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Mr Paul Seagraves
Headteacher
Longsands Community Primary School
Longsands Lane
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Dear Mr Seagraves

Short inspection of Longsands Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 January 2016, 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 June 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leaders and governors have continued to improve the school and make sure that pupils make good progress from their starting points. Staff work hard to provide stimulating learning experiences within a safe and encouraging environment. As a result, pupils grow in confidence and develop excellent attitudes to learning; they are prepared well for the next steps in their education.

The governing body has high ambitions for the school and is ably led by the two new joint chairs. Governors are well informed through regular reports from leaders and visits to school, so they have a good understanding of strengths and priorities for improvement. Governors provide rigorous support and challenge to school leaders and many offer their time and substantial knowledge and expertise to enhance the school's work.

You have successfully addressed the areas for further improvement that were identified at your last inspection, including the way in which teachers use assessment information to check pupils' progress and plan teaching. Teachers are using the school's new approaches to assessment to plan work that meets pupils' learning needs and covers National Curriculum requirements in depth. Teachers make sure that pupils are provided with extra support to fill gaps in their learning if they are not making the progress that they should.

You have taken effective action to raise pupils' achievement in writing by the end of Year 6. Pupils have lots of opportunities to practise their writing skills in other subjects. Stimulating teaching helps them to develop a wide vocabulary and use increasingly sophisticated grammar and punctuation to add interest to their writing. In 2015, the Year 6 pupils made better than expected progress to achieve standards in writing that were well above average. These pupils also achieved well above average standards in reading and mathematics. Pupils who are currently in Year 5 and Year 6 are achieving similarly high standards that are at least in line with, and often above, age-related expectations.

There has been disruption to teaching at Key Stage 1 in the past, but you have dealt with this successfully and staffing is now stable. You are taking the necessary action to ensure that pupils experience good teaching in every class. Where pupils have made slower progress in previous years, you are providing extra support to enable them to catch up quickly. However, there is a need for leaders to keep a close eye on the progress of those pupils, including the most able, who have slipped behind in previous years.

Your school motto, which focuses on 'TEAM' work (Together Everyone Achieves More), is respected and upheld by all. Staff share your ambition and feel part of a team where they can discuss ideas and learn from each other. Pupils feel valued and show pride in their school. The vast majority of parents are pleased with their children's education. There were many positive comments, including for example, 'I feel this is a great school which is well supported by all the staff...they have great resources, lots of team spirit and rewards for the children which they love' and 'I am content that my child is well looked after, safe and progressing and is offered a range of positive experiences.'

Safeguarding is effective.

The school provides a nurturing environment where pupils' safety and well-being are of the utmost importance. Pupils feel extremely safe and understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy. All parents who made their views known during the inspection say that their children feel safe. Pupils' safety and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are given a high priority in teaching, through assemblies and visits out of school. Pupils make a positive contribution by maintaining high standards of behaviour and showing respect for each other. Parents play their part too, by making sure pupils' attendance remains above average and by fostering positive attitudes to school. The positive attitudes of staff, parents and pupils create a harmonious school community where pupils develop mature personal and social skills.

Safeguarding checks on staff and volunteers who work with the children are thorough and records are of high quality. You have made sure that safeguarding training is up to date and all staff, including those new to the school, are fully aware

of procedures they need to follow if they have a safeguarding concern. Senior leaders have completed training on the government's 'Prevent' strategy, providing them with an understanding of how to protect pupils from risk of exposure to extremist views. There are appropriate plans to share this more widely with staff and governors.

Inspection findings

- You, staff and governors have ensured that the school remains dynamic and continues to improve. Teachers are enthusiastic and make sure they keep up to date and learn from best practice. Staff work together very effectively to share resources and learn from each other.
- You have carefully managed appointments of new teachers. The induction procedures and mentor support for the newly qualified teachers (NQTs) who have just joined the school are excellent. The NQTs are fully aware of school policies and benefit from the expertise of more experienced staff. They feel able to make a full contribution and have brought fresh ideas to the school, which have been enthusiastically welcomed.
- The team approach to leading improvement in subjects works well. Each team has a good overview of performance in their subject arising from regular assessment of the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. Teams plan professional development and drive improvement effectively.
- Pupils show enthusiasm for learning and develop high aspirations. Their positive attitudes make a considerable contribution to their achievement. The 'pupil governors' are right to be proud of all the good work they have done to improve the school and raise funds for various charities. Pupils show respect and consideration for each other in shared areas of the school.
- The achievement of pupils is consistently good for all groups. The pupil premium (additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils) is used effectively to make sure disadvantaged pupils do just as well as others in school. In 2015, disadvantaged pupils made better progress and attained higher standards than others nationally in the Year 6 assessments. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive good support and make similarly good progress.
- Support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is a strength of the school and valued by parents. As one parent said, 'there is fantastic support for children who need extra help...teachers go to great lengths to plan activities that help them learn and grow in confidence.'
- The early years provision is very effective in helping children develop the personal and social skills they need to succeed as they move through school. Teaching provides children with a strong foundation for further learning. However, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been below average for the last two years. Ensuring that children make more rapid progress in language, literacy and mathematical development remains a priority for improvement. Action taken so far is having a positive impact.

- In 2015 pupils did not do as well as they should have in the Year 1 national check on phonics (letters and the sounds that they make). This was because of disruption to staffing. Staff would now benefit from further training in the teaching of phonics.
- The vast majority of parents are extremely pleased with the education and care their children receive. A few parents feel that the information they receive about their children's progress is not clear enough and that the approach to homework varies from class to class. You are taking appropriate action to ensure that such concerns are addressed.
- Pupils experience a broad and interesting curriculum in each class, although this information is not currently available on the school's website as required. There also some minor omissions in the information provided about governors.
- The local authority adviser provides good support and challenge to the school, which strengthens self-evaluation.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- teachers and teaching assistants receive further training in phonics to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement in reading and writing, with this being reflected in the Year 1 national phonics screening check
- children's progress in language, literacy and mathematical development continues to improve in the early years in order to enable more children to reach a good level of development
- the progress of those pupils, including the most able, whose learning has slowed in previous years, is tracked carefully to make sure they make rapid progress to catch up any lost ground
- the website is updated to include details of the curriculum offered in each class and information about governors.

I am copying this letter to the Chairs of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Lancashire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jean Olsson-Law

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, senior and middle leaders, newly qualified teachers and the joint Chairs of the Governing Body. I spoke with the school adviser by telephone. I visited classrooms to observe learning and look at pupils' work. I spoke with pupils during lessons, and in two meetings. I looked at your assessment

information, self-evaluation, action planning and safeguarding procedures. I spoke with several parents at the start of the day and took account of 21 'freetext' comments and 34 responses to 'Parent View', the online questionnaire for parents. I also took account of six returns to the online staff questionnaire and eight pupil questionnaire returns.