupils are protected and feel safe. Pupils know who the safeguarding leads are and say that there are adults to whom they can speak if they are worried about anything. Pupils have a good understanding of how to look after themselves and be safe online.

You have effective policies in place that are well understood by everyone in your school. Procedures for monitoring behaviour and safeguarding concerns operate in a timely manner, with staff responding quickly to any concerns or problems that arise. Adequate first-aid measures are in place.

All the necessary checks on staff's suitability to work with children are carried out properly and records are stored securely. Staff and governor training is up to date and pupils learn how to behave responsibly and show care for others.

Inspection findings

- You and your staff have created an inclusive and purposeful working atmosphere in all classes. Pupils work hard and are engaged in their learning. You regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching and classroom organisation. You are quick to try new strategies to improve ways of working and ensure that pupils' different needs are met. Regular training has enabled teachers to develop their skills and has encouraged them to evaluate their practice and to be open about successes and difficulties. You and your team are receptive to new ideas and are ambitious to move the school forward.
- You and other leaders regularly check on what is happening in classrooms and make sure that staff receive frequent training and advice. This has ensured consistently effective teaching throughout the school. Homework, too, makes a positive contribution to learning and pupils enjoy a variety of home-based projects. Furthermore, pupils are clear about their learning targets because teachers keep them well informed about how well they are doing. In many classes, for example, pupils talk with confidence about the structure and content of their writing and most pupils produce high-quality pieces of work. Nevertheless, you rightly identify that some of the brightest pupils could produce even better written work if teaching built in more opportunities for them to extend their vocabulary and think creatively. Currently, there is a lot of worthwhile focus on structure and grammar, but not quite enough opportunities to apply and develop skills in a creative way.
- When I spoke with pupils and observed them in class, it became clear that mathematics is a popular subject. Effective teaching generates enthusiasm

through special activities such as 'maths blast' challenge activities and multiplication tables games. Teachers also take time to check how well pupils understand before moving on to new work. This level of attentive care means that work is usually pitched just right for the different abilities in each class. In a lower key stage 2 class, for example, the teacher asked pupils to read a mathematical problem and then talk through their thinking. This was followed by some peer discussion before pupils went on to tackle further problems with confidence and success. The quality of mathematics teaching, and the enjoyment it creates, ensure that most pupils do well in this subject.

- There is a positive reading culture in the school, which starts in early years. During their first year in school, children are prompted to enjoy stories in school and at home. For instance, having enjoyed the story of 'The Elves and the Shoemaker', children were set a homework challenge to build a den for the elves. Parents captured their creations in photographs and shared them with school via an online assessment system. The teaching of letters and sounds also starts early and is effective at equipping children with the skills they need to become successful readers.
- There are many reading books for pupils to enjoy. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the school library, authors and reading for pleasure. The school's librarian organises interesting literary events, such as arranging exciting video calls so that pupils can talk to authors on screen. This attention to reading enriches pupils' learning and enjoyment of school and literature.
- Pupils are proud of their school and relationships between pupils and staff are excellent. Pupils know that the adults at school will always listen to them if they have any worries and say that bullying is not a problem. They also told me that, if it did happen, the teachers would stop it. Pupils also talk with enthusiasm about the school's values. They know and understand them and are particularly motivated by the reward card system, which involves pupils earning tickets for exemplifying a particular value or quality. Parents also praise this system and say that it has had a positive impact on their children's attitudes to school life. Several parents commented on how excited their children are on Friday mornings, knowing that value rewards will be presented to those pupils who have collected the most tickets.
- Most pupils attend school regularly, but a few do not. When analysed by pupil groups, it is clear that the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is a concern. In some cases, there are genuine reasons for absence, but other reasons include holidays in term time, or absences are not properly explained by parents. Your work with families has resulted in some recent improvements but this is still an area for improvement. Pupils who miss too much school risk falling behind, and this has clearly happened in some cases.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a few fixed-term exclusions. This has happened as a last resort when other measures have been tried. However, you made sure that proper procedures were followed and put follow-up support in place in order to minimise the risk of recurrence.
- Year 6 pupils feel ready for the challenges of secondary school because their primary education is successful.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- increase the most able pupils' progress in writing by providing appropriate resources and opportunities to apply and develop their writing skills creatively
- continue to develop and monitor strategies to boost the progress of disadvantaged pupils
- work with families to improve the attendance of some pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Diane Pye
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, senior leaders, staff and governors. I also met with an education consultant who was representing Coventry local authority. I carried out short observations of teaching and looked at pupils' work in books and on display. I talked with pupils in lessons and at breaktime and met with a group of pupils to gather their views. I spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.

By the end of the inspection, there were 27 recent responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. I took account of these responses and talked with some parents during the inspection.

I looked at several documents, including pupils' progress information, the school's own evaluation of its performance, development plans, external monitoring reports, a range of school records, and several school policy documents. I also checked the school's website and the procedures for keeping pupils safe. I asked members of staff, pupils and parents about safeguarding matters.