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Mrs Sarah Chadwick  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Chadwick

### **Short inspection of Duckmanton Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 16 March 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 May 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Duckmanton Primary is an inclusive and welcoming school. Its increasing popularity reflects its success in helping pupils of all abilities, needs and backgrounds to succeed. All of the parents spoken to during the inspection, or who left comments on Parent View, were full of praise for your school. One comment captured their opinions: 'Our children are happy and enjoy school... the pupils are always well behaved and well mannered. We don't regret choosing this school over our other choices.'

You deserve much of the credit for the fact that the school community is so positive about its school. High levels of disadvantage and mobility provide particular challenges for you and your staff. These challenges, however, are never allowed to lower your ambition for the pupils. The expectation is that pupils will reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are at least as high as those that other pupils do nationally. To ensure that this ambition is realised, there is an unremitting focus on improving the quality of teaching. Together, your aspiration and actions result in pupils gaining the necessary skills and self-belief to succeed at their secondary schools.

Your school's successes are not limited to good academic outcomes. Pupils speak with insight and pride about what it means to be a 'rights respecting' school and British values are promoted effectively throughout the curriculum. Both of these

aspects of your provision are celebrated through inspiring displays in classrooms and around the school. You also ensure that pupils encounter a wide range of interesting activities to broaden their horizons. For example, because of the lack of ethnic diversity in the village, you have forged links with a school in Bethnal Green serving an overwhelmingly minority-ethnic community. Similarly, the good range of educational visits, which are a strong feature of the curriculum, includes visits for pupils to places of worship for a range of different faiths.

Your school's partnership with the local cluster of schools has been an important factor in improving the quality of leadership and teaching throughout the school. You value the opportunities the partnership provides for sharing best practice. Governors also value the support they receive from the local authority. This has been particularly welcomed following significant changes in the membership of the governing body. New governors have recently been recruited to broaden the skills and knowledge base of the governing body. Governors take seriously their responsibilities for key aspects of the school's work, such as safeguarding and the allocation of pupil premium funding. They ensure that they receive the information and training necessary to hold you and other leaders to account for the school's performance.

The previous inspection asked you to ensure that pupils are always clear about the purpose of their lessons. You have addressed this improvement point very effectively. Pupils are now actively involved in discussing with staff and their peers the learning objectives of their lessons. Crucially, pupils have opportunities to reflect at the end of lessons on how well they have met these objectives. Pupils use these opportunities with great maturity. Pupils, regardless of ability, who feel that they have not mastered the specific skills being taught, make this known to staff. They receive additional one-to-one support in afternoon 'impact' sessions. This strategy has been key in helping pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, make good progress.

The previous inspection also asked you to provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in a wide range of subjects. Pupils' work across the curriculum shows that this is now happening. In subjects such as history, geography and design technology, pupils present their work with pride. They take great care with their spellings, grammar and punctuation. The above-average writing standards, attained by Year 2 and Year 6 pupils in the 2016 national assessments, demonstrate the positive impact of these opportunities and attitudes.

Sustained success has not diminished your desire for continuing improvement. You recognise that in the past, the most able pupils had not achieved as well as they should. For example, too few have exceeded the standards expected for their ages at the end of Reception Year and Year 6.

The progress of the most able pupils has been a focus of your school improvement work this academic year. While there is emerging evidence of better outcomes for this group, it is too early yet to be sure of the full impact of your improvement strategies.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that all safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. Staff receive the necessary training on how to keep children safe in education. They know exactly what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare. The school keeps appropriate records of any issues that arise, the actions taken and the impact of these actions. A sample of these records, seen during the inspection, shows how decisive actions taken by the school have secured the well-being of individual pupils. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding regularly checks that safeguarding procedures are robust and thorough.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. The curriculum provides them with important information about keeping safe and healthy. For example, sessions on online safety ensure that pupils are fully aware of the dangers of sharing personal information when using computers or mobile telephones.

Pupils have a number of ways to seek support if they are anxious or sad. Crucially, they trust the adults in the school. Pupils know that the school staff will do all that they can to ensure that pupils are safe both inside and outside school.

## **Inspection findings**

- In 2015 and 2016, the proportion of disadvantaged children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception Year was well below that of other children nationally. These outcomes were linked to the number of disadvantaged children joining the school part-way through Reception Year with skills below those typical for their age.
- The early years staff use the pupil premium effectively. They check on each disadvantaged child's development and progress carefully and provide appropriate additional support for each individual. This additional support enables disadvantaged children to make good progress.
- In 2016, the most able pupils in key stage 2 made slower progress than other ability groups. No pupils achieved a high standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined, at the end of key stage 2. Work in current pupils' books shows that the most able pupils do receive challenging work and that teachers have high expectations of what they are capable of achieving. There is evidence that pupils who attained highly at the end of key stage 1 are now making good progress through key stage 2. However, you recognise that ensuring that the most able pupils, particularly in key stage 2 and children in early years, do as well as they can, remains a priority.
- In 2016, key stage 2 pupils made slower progress in reading than in other subjects. You addressed this issue by reviewing how reading is taught. Reading skills, such as inference, prediction and summarising, are now taught with greater frequency and effectiveness. You also introduced a resource that tracks how frequently pupils are reading and their level of understanding of each book

that they complete. Together, these strategies are increasing pupils' enjoyment of reading and contributing to better progress than in the past.

- Pupils' outcomes in the phonics screening check in key stage 1 have been above the national average since the previous inspection. These positive outcomes reflect the high priority the school gives to teaching phonics in the early years and in key stage 1. Pupils' phonics skills benefit from the good subject knowledge of staff and the small size of teaching groups, which ensure that each individual pupil's needs are met.
- In 2015 and 2016, pupils' attainment in reading at the end of key stage 1 was above the national average. These outcomes demonstrate the success of the actions you take to get as many pupils as possible reading confidently by the end of Year 2. These actions include regular reflection and training on how to improve the quality of the teaching of reading. Other important strategies include sessions where older pupils read with younger pupils and daily one-to-one additional support for individuals who are at risk of underachieving.
- A particular strength in the 2016 assessments was the very good progress that key stage 2 pupils made in mathematics. These strong outcomes remain evident in the performance of pupils currently in key stage 2. They are the result of high-quality teaching that focuses on ensuring that pupils understand the mathematical concepts being taught. For example, pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop reasoning skills and solve challenging problems in mathematics lessons. Additional teaching is provided on the same day for any pupils who have struggled to grasp the ideas covered in their mathematics lesson.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- greater proportions of pupils exceed the early learning goals by the end of Reception Year and the expected standards by the end of key stage 2.

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. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Anthony O'Malley  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you to discuss the school's effectiveness. I also met with other staff, three governors and a representative of the local authority. I met with a group of pupils and talked with others around the school and during

visits to classes. I observed teaching and learning throughout the school and heard a small number of pupils read. I looked at work in pupils' books, giving particularly close attention to the quality of their written work.

I examined documents, including those linked to keeping the pupils safe, the school's self-evaluation document and the school improvement plan. I considered comments made online by parents, together with the views of parents gathered as they brought their children to school. In addition, I took account of the views of 10 members of staff provided through their online survey.