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Mrs Helen Stott
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Stott

Short inspection of Allerton C of E Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 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 February 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 are rightly exceptionally proud of the progress the school has made since the last inspection. Your continuous ambition to make the school even better is recognised by both parents and pupils. Your clear vision for the future is shared by staff at all levels.

Parents spoken to during the inspection told of their affection and enthusiasm for the school. Several candidly admitted to having been less than pleased initially when they first received confirmation of their child's place at the school. However once their children started, their opinions changed and many were quick to point out the wide range of opportunities offered by school to themselves and their children.

The relationships you have forged with other groups in the locality have benefitted pupils and their parents well. For example, the development of the 'Fuel for School' market stall through a partnership with 'The Real Junk Food' project has provided food for families. The café and kitchen area now in place have also proved to be very popular with parents and pupils, offering opportunities for pupils to learn about food and a pay as you feel café for parents.

You have built a cohesive leadership team with complementary strengths. You all know your school well and are united in your desire to bring about improvement at

a fast pace. Your development plan reflects this well and accurately identifies the areas which need your immediate attention and those which will bring about future change.

The governing body support your future plans wholeheartedly. They feel your leadership has brought much change to the school and this they believe has benefitted pupils. Governors clearly offer you much support but are not afraid to challenge, especially over the progress of different groups of pupils. They recognise their responsibilities in working with senior leaders in developing a strong vision for the school. Governors' visits into school enable them to observe at first hand the impact of leaders' work.

You were clearly unhappy at last year's dip in results against national standards. Since then you have taken a detailed and thorough approach to analysing and investigating the reasons behind this. As a result, standards are rising across the school, particularly in mathematics and reading. Reading records and work in pupils' books demonstrate this improvement clearly. You and other senior leaders are closely monitoring progress and middle leaders spoken to confirm it is the focus of every meeting currently. This approach is clearly beginning to produce results as evidenced by the rise in standards across the school.

Pupils' progress in writing in key stage 1 is improving after a dip last year. Your focus on spelling has begun to have an effect. Prompts on tables and on the walls are used by pupils to support their writing, particularly of the words which do not always follow regular spelling patterns. Work in books shows pupils' growing confidence and more accurate spelling and punctuation.

Your innovative and wide-ranging approach to increasing pupils' love of reading and books is also improving standards. Year 6 pupils reported how much they enjoyed working in the new studio and how drama and dance were helping them to enjoy books and reading more. Choral reading sessions (reading together as a class) are improving pupils' fluency and understanding. Pupils working together as 'reading giants' (more able pupils partnered with less able pupils) are helping to develop pupils' stamina and confidence in reading.

Pupils' progress in mathematics is also improving rapidly. The most-able pupils, including those who receive additional support through extra government funding, have attended workshops at a local independent secondary school. This has accelerated the progress of this group significantly. Overall the development of a mastery approach within the curriculum which enables pupils to use their mathematical knowledge and skills has accelerated progress in key stage 2. However presentation in books is not as good as it could be and pupils do not always show sufficient pride in their work. Currently staff do not comment on this and as a result improvement in the presentation of work in pupils books is slower than it should be.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records kept are detailed and of high quality. You, the governors and your senior leadership team have ensured that safeguarding pupils is a key focus of the school. Staff spoken to during the inspection explained that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They felt that recent training and regular updates had enabled them to feel confident about who to contact and what to do if a safeguarding concern occurred.

The high quality work of your learning mentor also contributes greatly to safeguarding pupils. Her strong relationships with the local community have enabled her to support families, for example in getting children to school regularly and on time. Her diligent record keeping in the school's online safeguarding programme shows that liaison with outside agencies is effective and school regularly attends and contributes to child protection meetings. Parents and pupils spoken to agree that school is a safe and happy place which regularly reaches out and supports the local community.

Inspection findings

- The school currently makes provision for two-year-old children. Leaders are proud that they were one of the first schools in Leeds to offer this provision which is now in its second year. Currently there are 16 children in this part of the nursery for 15 hours per week. All of these children started school with knowledge and skills below those typical for their age. Due to the skilled approach taken by staff, children's needs are well met and understood. As a result, they make up lost ground and make good progress overall. Last year this group made a smooth transition to the school's nursery.
- Children often join the school's Nursery and Reception classes with knowledge and skills lower than those typical for their age. Parents and carers feel their children make a good start and many leave having attained the early learning goals and are in line with others nationally.
- Last year progress dipped for some. All groups are now making much better progress, particularly in mathematics and reading. The school's effective use of pupil premium funding and focus on improvement has ensured that disadvantaged pupils are on target to reach much higher standards than those reached last year. This represents good progress for these pupils, particularly from their starting points.
- Pupils who have special educational need and or disabilities make good progress from a range of different starting points. Parents recognise the inclusive approach of the school and this has led to an increase in the numbers of pupils joining the school with additional needs. Staff are effectively trained and work closely with parents to ensure pupils' individual needs are met. A comment made by a parent of a child with additional needs summed up this close working relationship well: 'Staff in this school have made my life so much better. They understand the needs of my child and not only support him in school, but regularly check how I am coping. I am so pleased my child came to this school.'

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and this is clearly reflected in their regular attendance which is consistently above the national average. Pupils feel that school offers them a very wide range of opportunities which they really appreciate. Several commented on the 'brilliant' opportunities the 'scrap shed' offered at break and dinner times when recycled materials and equipment donated by a charity are given to pupils to design and model with on the playground.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- senior leaders continue to monitor the progress of pupils at a high level to ensure the good and better outcomes currently forecast
- staff encourage pupils to improve the presentation of their work particularly in mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Marian Thomas
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I examined a range of documents. These included the school's safeguarding documentation including that held online, the school's data on measuring pupils' progress and behaviour and attendance records. I met with the chair of the governing body and five other members of the governing body, staff members, the learning mentor and senior leaders. I also met informally with groups of parents at the start of the school day and pupils in the playground during lunchtime. Accompanied by senior leaders, I observed learning in classrooms across the school and looked at work in pupils' books. I also visited the classroom where two-year-olds are taught, the school's onsite café and market stall, and the before- and after-school club run by school governors.