

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



2 March 2017

Mrs Valerie Sian  
Headteacher  
Walkley Primary School  
Burnaby Crescent  
Walkley  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S6 2RZ

Dear Mrs Sian

### **Short Inspection of Walkley Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 14 February 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 December 2012.

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

You and your colleagues have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. It is to your credit that you have achieved this despite the many changes in staffing and leadership that have happened in the last few years, and the steep increase in pupils joining the school during term time, especially from ethnic minority backgrounds and often at an early stage of learning English.

The previous inspection highlighted strengths in teaching, leadership, behaviour, and relationships with the community and parents. These aspects remain strong. Parents and staff are complimentary in their praise of all aspects of the school's work. Staff are proud to be part of the school and enjoy working here. The culture of the school is very positive and underpinned by strong, shared values. Relationships are warm and respectful.

You and your senior leadership team work hard to ensure that all staff are clear about how well the school is doing, what the school's priorities are for continued improvement, and the roles that they are expected to play in achieving these. You have responded well to the area for improvement in the previous inspection to continue to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in providing opportunities for pupils to practise regularly their reading, writing and other basic skills during lessons.

Staff feel well supported and challenged to make the school even better. They are positive about the many opportunities to share effective practice, plan lessons together, check the accuracy of each other's marking and take advice from specialist practitioners in other schools. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved. You and senior leaders have been successful in emphasising to all teachers and teaching assistants their responsibilities in ensuring that all pupils continue to make at least good progress. Children in the early years get off to a flying start. By the end of the Reception Year, most now reach a good level of development. Across key stage 1, pupils achieve increasingly well. They make overall good progress, from their starting points, to reach standards that are average over time in writing and mathematics, and average currently in reading. Outcomes in phonics have particularly improved since the last inspection, and are now average. Pupils who attend school for the full key stage 2 also make good progress. Many reach above-average standards in writing by the end of Year 6. Although reading and mathematics outcomes were not as strong as in writing in 2016, they are improving rapidly in school due to the good and better teaching.

Senior leaders share a clear understanding of how well the pupils are doing, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is because of the regular and rigorous checks that leaders make on how well pupils are progressing. You rightly identify that some pupils, including the most able, could be making more progress across key stage 2 in mathematics, and that there is still more work to be done to accelerate some pupils' progress in reading in all years. Visits to lessons and work in pupils' books suggest that you and your staff are succeeding in making these necessary improvements.

Governors are committed, ambitious and determined to see the school do even better. They have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas to improve. They provide a good blend of challenge and support and are not afraid to ask difficult questions of leaders. Governors are keen to improve and develop their own skills. They have used a skills audit effectively to identify the nature of training they need in the future. Governors recognise that they need to ensure that the review of the impact of pupil premium funding is published on the school's website. As a consequence, the school's website does not fully comply with the statutory requirements regarding what schools should publish on their website.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and your leadership team take your safeguarding responsibilities seriously. Staff have taken on board the key messages from the Department for Education's 'Keeping children safe in education' and the implications these have within school to make sure that children are kept safe. Staff understand the need to remain constantly vigilant of any signs that children may be at risk of harm. As a result, the pupils feel safe, happy and well looked after in school. Their parents agree. The overwhelming majority of responses to the parent online surveys were highly positive. The staff know families and individual pupils very well indeed.

Staff are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding practice, including neglect and other abuse, domestic violence and radicalisation. Staff are clear about reporting concerns they may have and are confident these will be acted upon by key leaders. Any concerns are carefully recorded, tracked and analysed. There are secure systems for checking and recording the suitability of adults to work in the school.

## **Inspection findings**

- Senior and middle leaders have high expectations of staff and pupils. They are able to show that through their own monitoring of teaching and learning they have brought about further improvements. For example, in pupils' writing, effective steps have been taken to enhance the range of language that pupils use, hone the accuracy of their spelling and increase the depth and detail in sentences and paragraphs. Pupils' abilities to match letters and sounds have also improved, and phonics outcomes have risen to match national averages in Years 1 and 2.
- Children in the early years enjoy the many exciting activities and experiences. There is a wealth of opportunities for children to develop their writing and mark-making skills both inside and outside the classroom. As a result of high-quality teaching, most children are ready for the demands of Year 1.
- Consistently good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2, to reach average outcomes in writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1. For many pupils who attend school throughout key stage 2, outcomes in writing are increasingly above average by the time they leave school, reflecting the good progress that they make. Outcomes in mathematics are rising strongly, with many key stage 2 pupils achieving levels appropriate for their age. But you and your staff are not complacent. You rightly recognise the need to accelerate key stage 2 progress of some pupils, including the most able, in mathematics, and to improve further some pupils' outcomes in reading in all years. You are also keeping a close watch on the most able pupils who come from disadvantaged backgrounds, to ensure that they make consistently good progress in all subjects. You are making secure gains in all of these areas.
- Daily mental mathematics practice is enhancing pupils' confidence and agility in using the basic skills to calculate accurately. Many pupils can explain key mathematical concepts and the approaches that they are taking to solve problems. However, some pupils, including the most able, are not always challenged soon enough to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills.
- Pupils are developing a love of reading. The pupils I listened to reading demonstrated good levels of fluency and understanding. They said how much they enjoyed the regular opportunities to read, both in school and at home. Nonetheless, information gathered during the inspection shows the need to continue to hone pupils' skills in retrieving precise information, in 'reading between the lines' to deduce further details and in making assumptions about future character and story developments.
- Bespoke small-group work and individualised catch-up sessions are proving effective in helping particular pupils to improve their progress. They include

pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, those from disadvantaged families and the increasing numbers of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds who join the school during term time, and who are often at an early stage of learning English.

- Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to their learning. They are happy and enjoy coming to school. You and your staff emphasise that every day's attendance is important. As a result, attendance is improving and in line with the national average. Absence and persistent absence of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have fallen, and are close to the national averages for all pupils.
- Parents are overwhelming in their praise for the school's leaders and staff. Parents believe that their children are very well looked after in school and are safe. They acknowledge the good teaching, and are particularly pleased about the many opportunities for their children to become involved in sport, music, art, science and technology activities. Almost all parents would recommend the school.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- some pupils, including the most able, make even faster progress across key stage 2, especially in mathematics
- pupils generally improve key reading skills of inference and deduction in all years
- the school's website complies with statutory requirements by including an evaluation of the impact of pupil premium funding for the most recently completed academic year.

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

Yours sincerely

Andrew Swallow  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, your deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and inclusion manager, the senior learning mentor, and other key leaders and managers. I also met with two governors. I held a telephone conversation with a local authority school improvement adviser. Together with you and your deputy headteacher, I visited most classrooms to observe teaching and to look at pupils' work. I also listened to some Year 5 pupils read. Consideration was given to 48 free text responses from parents and to 80 responses

to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View. Although there were no pupil or staff responses to the Ofsted online questionnaires, I evaluated pupil (168) questionnaires completed in school during the summer term 2016. I evaluated recent information in relation to pupils' progress, the school self-evaluation document, the school improvement plan and documentation about how you keep pupils safe. I also sampled some vulnerable children's case files.

The key areas I looked at during the inspection were how effective safeguarding arrangements are, and the progress that pupils are making in reading and mathematics, especially pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. I also checked whether the good outcomes in writing last year were being maintained. In addition, I verified the absence and persistent absence rates of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as confirming the whole-school attendance since the start of the academic year. I looked carefully at aspects of leadership and management, particularly the extent to which leaders and managers, at all levels, including governors, are ensuring consistently good and better teaching.