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Ms Tara Lovelock  
Headteacher  
Great Linford Primary School  
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Great Linford  
Milton Keynes  
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Dear Ms Lovelock

### **Short inspection of Great Linford Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 11 January 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. Based on the evidence available during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Since your appointment, you have worked tirelessly to establish a culture in which every person is valued and respected. Your work is held in high regard by everyone. Parents, carers and pupils are positive about your leadership, and staff recognise the clarity, determination and support you provide. Along with your committed staff and governors, you have established Great Linford Primary School as the hub of the community. You have invested time wisely in getting to know the pupils and their families very well, enabling you to provide targeted and specific support.

At the time of the last inspection, you were asked to provide greater challenge for pupils. Since then, improvements to teaching have ensured that pupils' progress has accelerated rapidly. The majority of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In reading and writing, more pupils achieve standards that are above those expected for their age than they do in mathematics. The attainment of

disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities has risen considerably due to the consistently good teaching and focused support that they receive.

Pupils really enjoy school and take great pride in their work. They work well together and enjoy being challenged in lessons. They want to do well and they have high aspirations to succeed. Pupils told me that they have a 'wonderful headteacher' and that their teachers inspire them to do their best. One pupil said, 'learning is fun and teachers make sure we learn well.'

The curriculum is a significant strength of the school. Pupils are excited by their learning, and talk with great enthusiasm about lessons and recent projects involving science experiments and learning survival skills. The very popular additional clubs, before and after school, give pupils opportunities to try new things in a safe and nurturing environment. Parents recognise the positive impact the curriculum is having on their own children's progress and many enjoy taking part in home learning. They are often surprised at what their children achieve. For example, one parent told me that her daughter was now an 'amazing writer' thanks to the help and inspiration she had received from her teacher. Many parents take advantage of the various opportunities that you offer them to develop their own skills and confidence. For example, some parents and their children worked with a local business and the Food Bank to create recipes from a selection of food items. Their recipes, printed and laminated, are available for disadvantaged families to use to create meals via the Food Bank. This type of work has been invaluable in your creation of a happy, purposeful school where pupils, parents and staff feel they 'really belong'.

You are clear about the school's strengths and areas for development. For example, your focus on assessing pupils' progress in other subjects, in addition to mathematics and English, is engaging staff in useful professional debate, while adding value to the curriculum as a whole. This exciting work is allowing pupils to learn about the world differently and is supporting them in learning at a greater depth of understanding. You know that you need to increase the number of pupils working at this greater depth, particularly in mathematics. You have made good use of pupil information to inform this judgement. Along with your core leaders and governors, you carefully monitor the progress you are making towards more pupils achieving greater depth in all subjects, but particularly in mathematics.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Senior leaders and governors have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are extremely rigorous and that any records are detailed and of high quality. You ensure that policies to prevent risks are rigorously implemented and procedures to support vulnerable pupils and their families are effective. When intervention is required, you act swiftly and ensure that relevant agencies are involved to work with pupils and their families to address specific needs

effectively. You always follow up issues rigorously to secure positive outcomes.

The family champion's daily availability on the playground and in school means that relationships between home and school are very good and any concerns can be promptly and effectively addressed. Any lateness or absence is swiftly followed up too, so that pupils are in school every day and arrive ready to learn. Attendance has improved annually since you joined the school because of the high and clear expectations you set.

## **Inspection findings**

- During this inspection, I looked at the effectiveness of safeguarding; the impact that teaching is having on supporting pupils to work at greater depth; and the progress that pupils who achieved the highest levels at the end of key stage 1 are making in key stage 2.
- The overall culture in the school gives safeguarding the highest priority. Pupils feel safe and know that they have adults in school who will listen to them. School leaders work extremely hard to build and maintain very good working relationships with families. A significant number of parents informed me that since your appointment, the school has become a much safer and happier place to be in. They appreciate all that staff do to keep their children secure and engage them in learning which challenges them and provides positive experiences.
- There is now a consistent focus on routinely providing extra challenges in English and mathematics. Teachers plan learning activities that meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. Work in books and current records of progress show that pupils respond well to the higher level of challenge given to them. Some pupils said they would like even more challenge in their lessons.
- With your core leaders, you continue to check that the quality of teaching is at least good across the school. Your detailed records of observations and your scrutiny of pupils' books allow you to identify effective practice and eradicate any weaknesses by providing high-quality support to improve teaching skills.
- Subject leaders undertake additional training and research to further develop their very effective practice. The focus on developing leaders has been key to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Governors liaise with subject leaders to gain a firm understanding of pupils' progress and are keen to support the continual improvements in teaching and learning.
- Consistently good teaching and learning in your school are raising standards. In 2017, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the early years increased on previous years. Children join the early years with skills that are lower than those typical for children of the same age. Good teaching and creative provision ensure that

all groups of children, including the most able, disadvantaged children and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, make good progress.

- In 2017, provisional outcomes for key stage 1 showed an improvement on previous years. Effective teaching ensures that pupils make strong progress from the end of the early years, with more pupils achieving a greater depth of understanding in reading, writing and mathematics than other pupils nationally. You have rightly identified that disadvantaged pupils do not make as much progress as other pupils by the end of key stage 1. Staff are working hard to ensure that these pupils have every opportunity to catch up earlier.
- In 2017, provisional outcomes for key stage 2 showed a marked improvement on previous years. By the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics exceeded national averages. However, you have rightly identified that not enough pupils whose attainment was already high prior to entering key stage 2 go on to achieve the higher standards, particularly in mathematics. You know that pupils' progress in this subject needs to be accelerated further.
- By the end of key stage 2, the progress disadvantaged pupils make is significantly above national figures, and their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above that of other pupils nationally.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- increase the number of pupils working at greater depth, particularly in mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Sarah Varnom  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, your acting deputy headteacher, core leaders and governors to review your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I visited the breakfast club and accompanied senior leaders to several classrooms. I talked to your 'family champion' and your attendance officer. I spoke to parents on the playground and considered 30 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 38 staff survey returns. I also considered five letters sent in by

parents. I spoke to pupils around the school and interviewed members of the school council. Together, we evaluated a range of work in pupils' books and your assessment information. I reviewed monitoring information, governors' records and attendance information. I checked the effectiveness of your safeguarding arrangements.