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14 February 2017

Mrs Jeanette Matthews  
Headteacher  
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CA11 0TP

Dear Mrs Matthews

### **Short inspection of Greystoke School**

Following my visit to the school on 31 January 2017, 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 May 2012.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your governors have a clear vision for the future of the school. Governors have a range of skills which they use to support the school. They ask challenging questions because of the high-quality, timely information they receive from you. Governors share and celebrate the school's vision with the wider community. Your active involvement in the work of the local cluster of schools further promotes ongoing development for teachers and pupils.

You and your team have taken action to tackle the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. The proportion of pupils in key stage 2 achieving the higher standards in mathematics has increased. Although this is not the case at key stage 1, current pupils in key stage 1 are making good progress in mathematics. This improvement is because of good teaching of written calculations and the frequent opportunities pupils are given to solve problems and investigate numbers.

You are not complacent and recognise that while standards are high at key stage 2, reading comprehension can be further developed across the school. You also acknowledge that further improvements can be made to the achievement of pupils in key stage 1. More work is needed to develop and monitor progress in some subjects, such as history and geography.

Parents value the good communication they receive, including emails and weekly newsletters. They say that you and your staff always have time for them. Parents say that their children are happy and that school 'ignites a love for learning'. Absence rates are low and on the day of the inspection, all pupils were in school. It reflects pupils' enjoyment of school that they rarely miss a day.

Your pupils are very well behaved. They are always polite and well mannered. Tolerance and respect for others are clear in pupils' work and in their behaviour. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well. Pupils talked excitedly about the opportunities they are given, including opportunities to debate. Because of your well-planned curriculum, pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when they work and play online. Pupils value the care and support they receive, with one telling me that, 'Teachers don't tell us the answer, they help us work through it.' The curriculum ensures that pupils have a good understanding of British values, and other faiths and cultures and are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and your staff know individual pupils well and so any issues are quickly identified and addressed. Your governors ensure that all policies and procedures are in place, including checks on teachers and governors. Training for staff is comprehensive and up to date. Consequently, all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a high quality.

### **Inspection findings**

- Staff know individual pupils well and monitor their progress carefully in English, mathematics, science and computing, involving the pupils in this process. As a result, extra help is put in place quickly when it is needed. However, this close monitoring of pupils' progress does not happen in history or geography.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support, including support from outside agencies where appropriate. These pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils benefit from good teaching at all levels. The adults in school provide good role models for pupils, including when modelling learning. This adds to the warm and positive relationships seen around school. The stimulating classroom environments immerse pupils in their learning and are a credit to the adults in school. Staff value the opportunities they get to continue their professional development and they use these opportunities well.
- Pupils are supported by adults with good subject knowledge who bring learning to life. Incisive questioning from adults develops pupils' thinking and their learning. As a result, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make good progress in a range of subjects. Pupils read fluently and with expression and are developing a good understanding of what they read. Older pupils are beginning to write with flair. For example, one Year 6 pupil wrote, 'As tight as a squeezing cobra, my throat like tornadoes expanding.'

- Pupils are attentive in lessons and they want to do well. They are proud of their school and the way in which they help and support one another. Older pupils value the opportunities they get to help the younger children.
- Your curriculum is broad and balanced and provides pupils with a wide range of experiences. Your pupils talked about the way in which you enrich the curriculum with visits, including to the polling station during elections. However, the curriculum for history and geography is less well developed at key stage 1 and your staff do not consistently monitor the progress of pupils in these subjects.
- A key line of enquiry for this inspection was about the progress your pupils make in key stage 1. Your current pupils, including the most able, make good progress in mathematics and are developing secure methods of calculation. The development of problem-solving and mathematical reasoning skills is enabling the most able pupils to work at greater depth. Phonics is taught consistently well and the focus on enriching pupils' experience of language is having a positive impact on standards in reading and writing. Consequently, pupils make good progress in reading and progress in writing is improving. You acknowledge that pupils in key stage 1 have too few opportunities to develop their writing in subjects other than English and science. As a result, few pupils in key stage 1 are on track to reach the higher standards in writing.
- Another line of enquiry was focused on the progress of pupils currently in key stage 2 who did not reach the expected standards at the end of key stage 1. These pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and are rapidly catching up with their peers. They read with expression and are developing an extended vocabulary, which they use to good effect in their writing.
- Since the previous inspection, you have added provision for Nursery-age children. Your early years and key stage 1 classroom supports the learning of the younger children well. There are opportunities for Nursery and Reception children to develop skills in all areas of learning. Opportunities for social development have been considered carefully in this mixed-age class. You have worked within the constraints of the building to provide a secure outdoor environment for the early years children. This is something which you are developing further. Due to your carefully constructed curriculum, most children in the early years make good progress from their starting points. Where this is not the case, this is quickly identified and additional support is put in place. All welfare requirements for Nursery and Reception children are met.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- outcomes for pupils in key stage 1 improve further by:
  - developing the history and geography curriculum
  - ensuring that pupils develop their writing skills in geography and history.
- teachers monitor the progress of pupils in history and geography across the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Tanya Hughes

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this short inspection, I met with you, teachers and governors. I spoke to a representative of the local authority. You and I visited classes to observe learning and I looked at work in pupils' books. I met with pupils throughout the day and spoke with four parents in the playground before school. I considered the eight 'free-text' comments made by parents on Parent View. I also considered the 22 pupil and eight staff responses to the online questionnaires. I heard several pupils read and observed pupils on the playground and in the dining hall. I conducted a detailed review of safeguarding, including checking on the school's policies, procedures and record-keeping. I talked to you, other staff and governors about how the school ensures that children are kept safe. I also considered a range of other documentation, including school improvement planning and information about pupils' progress and attainment.