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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Rachel Barton
Headteacher
Littleton CofE Infant School
Rectory Close
Shepperton
Surrey
TW17 0QE

Dear Mrs Barton

Short inspection of Littleton CofE Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 26 April 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 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. Since that time, you have established a dedicated team of staff and governors that have high expectations and are ambitious for pupils and themselves. Underpinning the school's work are the values of caring for ourselves, for each other and for the world. Pupils flourish academically and personally because they are warmly welcomed into a vibrant learning environment. The large majority of parents and carers are delighted with the education you provide. One parent reflected the views of many by her comment, 'I cannot thank Littleton and the strong team of staff enough. They have given my son roots and wings to fly as he goes on to the next stage of his education.'

You have established a culture in which staff and pupils are partners on a learning journey and are not afraid to make mistakes. You have empowered your staff to be innovative and to take risks that provide stimulating learning experiences for all pupils. Together with your staff, you have implemented an inspiring curriculum that brings learning to life. You have changed the way in which teachers work by shifting the focus of their lessons to what pupils are to learn, rather than what they are to do. Consequently, teaching is consistently strong across the school and across all subjects. One of the strengths of teaching is the quality of dialogue between adults and pupils. Teachers are particularly skilled at asking pupils questions that make them think, to reason and to apply what they know to new learning. As a result, pupils progress well throughout the school.

You actively seek partnerships with other settings and schools to give your staff opportunities to share best practice and gain new ideas. Consequently, staff at all levels are highly competent and seek to develop the skills and talents of all pupils. Many parents wrote comments in praise of the staff. As an example, one parent wrote, 'Littleton is a wonderful school where my child feels safe and supported and enjoys learning in a fun and inspiring setting brought to him by teachers of high calibre.'

Pupils love school and this is reflected in their attendance, which is above average. They demonstrate exemplary behaviour and attitudes towards learning. They are curious and enjoy finding out about the world around them. Pupils understand the school's values and spoke sensitively about the morning's family worship in which the values of kindness and compassion were reflected through a role-play activity depicting 'The Good Samaritan'. They care very much for each other and for adults who help them. They are polite and helpful and show respect towards each other and adults.

You work in close partnership with staff and governors to ensure that the school continues to develop and improve further. You have addressed the issues for improvement from the previous inspection but you know that more needs to be done to increase the proportion of pupils who reach a greater depth in writing. The governing body provides a high level of support and professional challenge to ensure that the school continues to thrive and flourish. Governors are knowledgeable and bring a wide variety of professional skills that make a valuable contribution to the leadership and management of the school. Governors visit school frequently and they share your passion for making Littleton Infant School the best it can possibly be.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that the school's systems and procedures for keeping pupils safe are effective and fit for purpose. Staff have been very well trained and so they know exactly what to do should they have a concern that a child may be at risk from harm. You are tenacious in ensuring that vulnerable pupils receive the help they need in a timely way. You work in close cooperation with other professionals and agencies to protect pupils. Records of concerns are of good quality and clearly show how the progress of pupils at risk is tracked. There are robust checks made on the suitability of adults to work with children and all visitors to school are carefully checked.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and that adults provide them with high-quality care and support. They say that adults listen to them and take their concerns seriously. There is plenty of guidance in displays around the school advising them of what to do should they have a worry. Pupils know about bullying but report that it never happens. They know and understand that care needs to be taken when using modern technology and that they should never send photos or personal information to people they do not know. They also said they would tell a trusted adult if they were uncomfortable about any images they observed.

Inspection findings

- One of the key lines of enquiry that we agreed to evaluate was the extent to which the most able girls achieved as well as they could in writing and mathematics. This was because, in the 2017 national assessments, none of the girls reached a greater depth in these subjects while the proportion of boys who did so was well above the national average. However, assessment information held by the school shows that girls currently in school achieve equally as well as boys. There are very few variations in the learning and progress of different groups of pupils.
- One of the school's current development objectives is to increase the number of pupils reaching a greater depth in all subjects. To achieve this, the mathematics leader has introduced a programme to develop pupils' reasoning and mastery of mathematics. This has already improved pupils' conceptual understanding of number and allowed them to apply this to solve complex word problems. Work in pupils' books shows that they make good progress across key stage 1 and work at a deeper level by having to think about their work and explain their answers. This has helped girls, as well as boys, to attain well.
- The rich and vibrant curriculum provides pupils with plenty of opportunities to write frequently and at length when learning other subjects. This means that they use and practise their writing skills regularly. Work in their books shows that they write fluently and confidently and use a rich vocabulary to express their thoughts and ideas. However, not all pupils form their letters correctly and this makes their writing difficult to read at times. Additionally, they do not always apply their spelling patterns correctly when they write and this prevents them from writing as well as they could. The most recent performance information shows that girls do equally as well as boys and this is reflected in work seen in their books. Although pupils write extensively across a range of subjects, including mathematics, there are few occasions when they write imaginatively and creatively.
- The quality of the curriculum is undoubtedly a strength of the school and underpins all aspects of learning. It has been imaginatively planned to take into account locally found experiences as well as building on the skills and talents of adults associated with the school. The curriculum is based around topics or themes and always begins with a question to stimulate pupils' interest. For example, pupils in Year 1 were asked to think about what is special about Shepperton. This led to a visit to the local area to find out for themselves what makes their village special. Year 2 pupils studied dinosaurs in response to the question, 'Why did dinosaurs become extinct?' This approach engages pupils, who thoroughly enjoy finding answers and learning a range of skills that prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Work in their books shows that they research questions, they compare and contrast, they reason and think for themselves. In classrooms, they are encouraged to talk about their work and to share their ideas. They listen carefully to each other and confidently offer a different point of view when required.
- Through the rich curriculum, pupils develop their curiosity and imagination. In addition to pupils' visits to local places of interest, visitors to school are a regular part of school life. The local vicar, who is also the chair of governors, leads a family worship every Thursday morning. This is well attended by families and helps

to cement the relationships between home and school. A teaching assistant helped to plan a topic on South Africa and introduced South African food for the pupils to taste. One of the unique features of the school is the library, housed in an old red London bus situated in the school grounds. This has been well fitted out to provide a delightful environment in which pupils read and enjoy browsing through the books with their friends.

- One of the issues for improvement from the last inspection was to develop the role of middle leaders. This has successfully been achieved through a programme of training and mentoring to help teachers develop their leadership skills. Advisers from the London Board of Diocesan Schools have provided effective support to the school to help them to improve this aspect of their work. Through network meetings, teachers have worked alongside middle leaders from other schools to learn and share their ideas. As a result, leaders at all levels are skilled in supporting colleagues and helping them to implement new initiatives. They support the headteacher in checking the work of other staff and they play a key role in developing the school further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils have more opportunities to write imaginatively and creatively to increase the number of pupils reaching a greater depth in their writing
- pupils form their letters correctly and they apply the spelling patterns they learn when they write.

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

Yours sincerely

Joy Considine
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I visited classrooms with you to observe pupils working and I looked at pupils' work in their books. I spoke to pupils formally as well as in the playground. I scrutinised documentation showing how the school is to improve further as well as documentation showing how the school keeps pupils safe. I met with you and your staff and I held a discussion with two governors, including the chair of governors. I looked at pupils' performance information to evaluate their learning and progress. I took into account the views of parents by analysing the 86 responses to the online survey, Parent View, as well as the many written responses on free text. I considered the views of staff by analysing the 13 responses to the staff survey.