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Mrs Dawn Hunt  
Headteacher  
Roberts Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Hunt

### **Short inspection of Roberts Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 10 January 2018 with Sally Noble, Ofsted Inspector, 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 July 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. In fact, many aspects of the school's work have strengthened, notably the provision and progress in early years and key stage 1 and the rich range of activities on offer across the school, both within and outside of the classroom. Furthermore, the quality of teaching has continued to improve and the attention to pupils' welfare and safety is commendable.

The key driver behind these improvements is your confident and informed leadership that steers the school with absolute clarity of purpose. You know exactly what you want to achieve at the school and make sure all staff are given the necessary challenge and support in order to develop and thrive in their roles. Everyone knows what is expected from them and leaders at all levels are positive and motivational role models. Governors, too, play their part, with some newly recruited governors still settling into their roles. Across the whole staff, there is a 'can do' culture and a commitment to doing the best for the pupils at the school.

You have tackled most of the areas identified for improvement by the previous inspection with success. The school's partnership with parents has gone from strength to strength, as recognised by a recent parent partnership award. In addition, systems for tracking pupils' progress and attendance have been refined and improved. That said, you know there is still more to be done to boost progress across key stage 2 so that standards at the end of Year 6 continue to rise.

Most parents are highly supportive of the school and believe that their children's

needs are well catered for. In particular, several parents commented favourably about the quality of leadership, outdoor education, school sport and the provision for pupils with complex medical needs.

Pupils get along well with one another, look smart and say they enjoy coming to Roberts Primary School.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The school's procedures for keeping pupils safe and for responding to concerns are excellent. Governors, leaders and staff have a very well informed awareness of their duty of care and are alert to the risks that pupils might face. Record-keeping is thorough and the school works closely with a range of different organisations in order to keep pupils safe and promote their welfare. Very effective teamwork and frequent training make sure that safety and welfare matters are attended to swiftly. Governors also support this aspect of the school's work by making regular checks on routines to ensure that statutory duties are met. Pupils who need medicine in school have access to it when needed. The school site is well maintained and secure and playground accidents are dealt with promptly. Most of the time, pupils get on well with one another, but if disagreements or upsets occur, staff intervene quickly.

### **Inspection findings**

- You provide confident and capable leadership and know where the school is going. Along with other school leaders, you are committed to providing a broad and meaningful curriculum that enables pupils to feel good about themselves, lifts aspirations and instils feelings of success. There is a firm expectation that everyone will do their best and a strong team spirit that has grown out of a sense of common purpose and supportive attitudes to colleagues. Staff, pupils and parents are proud of their school and this shows in the superbly maintained premises, well-presented work and positive attitudes to school life.
- Good communication with parents and caring, attentive provision in the Nursery and Reception classes enable children to make the most of their early years at school. Teaching in key stage 1 builds very successfully on this positive start and, in many cases, pupils race ahead in Years 1 and 2. There are several reasons for this. First, the school's leadership has recruited and deployed staff with great care and thought. This has brought out the best in everyone on the key stage 1 team and ensured consistent and creative practice. Second, a focus on key basic skills within an exciting and stimulating curriculum has brought evident benefits. In the Year 1 phonics screening check, for example, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard has risen year after year and, in 2017, was in line with the national figure. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have also risen over time. For the last two years running, standards in all three subjects, at expected levels and above, have been above the national average. Given that many pupils start school with levels of knowledge and skill below those typical for their age, this is a significant achievement. These standards are a credit to the effective leadership, teaching and curriculum in the early part of the school.

- In key stage 2, pupils continue to benefit from effective teaching and an interesting and relevant curriculum. In all classes, teachers apply school policies with consistency and kind authority. Indeed, good humour and upbeat attitudes to learning are apparent across the school. Teachers take care to build pupils' confidence, encourage them to respect themselves and others and to do their best. The Roberts School Charter, for instance, captures the school's aims in four simple statements that promote a healthy and positive outlook on life and learning. In class, teachers ask plenty of well-chosen questions that prompt pupils' thinking and stimulate some super discussions. During this inspection, for example, pupils in several classes were seen examining different foodstuffs as they tried to work out which part of a plant they came from. Teachers' questions were pitched just right and pushed pupils to think hard and use what they already knew in order to come up with well-reasoned suggestions. In another lesson, pupils were reciting poetry while other pupils evaluated their performance and gave constructive feedback against agreed criteria. In all these instances, teaching made sure all pupils were engaged, attentive and responsive. Work in pupils' books and the excellent quality of work on display on walls and in large colourful folders around the school demonstrate that pupils regularly turn out some great work in response to exciting activities.
- That said, there are times when pupils do not make such brisk progress and, over time, pupils' progress in key stage 2 has not been as strong as that seen in key stage 1. You and other school leaders are alert to this and current assessment information shows that progress rates are on the up, with recent gains in mathematics and writing. Reading, however, remains slightly behind, which is why the school is doing much to improve pupils' reading skills and promote a love of reading and books. In many classes, there are inviting displays that draw pupils towards literature. In-school competitions reward pupils for increased enthusiasm for reading. In addition, reading sessions take place every day and are often enlivened by imaginative teaching. The school is clearly on the right track but there is still further to go.
- Attendance has been below average over time but has been heading upwards. In the main, this is due to the school's ongoing attention to this important matter. The school day starts promptly and punctual regular attendance is noted and rewarded. Bit by bit, attendance is rising and leaders are right to remind parents about the link between good school attendance and achievement.
- A notable feature of the school is the attention to learning and achievement outside of the classroom. The facilities for outdoor learning and teaching pupils about environmental matters are superb and are put to excellent use. Pupils also participate regularly in sport, with some significant successes in competitive events. Other events, including musical celebrations, mathematics challenges, book quizzes and involvement with local charities and community events, help pupils to understand the value of putting their energies and talents to good use.
- Your focus on giving pupils a breadth of experience and helping them to grow into responsible and well-rounded members of society is at the heart of the school's work.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they work to:

- boost progress, especially in reading, across key stage 2 in order to capitalise on the higher standards now coming up from key stage 1.

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

Yours sincerely

Martin Pye

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, we met with you, other members of your leadership team and the teaching staff. I also met with two governors and my colleague met with administrative staff to check on record-keeping. We carried out short observations of teaching in all year groups, observed the start of a singing practice and looked at pupils' work in books and on display. We talked with pupils in lessons and at breaktimes and met with a group of key stage 2 pupils. We spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.

We paid particular attention to several key lines of enquiry. These included: progress since the previous inspection, pupils' achievement in key stages 1 and 2, safeguarding and the impact of leadership and management.

By the end of the inspection, there were 54 recent responses on Parent View and 20 written comments. We took account of these responses and talked with some pupils and parents about how school staff listen to their views. We looked at a number of documents, including: pupils' progress information, the school's own evaluation of its performance, improvement plans, records of leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and learning, and several school policy documents. We also checked the school's website and the procedures for keeping pupils safe. We asked members of staff, pupils and parents about safeguarding matters.