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Mrs Kerry Rodger  
Headteacher  
Meadowdale Primary School  
Meadowdale Road  
Market Harborough  
Leicestershire  
LE16 7XQ

Dear Mrs Rodger

### **Short inspection of Meadowdale Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 3 July 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 October 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Meadowdale Primary School is a happy and welcoming school. Parents whom I met with commented that staff are very approachable and quick to resolve any concerns. They appreciate the good-quality communication and information they are provided with to support their children at home. One parent commented that the school was 'brilliant'. The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school and felt that their child is happy.

You are determined to ensure that every child at Meadowdale has the opportunity to experience a curriculum that is creative and engaging. Through staff development, you have encouraged teachers to provide opportunities for pupils to apply and refine their skills in a broad range of subjects. For example, we observed pupils in Year 6 apply their mathematical skills to construct their own model cars. They showed independence, cooperating effectively with their peers. Ambitious projects, such as on Shakespeare in Year 1, provide opportunities for pupils to develop their expression and to write for sustained periods in a range of subjects across the curriculum.

Pupils whom I met with were eager to talk about their wide and varied learning opportunities. They spoke enthusiastically about their trips and celebration weeks, and of the many visitors who enrich their learning experiences. You are rightly proud of your curriculum and the vibrant displays celebrate the diverse and creative opportunities given to pupils.

Leaders are aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. Clear development plans are in place, which have supported improvements in key areas across the school. However, some pupils are not making as much progress as they should, in particular in writing. Support for disadvantaged pupils is not always targeted well enough. Some of these pupils do not make as much progress as they are capable of.

Members of the governing body and the chief executive officer from the Learn Academies Trust support and challenge leaders well. They use their detailed knowledge of the school to hold leaders to account.

In the last inspection report, you were asked to use assessment information to improve pupils' progress in reading and writing. You have reviewed how teachers respond to assessment during lessons, to maximise outcomes for pupils. Our observations of teaching showed that assessment and precise questioning are used to support and challenge pupils, especially in key stage 2. The school has systems in place to measure the progress of pupils. However, leaders do not always effectively use this system to track the progress of pupils effectively.

You were also asked to improve leadership at all levels by ensuring that the school's policies are applied consistently. We conducted a work scrutiny, which showed that the policies agreed in school for how things should be done are largely applied by teachers.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Arrangements for the safe recruitment of staff are robust. Key safeguarding issues are addressed through regular staff training and termly bulletins. Records for the most vulnerable pupils are stored confidentially and concerns are dealt with in a timely manner.

Pupils were keen to tell me that they felt safe at school and this was shared by the vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Pupils conduct themselves appropriately across the school and they are courteous towards each other. Staff help pupils understand how to keep themselves safe when online through lessons and e-safety weeks. Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe on the internet and when using mobile devices.

Pupils are happy to talk to staff if they have a problem: 'the teachers are always there to help,' said one. Pupils are aware of what constitutes bullying and say that incidents are rare, and staff resolve any issues swiftly.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leadership of early years is strong. You the leaders have identified areas for improvement. This has resulted in a sustained improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development.

- You have rightly identified writing as an important improvement area. Alongside leaders, you have secured a consistent approach to teaching writing. Writing strategies have been implemented across the school, to ensure that pupils are able to apply their skills in this area, automatically and with precision. Teachers use questioning effectively to deepen pupils' understanding and enhance their vocabulary for writing.
- The school's own assessment information indicates that more pupils are set to achieve the expected standard at key stages 1 and 2 in 2018 than in previous years. Leaders track the progress of pupils in writing; however, they recognise that there has not been a sharp enough focus on the progress of all pupil groups, especially those of middle ability and the most able.
- Together we observed in lessons the actions you have taken to improve writing. There is greater consistency in pupils' books, and staff ensure that pupils write longer pieces with greater frequency in a range of subjects. Pupils whom I spoke with were positive about their writing, commenting that they, 'get to use their creative side and imagination'.
- A proportion of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were concerned that the school does not deal with bullying effectively. Leaders rigorously record any incidents and take the necessary steps to resolve any concerns. You report incidents to the governing body. Pupils said that they are confident that staff are quick to resolve any issues surrounding bullying.
- Progress for pupils who are disadvantaged is slower than that of other pupils nationally at the end of key stage 2. The leader for implementing the approach to the use of pupil premium funding identifies the needs of pupils through discussion with teachers and parents. However, support provided for these pupils is not always sharp enough to enable them to make rapid progress.
- Leaders have not ensured that the support for disadvantaged pupils is targeted well enough to support their needs. Governors do not monitor or measure the impact of the funding for disadvantaged pupils carefully enough.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- a greater proportion of middle-ability and most-able pupils make accelerated progress, especially in writing, in order to attain as well as they should
- support for disadvantaged pupils is precise to enable pupils to make rapid progress.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive

officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leicestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Stewart

**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, your senior leadership team and members of the governing body, including the chair and chief executive officer of the trust. I met with a group of Year 4 and Year 6 pupils and spoke with parents early in the school day. I considered the views of 172 parents posted on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. We jointly conducted a scrutiny of pupils' workbooks from early years to Year 6 across a wide range of subjects studied. I evaluated a range of documents, including leaders' development planning, safeguarding records and school policies.