

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



16 January 2017

Mrs Janet Clayton
Headteacher
Norland Church of England Junior and Infant School
Berry Moor Road
Norland
Sowerby Bridge
West Yorkshire
HX6 3RN

Dear Mrs Clayton

Short inspection of Norland Church of England Junior and Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 13 December 2016 with Ofsted Inspector Anne Humble, 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 2011.

This school continues to be good.

You and your leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have robustly addressed the weaknesses in teaching that have led to gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills, especially in mathematics. You have worked effectively to address these gaps. You have now established a stable and highly effective staff team who share your vision of high expectations and high-quality education for all pupils. Your staff are excited by this and morale is high.

In your pursuit of excellence you have carefully sought out focused and effective support from a range of sources. These have included the local authority, the Anglican diocese of Leeds and outstanding local schools. You then acted promptly and well on the advice and support you and your team were given. As a result, the comparative weaknesses in mathematics in key stage 2 and writing across the school are being successfully and imaginatively addressed.

You know your children well. Working with your staff team, you have put in place effective systems for assessing the quality and impact of teaching on pupils' progress. As a result teaching is informed by an increasingly detailed understanding of what each child needs in order to make good and better progress.

You have worked effectively with your governors. They know the school well and are realistic about what needs to be done. They now recognise that they may have

relied too much on the very detailed and thorough information you have provided for them. They have responded enthusiastically to a recent review of their work undertaken by a national leader of governance. Governors, under their recently appointed chair and vice-chair, are now engaging more directly with the school's work through regular, focused visits and links to subjects and phases. This work is still in its early days. However, evidence from the inspection, including a review of the very detailed minutes of governors' meetings, suggests that governance will increasingly play a significant role in strengthening and challenging your work at the school.

At the previous inspection the school was asked to strengthen its work in preparing pupils for their next steps in learning and as sensitive citizens. This has largely been addressed. Evidence from this inspection shows that pupils are very aware of the needs of others, of the multifaceted nature of life in modern Britain and how to live and prosper as citizens. Building on this and on the enthusiasm for learning you have engendered in your pupils, more still needs to be done. The curriculum beyond the 'core' of English, mathematics and science is not as stimulating and demanding as it should be, especially for the most able pupils. Pupils would be better prepared for their next steps if their experience of subjects beyond the 'core' was more carefully distinctive.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, your staff and governing body take your safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. You have created a culture of safeguarding at the school which all members of the school community share and contribute to. There is regular and effective training for all staff and governors to ensure that they are up to date in their knowledge and understanding. You, as designated safeguarding lead, have strong links with outside agencies. Your records of engagement with these agencies are detailed and show your careful approach to this aspect of the school's work. You make referrals to the local authority promptly and follow them through effectively.

You and your leadership team have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are of high quality and appropriately detailed.

Inspection findings

- Children settle well into the Reception class and make good progress. Communication between parents and carers and Class 1 staff are strong. Children are well looked after and safe. They work together well. They learn and grow in confidence as they explore the wide range of activities that staff provide for them. Staff monitor the children's progress carefully and use the information they gather to focus their teaching. The early years provision is well and imaginatively led. The leader deploys her staff effectively and there is a strong team spirit rooted in ensuring that children are happy, safe and have every opportunity to explore and excel. Outcomes at the end of the Reception Year are strong and children are well prepared for Year 1.

- Phonics is a strength of the school. Over the past three years the proportion of pupils who achieve the standard in the Year 1 screening check on phonics has improved each year. In 2016 it was 100%. Year 1 pupils undertake work which is challenging; this is particularly the case for the most able pupils. This is because staff monitor the progress of pupils carefully. As a result of good teaching and careful monitoring most pupils make good progress across key stage 1 and attain well.
- The provisional results for the end of key stage 1 in summer 2016 suggest that outcomes were good in mathematics and in reading but weaker in writing. However, inspection evidence from the scrutiny of writing books and talking with pupils shows that there has been significant progress in writing during the course of this term. Pupils are getting more opportunities to write at length and in a wider range of genres. There is clear evidence that more pupils are writing with greater maturity and accuracy.
- You are successfully tackling weaker performance in writing through a range of strategies. For example, teachers are planning and providing more opportunities for writing at length in subjects other than English. Pupils' science books, for example, show that they are using a range of ways to describe the results of their experiments. They are also using science-specific language in their writing with growing confidence.
- You have also introduced a whole-school approach to writing, starting from Class 1, that explicitly links class reading books to pupils' own writing. They report that they enjoy and welcome this. As they move up the school, pupils are discussing with increasingly appropriate technical language and growing confidence the skills that 'real' writers use to create effects in their writing. Pupils are then using these skills in their own writing. This is having a significant impact on both the quality of pupils' writing and their expertise as readers.
- All of the pupils I spoke with said that they enjoyed reading and that the school encouraged them to read widely. The most able pupils read to me with real delight and were able to talk with obvious pleasure and growing awareness about their reading. The least able readers were able to tackle new words well and discuss the positive impact that reading was having on their learning and confidence.
- Working with the White Rose Maths Hub and other colleagues from the local authority, you have successfully introduced a much broader and more varied approach to mathematics. This approach helps deepen pupils' confidence and expertise by encouraging them to explore more open-ended, 'real-life' problems. Inspection evidence shows that this is having a significantly positive impact on pupils' experience and learning in mathematics. Pupils reported to me that they really welcome this. They said that they found mathematics 'really, really hard' but that they 'loved it'. This was particularly the case for the most able pupils I spoke to.
- Your pupils told me that they enjoy coming to school. Some of the older pupils in key stage 2 also told me that they had noticed the significant improvements you had brought to the school. A large number of parents concurred with both of these views. Overall attendance is consistently higher than the national average and continuing to improve. Those pupils and families who, from time to time, find regular attendance a challenge are carefully, firmly and, usually, successfully helped to improve their attendance.

- Pupils are safe at school and know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. You offer pupils regular and effective opportunities through assembly and the detailed personal, social and health education programme to explore aspects of personal safety, such as road safety, and how to keep themselves healthy. Year 1 pupils were able to describe in detail, over lunch, the content and benefits of a healthy diet. They knew that water was better for them than other drinks because, as one Year 1 said, 'it's natural and has no sugar in. Too much sugar is not good for you.'
- Pupils are well behaved and enjoy learning. They are polite, kind and aware of the needs of others. I saw no examples of low-level disruption during the inspection. Pupils reported that poor behaviour was very rare and that the systems to deal with misbehaviour were effective. They also said that because of the work of the school they knew about the forms that bullying can take. They said it was very rare. They were confident that if bullying did occur it would be dealt with swiftly and effectively by adults.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils at the school is lower than the national average. Their books and the school's own information show that this group of pupils is making similar progress to that of their peers across the school. This is because you focus your teaching and support very carefully, taking into account the needs of each pupil.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make generally good progress from their starting points. This is because you, as the coordinator for this aspect of the school's work, ensure that staff are well trained and aware of the needs of these pupils. You also work carefully with outside agencies, including the local authority, to ensure that these pupils receive appropriate support.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the whole-school approach continues to develop and further extend pupils' facility, confidence and accuracy in writing in a wide range of genres for a range of audiences
- the curriculum provides all pupils, including the most able, with opportunities to explore the distinctive skills, knowledge and disciplines associated with subjects beyond the 'core' of English, mathematics and science.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Evans
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I focused on the following lines of enquiry during the inspection:

1. Is safeguarding effective?
2. Does the provision in the Reception class and Year 1 (Class 1) enable children to make good progress from their starting points?
3. Are pupils, especially the most able, making better progress in writing across the school?
4. How successfully have the mathematics issues in key stage 2 been addressed?
5. How effectively does the school's curriculum prepare pupils for their next steps in education and for life in modern Britain?
6. Is leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness accurate and based upon robust evidence?

I met with you to discuss the school's effectiveness and what you had done to ensure that the school continues to improve. I also met with the early years leader, two governors, including the chair of governors, the local parish priest, and with you in your role as coordinator of the school's work to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. I spoke on the telephone with three colleagues from successful local schools and from the local authority who have provided support for your school. I scrutinised a range of documents, including your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I also scrutinised the school's safeguarding systems, records and associated documents. I checked information about pupils' achievement along with external evaluations of aspects of the school's work and minutes of meetings of the governing body.

I considered 27 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own records of monitoring parental views. I also took into account 28 written comments from parents. I visited all classes, most of them accompanied by you, to observe teaching, learning and assessment. I checked pupils' progress in their books, talked formally with a group of pupils from key stage 2 and talked informally with pupils in lessons and around the school at lunchtime and playtime. I enjoyed listening to and discussing reading with pupils from Years 2 and 5. I attended an Advent act of collective worship at the start of the day.

I met with groups of parents at the beginning and end of the day.