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Mr Geraint Mills
Headteacher
Swindon Village Primary School
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Dear Mr Mills

Short inspection of Swindon Village Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 1 March 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 December 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. All members of the school community are confident that pupils learn and develop well at the school. By the time they leave, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

You started in your role as headteacher in September after a period of leadership change. It is a testament to the work that you and your deputy headteacher have done that the school is now in a strong position. Parents and carers, governors and the local authority have welcomed the fresh approach that your leadership has brought. This view is echoed by the staff and pupils.

Your new leadership team has acted quickly to make improvements. You have reviewed the behaviour policy, redesigned the curriculum, and raised the challenge that pupils experience in their learning. Pupils make more progress, and parents are very positive about the changes that have been made. Staff have also welcomed the changes and are confident that the school has improved as a result.

Pupils are keen to learn. They enjoy lessons and feel that teachers work hard to help them learn, stating, 'They do fun things to help you remember.' Teachers regularly check how well pupils are learning, which was an area for development from the previous inspection. They are grateful for the support that teachers and other adults give them in their learning. They particularly appreciate the wide range of clubs and sports activities that are provided for them at lunchtime and after

school. Pupils are respectful, caring and articulate.

Governors have a strong understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school from the accurate and comprehensive information you provide for them. They have a good range of skills to help them in their role and are active in monitoring the work of the school through visits and questioning leaders about their plans.

Safeguarding is effective.

Senior leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to pupils' welfare and safety. This commitment is reflected in the careful and vigilant approach taken by you and your staff. You and your senior team have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, and records are detailed and of high quality. Arrangements for checking that staff are suitable people to work with children meet requirements. Staff receive appropriate training, and regular updates ensure that they are well briefed about potential risks to the safety of pupils. As a result, they understand the actions they should take if they are concerned about a pupil's welfare.

The school's curriculum ensures that pupils are educated to be safe. This includes how to stay safe online, when outside and in the home. Pupils understand about road and fire safety and have school trips that support their understanding. As a result of this, pupils feel safe and well supported. Parents are confident their children are safe in school and value the education pupils receive on these topics.

Governors rigorously check leaders' work to keep pupils safe. Governors receive appropriate training and visit the school regularly to check on policies and procedures. They have a good understanding of the wide range of issues connected to pupils' safety and are vigilant in checking that these issues are addressed.

Inspection findings

- The first line of enquiry checked the effectiveness of the curriculum planned for pupils. This has been an important area for development for the school both last year and this. In recent years, pupils have not achieved well in science. Although this has improved, the inspection examined how well pupils have been learning in science and other subjects during this year. You and your leadership team have reviewed the entire curriculum because you were keen to make it more interesting and relevant to the pupils. You also wanted to ensure that teachers are clear about identifying next steps in learning. Teachers stated that, because of this reorganisation, they find it easier to plan interesting and challenging lessons that link learning in several subjects. Teachers ensure that they offer extended writing opportunities across a range of subjects, including science. Pupils apply their writing, grammar and spelling skills in a range of different contexts so that they become confident in using them.
- You have improved the way that teachers plan mathematics. Lessons now include more reasoning and problem-solving activities, as well as opportunities for pupils to practise their skills. Pupils reported that they find this approach

helpful. However, they have limited opportunities to apply their mathematical learning in practical situations or in other subjects. You have started to change this by introducing 'Life Savers' lessons, in which pupils use their mathematics skills in topics related to money and financial matters. However, you recognise that pupils would benefit from extending these opportunities both when studying other subjects, and in mathematics lessons.

- The second line of enquiry concerned the progress that pupils make during key stage 1. You and your deputy headteacher have supported teachers to understand how understanding and skills in each subject develop from year to year as pupils get older. This clarity and the high expectations that you model to staff have helped to increase pupils' progress across key stage 1 and the rest of the school.
- Finally, we discussed how effectively leaders and governors are supporting learning for disadvantaged pupils. You have improved the way that you evaluate the effectiveness of the actions taken to help these pupils. As a result, your plans have become better focused on the most effective actions. Leaders and teachers have followed your plans carefully and learning has improved. Leaders have been rigorous in their work to improve attendance, especially for disadvantaged pupils, and absence has fallen. Governors check carefully how effectively the pupil premium funding has been spent to improve how well these pupils are learning. Following the concerted action of leaders, teachers and governors, these pupils are now making good progress, especially in key stage 2. However, some of these key stage 2 pupils did not achieve well enough when they were in the Reception Year and key stage 1. We agreed that it is important to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils at the start of their school career so that they can achieve higher outcomes in key stage 2.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- continue to improve the curriculum so that it provides more opportunities for practical applications of skills and problem solving in mathematics
- improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils in Reception and key stage 1 so that they can build on this to achieve higher outcomes in 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 Gloucestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Tom Morrison
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the chair of the governing body and the chairs of other sub committees, senior and middle leaders, teachers and other staff. I had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority and met with a group of pupils. I made observations of learning across the school jointly with you and your deputy headteacher, and we jointly scrutinised examples of pupils' work. I examined a variety of documents including leaders' evaluation of the performance of the school, development plans, assessment information, records of leaders' assessment of teaching and the school's website. I also read some of the minutes of the governing body's meetings, as well as records of checks leaders make on the suitability of staff to work with children. I took account of the views of parents from the 39 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View.