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Mr John Mapperley
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Dear Mr Mapperley

Short inspection of St Peter's CofE Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 12 January 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 have successfully created a culture where pupils and staff are provided with a wide range of opportunities to develop their potential. This is appreciated by pupils, staff and parents alike and is reflected in your school motto, 'A place for all to flourish'. Yours is a highly inclusive school. At the start of each school year, you meet with all staff to celebrate the achievements of the previous school year and to share the vision and priorities for the forthcoming year. The staff I spoke with appreciate your effective communication. They feel involved and understand their role in bringing about the success of the school. Pupils, too, enjoy being involved in the life of the school. Examples of this include pupils' involvement in the review of the school's anti-bullying policy and pupils being included on the school's newly formed 'Equality Team'.

During the previous inspection, inspectors praised the effective use that teachers make of the school's grounds and facilities to enhance pupils' learning experiences. This strength has been maintained. Teachers plan learning that engages pupils and fires their imagination. For example, during a study of the book 'Kensuke's Kingdom', pupils cooked around a campfire on the school grounds and visited the National Holocaust Centre. They were able to draw upon these experiences and use the skills that they had been taught in English lessons to write, at length, their descriptions of the life of a child during the second world war.

Parents are welcomed into St Peter's Church of England Junior School. One member of staff told me that there are sometimes so many parents who volunteer to help in school that names have to be drawn from a hat! During the autumn term, parents and pupils come to school together for a bedtime story, with hot chocolate, around the campfire in the school grounds. One parent used the online survey, Parent View, to praise some of the school's special qualities: 'The school has a holistic outlook and treats each child as an individual, helping them develop their creativity and confidence alongside the curriculum.'

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors asked you to ensure that pupils are given more opportunities to learn independently, to ensure that tasks are well matched to their abilities and that individual targets set for pupils are frequently referred to during lessons. You have successfully addressed these areas for improvement. During our tour of classrooms, we saw pupils working independently and collaborating in pairs or small groups. As I spoke with pupils, they told me that the work they had been given was just right for them. It was making them think and draw upon their previous learning. In every class, pupils were able to tell me about their long-term targets for improvement and those to be achieved during that particular lesson. We saw teachers and teaching assistants providing effective support and challenge for pupils, asking well-thought-out questions and making good use of equipment to help pupils grasp the concepts they were learning.

Recently, you and your leadership team have recognised that there is work to do to improve the rates of progress that pupils make in reading and writing. You have wasted no time in beginning to address these relative weaknesses, with particular success in reading so far. In doing so, you have recognised that the assessment system you developed in response to the new national curriculum should now be reviewed. The revision you are proposing will provide the precise information that teachers require to ensure that all groups of pupils do as well as they can.

Parents were very keen to speak with me as they brought their children to school in the morning and many shared their views through Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Almost without exception, parents were highly positive about the school. Typically, they said that their children are safe and enjoy coming to school. They were quick to praise the raft of opportunities available to pupils and the community feel of the school. Many parents praised the staff, particularly the leadership team. One parent summed up the views of many by declaring, 'Hats off to the leadership!'

In lessons, pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively to their teachers and respectfully to each other. Pupils in every class we visited were able to describe what they were learning and how it linked with previous lessons. Every pupil in Years 4 to 6 has their own tablet to use in class. Pupils enjoy using this technology, both to help them in lessons and also, with support from their teacher, to share the work they have been doing with their parents at home.

The school environment is bright and welcoming. Displays around school celebrate pupils' work and promote learning. For example, several large photographs in the

entrance show staff enjoying reading.

Governors know the school well. They are fully aware of the strategic role they have to play. They provide you, and other leaders, with an effective balance of support and challenge. Governors, like everyone associated with the school, are keen for the pupils to do well.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and the records you keep are detailed and of high quality. The necessary vetting checks take place when new staff come to work at your school. Staff receive appropriate training and know how to raise concerns about the welfare of a pupil, should they arise.

You ensure that safeguarding is at the front of everyone's mind through frequent reminders that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

One governor has particular responsibility for safeguarding. She visits the school regularly to check for herself that procedures are robust.

Pupils say that they are taught how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about fire safety and stranger danger. Older pupils told me that they are learning about the potential perils of social media and other important aspects of online safety.

Pupils also told me that they feel safe in school. They say that bullying is very rare. They agreed that they could share any worries with a trusted adult.

Inspection findings

- You and your staff are determined to provide pupils with a wealth of opportunities and experiences to enhance their learning and to make sure that they are well prepared for life after primary school. Pupils can choose from an extensive range of clubs that are on offer at lunchtime and after school. Enterprise projects help pupils learn teamwork and simple business skills. The many opportunities that pupils have to raise funds and make collections, such as 'Teddis for Uganda', 'The Shoebox appeal', WaterAid and the BBC's Children in Need, encourage pupils to learn about helping those who are less fortunate. Pupils told me they enjoyed topics where they learned about the different cultures in India and South America.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They use their knowledge of phonics and punctuation to read with expression. There is a wide variety of books in school to ensure that pupils are able to select books that match their abilities and interests.
- You and other leaders have identified that there is work to do to ensure that pupils make better progress in reading and writing. You have already put in place several strategies to achieve this. Additional reading initiatives and teachers focusing more closely on particular aspects of writing are beginning to

bear fruit. Early indications, including work seen in pupils' books, show that these are beginning to have a positive impact.

- Following the removal of national curriculum levels, you and your leadership team developed a new system for checking how well pupils are doing. While this has been useful, the system is not providing you with all of the information you require to ensure that pupils of all abilities make the best possible progress. You and your leadership team have recognised that the time has come to review the system so that it is even more effective.
- The pupil premium funding is targeted carefully to provide additional support for disadvantaged pupils and to ensure that they take part in the full range of enrichment activities. You are determined that the revised assessment system will enable your leadership team to use the additional funding even more effectively so that disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, achieve even higher than they do currently.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' progress in writing is accelerated so that they make better progress from their starting points
- the school's approach to assessing and tracking pupils' progress provides the information needed to enable quick identification of any underachievement, so that teachers can adapt their teaching to make sure that pupils of all abilities, including those who are disadvantaged, fulfil their potential.

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

Yours sincerely

Di Mullan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, your deputy headteacher and one of the assistant headteachers. I also met with four other members of staff and four members of the board of governors, including the chair of governors. I spoke with parents as they brought their children to school and a group of six pupils. You and I undertook a tour of the school to see the learning that was taking place in every year group and I examined pupils' books with the deputy headteacher.

I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the development plan, minutes of governors' meetings and documents relating to safeguarding.

I took account of the 12 responses to the online staff survey and the 108 responses to the online parents' survey. There were no responses to the pupils' survey.