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Mrs Geraldine Lowden
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Dear Mrs Lowden

Short inspection of The Curzon CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 June 2019, 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 second short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in September 2010.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Your vision for the school is for it to be 'a place of hard work and learning in which personal responsibility and care for others are encouraged'. You have been successful in realising this vision. Along with your dedicated staff, you have created a school with a caring, family ethos. Pupils and parents told me that the staff know all of the pupils and the pupils all know each other and that it is a cohesive community. One parent told me 'all of the children are really well looked after at the school. The staff really care about them'. This view was typical of many.

You know what is working well in the school and what needs to improve. The school's improvement plan focuses on the correct areas and sets out how these improvements will be addressed. However, the targets within the plan need to be sharper so that governors can measure how successful leaders have been in bringing about improvements.

You have maintained the high level of attainment. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the early years is higher than that found nationally. By the end of Year 1 all pupils have met the expected standard in the phonics screening check for the last five years. The proportion of pupils meeting the expected and higher standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2 exceeds the national average. Work in books shows that these high standards continue across the curriculum.

Pupils' positive behaviour and conduct are strengths of the school. Pupils are highly courteous and give a warm welcome to visitors. They describe the school as 'bully-free' and say that poor behaviour is extremely rare. Should any poor behaviour happen, pupils are confident that leaders would deal with it quickly and effectively. Pupils describe the school as highly inclusive.

Evidence from books and lessons shows that the vast majority of pupils continue to work at age-related expectations, and above, across the curriculum. A large proportion of pupils in Year 6 write fluently and articulately. Their narrative work is highly descriptive and they skilfully use complex vocabulary. Adults use questioning effectively to intervene and enhance the quality of pupils' work.

Teachers give pupils clear feedback. Pupils know when they are successful and understand what they need to do to improve their work. They enjoy improving their work and are proud of the high-quality work that they produce. In lessons, teachers typically use 'next step challenges' to support pupils in accessing more-demanding work. Pupils look forward to seeing how teachers assess their work using the school's traffic light system. As a result, pupils regularly know their teachers' view about how they are getting on.

Your recent work on peer assessment has enabled pupils to evaluate and provide feedback to each other about their work. Pupils understand the process that has been put in place and the need to carefully balance compliments with constructive criticism. Older pupils give and receive feedback about each other's work in a productive, mature and constructive way.

Pupils enjoy spending social time together. They appreciate the wide range of activities that are available to them in the school grounds, such as the trim-track and the many sporting activities. One pupil that I spoke with told me about the purpose of the peace garden and how it had recently been developed to make it more sustainable. He spoke with pride about how both pupils and wildlife use the space.

Older pupils enjoy supporting younger ones and are proud to be 'buddy readers'. Older pupils talk confidently about the importance of them setting a good example and safeguarding younger pupils when they walk them to the local church each week. Older pupils are proud to be seen as positive role models.

The governing body has a secure understanding of the strengths of the school and quickly identifies what needs to improve. It has the right mix of experience and expertise to provide leaders with challenge and support. Governors make regular checks on how improvements are progressing in school and frequently focus on the school's work for disadvantaged pupils, safeguarding and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils', parents' and staff's views of the school are almost unanimously positive. All staff who responded to Ofsted's survey said that they are proud to work at the school. One parent summed up the comments of many when they told me, 'All of my children have attended Curzon. The school provides an excellent basis for their future and they have

thrived during their time at the school. The educational standards are high and the pastoral support is superb.'

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose and record-keeping is well organised and secure. Staff recruitment and checking systems are rigorous. Safeguarding training meets statutory requirements and staff are well trained to identify different types of risks and potential abuse.

Pupils know how to stay safe online and in the community. They talked positively about their work with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. They understand what abuse is and know what to do if they have a concern.

Parents are unanimous in their view that children are both happy and safe at the school.

Governors have a thorough understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and carry out regular checks of the school's procedures. Governors regularly review all aspects of the school's safeguarding work.

Inspection findings

- The rate of pupils' progress in mathematics has steadily increased over the last three years. The progress they make between key stage 1 and key stage 2 is now broadly in line with that of all pupils nationally. However, it remains lower than the progress pupils in the school make in reading and writing.
- Teachers make sure that pupils apply their mathematical skills in different contexts. As a result, pupils have become increasingly adept at investigating and solving mathematical problems. Teachers make good use of assessment to find out what pupils need to be taught in mathematics and plan their teaching in light of this. Pupils are assessed at the end of a unit of work. These assessments show that rates of progress in mathematics continues to increase across the school. Pupils are proud of the progress that they are making.
- In some classes, work in mathematics is not matched closely enough to what pupils can do. Sometimes pupils have to do work that is too easy for them before moving on to more challenging work.
- Leaders have ensured that funding that the school receives for disadvantaged pupils is well spent. These pupils receive bespoke provision to address any gaps in learning and to catch up with other pupils. Assessments and work in books show that these pupils are making the progress that they should and in some cases even better. The vast majority of these pupils reach the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have made good use of the funding that the school receives for physical education (PE) and sports. The wide range of sporting opportunities available to pupils has resulted in increased participation. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their experiences with 'the tough runner' challenge, curling, fencing and paddle boarding activities. They are proud of their sporting achievements and enthusiastically recount

their successes at the many sporting tournaments and competitions in which they have participated.

- Pupils have been inspired by the sporting celebrities that they have met. They have been visited by representatives of the England women's cricket team, a world-renowned, long-distance cyclist and a world class BMX expert. Some pupils also met the Olympian Brownley Brothers at the local secondary school. Pupils told me that this makes them want to try out new activities.
- Good use has been made of a specialist sports coach to develop teaching in PE. The coach has worked alongside teachers to improve their skills and expertise in teaching PE. The school's lead for PE makes regular checks on how well the subject is being taught. However, the evaluations that are made of how effective initiatives are proving are not detailed enough.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils enjoy their work and often extend their learning outside of lessons by their own choice. They readily recall information about the topics that they have covered such as, 'Around the World in 80 days' and 'From the Stone Age to the Iron Age'. Pupils develop English and mathematical skills well across the curriculum.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are provided with memorable activities to support their learning. Pupils excitedly told me about the battle that took place between the visiting Athenian and Spartan. They also told me about the visit from an archaeologist and the archaeological dig that they subsequently took part in.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's plans for improvement are specific and measurable and clearly describe how success will be measured
- rates of progress in mathematics continue to increase by ensuring that:
 - all pupils receive work that challenges them
 - pupils do not have to do work that is too easy for them before moving onto more challenging work.

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

Yours sincerely

Vic Wilkinson
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you; we shared the school's self-evaluation and my key lines of enquiry. We also met to talk about safeguarding, disadvantaged pupils and the school's curriculum. I had discussions with pupils, hearing them read, and parents at the start of the school day. I met with a group of governors. I considered the responses of parents made to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the views of staff and pupils. I observed playtime and we visited all classes in the school together, spending a short time in each. We looked at a sample of pupils' work together. I viewed a range of documents, including the school's improvement plan, the single central record, governors' documentation, monitoring logs and absence information.