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Mrs Sarah Hay
Headteacher
Eastfield Primary School
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Dear Mrs Hay

Short inspection of Eastfield Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 8 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 January 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. This is because you, and your leadership team, have high expectations for your pupils and are self-challenging. You have ensured that the school works effectively with the local authority advisers, who have provided excellent support and challenge, enabling the school to make strong progress when tackling issues. You understand the context of your school and put the needs of individual pupils at the heart of all you do. There is a strong moral commitment, at every level, to ensuring that pupils achieve their potential. This has enabled you to lead the school through some significant challenges in recent years, particularly the rapid growth in pupil numbers. You have a relentless focus on continual improvement, are highly reflective and constantly evaluate the impact of any new initiatives, which has led to good-quality teaching across the school.

You accurately identify the strengths and areas of relative weakness and then systematically set about tackling the areas identified for improvement. As a result of your actions, the quality of teaching in mathematics has improved and the teaching of reading is improving. You have put in place clear structures for teachers to follow, which secures a cohesive approach across the school. Following the last inspection, teachers are now providing more opportunities for pupils to work independently. Teachers' questioning skills have improved. As a consequence, pupils are answering in greater depth.

Pupils' attendance is tracked meticulously. Staff work closely with parents to help

them bring their children to school regularly and on time. Many respond well to this support. Nevertheless, some families still persist in allowing their children to stay off school, which undermines the work of the school and, more importantly, compromises the achievement of their children.

You have created a vibrant environment which celebrates pupils' work. Welcoming classrooms contain a wealth of helpful resources which support learning.

Pupils are happy at school and enjoy their learning. They behave well in lessons and learn to concentrate well from an early stage. Across the school, pupils focus on their work without the need for reminders. Pupils are well mannered towards adults and generally get on well together.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. There is a strong culture of safeguarding and pupil welfare is at the heart of the school. Rigorous checks are made on staff. Training is above and beyond the minimum levels. Staff not only receive annual training but, in addition, safeguarding is a regular feature in staff meetings. You regularly update the staff when there are changes in government advice about safeguarding soon after it is published. School staff get to know families very well and consider carefully how to support them in order to meet the needs of their children. All staff are vigilant in spotting concerns and these are reported immediately, actioned promptly and followed up tenaciously. The designated leads for safeguarding understand their role well and make sure that relevant outside agencies are involved as needed. Pupils are carefully tracked through identified stages of concern. Records of meetings, actions and training are filed meticulously. As a result of these effective processes, pupils are well cared for.

Inspection findings

- You were rightly concerned about the dip in standards at the end of key stage 2 in reading in 2016. Inspection evidence confirms that the historical picture of sound performance more accurately reflects the quality of teaching in reading.
- There is some highly effective teaching of reading in upper key stage 2. Pupils are taught explicitly how to deduce and infer meaning. This helps them to develop a real depth in understanding of what they have read.
- Pupils respond well to texts and talk knowledgeably about the books they have read.
- Reading journals are used throughout the school and, in some classes, demonstrate a strong impact on progress in reading. However, this is inconsistent across the school.
- Some teachers are particularly skilled at helping pupils overcome the challenges caused by their limited vocabulary. However, in some classes, teachers and teaching assistants do not focus sufficiently on helping pupils understand a wider range of words. Therefore, the paucity of language, identified by the school as a

barrier to pupils' learning, is not being consistently addressed.

- Disadvantaged pupils are identified and known to all staff. Support for them in lessons is carefully targeted to ensure that differences in outcomes between them and other pupils nationally are diminishing. However, where differences exist, it reflects the slight inconsistency in teaching that exists in the school.
- The school has a significantly high number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, many of whom are admitted after the start of the school year. Leaders have implemented a range of strategies which enable these pupils to achieve as rapidly as possible. This has included the appointment of staff whose purpose it is to support learning and secure achievement for these pupils.
- Observations in key stage 1 and the Reception classes demonstrate that pupils enjoy their learning and work hard. Work is usually pitched at an appropriate level. There is sometimes limited challenge, particularly for the most able pupils. This prevents them developing the sophisticated reasoning skills of which they are capable, especially in mathematics.
- In 2016, the proportion of Year 1 pupils who achieved the required standard in the phonics screening check was broadly in line with the national average.
- Pupils have a lot of opportunities to write across the curriculum. However, some teachers do not pay enough attention to checking basic punctuation, spelling and grammar, which leads pupils to adopt bad habits.
- Clear systems are in place to ensure that the school knows who is in school and who is absent. Staff follow through on absence until they are satisfied that pupils are safe. If necessary, they will visit homes to check on the well-being of pupils.
- Absence is rigorously tracked and monitored. The lowest attenders either have medical needs, which has reasonably led to necessary time out of school, or, where this is not the case, pupils with a poor record of attendance are under the scrutiny of the local authority's welfare team.
- Attendance overall and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved and is now broadly in line with national figures.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they keep seeking new ways of engaging with those families who are the hardest to convince that frequent attendance is essential
- pupils' understanding of a wider range of words is further developed
- pupils confidently and consistently apply appropriate grammar, punctuation and spelling to their writing across all subjects so that they meet the standards expected for their age
- pupils, especially the most able, learn to apply the skills of reasoning, justification and explanation in all subjects, particularly mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Davies
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, your deputy headteacher, your assistant headteacher and other members of school staff. I met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I spoke to a group of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. I spoke informally to other pupils in lessons. I spoke to parents as they arrived at school. I looked at the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. We visited lessons together. I looked at a selection of pupils' books from each year group, across all ability groups, including some disadvantaged pupils. I considered the school's self-evaluation and its plans for development. I took into account pupils' standards of attainment and rates of progress. I read a range of school policies, including those for safeguarding children. The inspection focused particularly on: the effectiveness of safeguarding; the teaching of reading; the effectiveness of support for disadvantaged pupils; pupils' progress within key stage 1; attendance, particularly pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities; and the effectiveness of provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language.