

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



20 June 2017

Mrs Sarah Healey
Associate Headteacher
Slaidburn Brennand's Endowed Primary School
Church Street
Slaidburn
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 3ER

Dear Mrs Healey

Short inspection of Slaidburn Brennand's Endowed Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 June 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 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school has gone through a period of instability but under your dynamic and confident leadership it is now back on track. I am pleased that your temporary role as headteacher will shortly be made permanent as this will give further constancy and enable the school to continue to thrive.

You and your leadership team have created an environment that fosters the care and nurture of the whole school community. You, staff, parents and children are rightly proud of the 'family feel' that is such a strong feature at Slaidburn Brennand's. This, coupled with your high expectations, ensures that pupils flourish, both academically and in their personal development.

The overwhelming majority of parents who spoke to me or responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, are extremely positive about the school and would recommend it to others without hesitation. Many parents say that their children 'love school' and they would 'gladly come to school in the holidays if they could'. They also feel that you and your staff always have their 'child's best interests at heart'.

All staff who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire are proud to be part of Slaidburn Brennand's and hugely appreciate the leadership and direction you have brought to the school. Staff share your vision and aspirations and there is a strong sense of the staff team working to achieve the very best for pupils.

Since your appointment at the beginning of this academic year, you have successfully put a great deal in place to secure improvement. This has included rethinking the deployment of staff, developing early years provision, tightening the use of assessment information and raising expectations and the teaching of writing across the school. Although, earlier in the autumn term, you invested in a good-quality, new-look website, you and governors have not completed this work. As a result, some of the information on the school's website is missing or not up to date with requirements.

I appreciate that the results of tests and assessments at the end of key stages need to be looked at with caution because the numbers of pupils in each cohort group are small. Children start school with skills and knowledge typical for their age. I agree with you that historically the number of children in early years reaching a good level of development has not been good enough. However, the decisive action taken by you and your early years leader has very successfully addressed this situation. This has resulted in all children in your present Reception group making good progress.

At the end of key stages 1 and 2, the vast majority of pupils reach the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. However, a small number of pupils are not achieving all that they are capable of at higher levels. You are mindful that the proportion of pupils achieving greater depth and higher standards needs to improve further, particularly for pupils of middle ability and those who are most able. The actions you have already put in place are beginning to lead to improvements and are starting to be evident in the work in pupils' books and your assessment records.

At the previous inspection, inspectors identified a need to raise the quality of teaching and achievement in mathematics. Leaders have ensured that the following improvements have taken place:

- The teaching of mathematics is now consistently good throughout the school. Staff have benefited from a member of the team having an expertise in this subject and so there are regular opportunities for training and support. Lessons are well planned and teachers ask effective questions, appropriate to pupil's ability, to check their understanding and reinforce their knowledge.
- Pupils are proud of their work and are clear about what they do well and what they need to do to improve further. Half-termly assessment information is gathered by teachers to ensure that any gaps in understanding are quickly picked up. Consequently, outcomes in mathematics have improved, with the vast majority of pupils making good progress.
- Pupils say how much they enjoy challenges in their learning, for example solving mathematical problems. However, they admit that sometimes the work can be easy. This, they say, is in mathematics and English. I agree with you that there are a small number of pupils, often identified as middle-ability, who could make even more gains in their learning. This is because there are times when pupils are not offered enough opportunities to extend themselves or encouraged sufficiently to work things out for themselves. As a result, there is still work to be

done to ensure that this group, as well as the most able, are further challenged in their learning.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your team have ensured that pupils have a safe and secure environment by promoting the message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Safeguarding arrangements and records are suitable and kept securely. Staff and governors have appropriate and up-to-date training, including that related to keeping pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism. Your vigilance around the care and support of vulnerable pupils is of an appropriate standard. Leaders have effective relationships with other agencies and are persistent in situations where vulnerable pupils need extra support or advocacy.

Pupils say that they feel very safe and well cared for in school and gave the inspector many examples of how adults support them. They are confident that adults will help them if needed. Pupils confirmed that bullying and inappropriate behaviour is very rare, and if it does occur, adults deal with any situations quickly. Pupils, particularly the older ones, talk with some knowledge about the ways they can stay safe in a range of situations, including online. The vast majority of parents feel that you and the staff look after their children and keep them safe.

Inspection findings

- From the outset of the inspection it was clear that you are a dedicated leader, whose genuineness has quickly won over staff, parents and children. You know your school well and have an accurate, honest view of its strengths and priorities. You have been particularly effective in making sure that the school benefits from having much more involvement with other schools. The governing body has a number of new members, who bring a good range of skills and attributes to the role. They are keen and enthusiastic to make a valuable contribution to the school's drive for further improvement. Consequently, there is a good capacity to improve the school further.
- Writing was a key focus for the inspection. Upon arrival at the school, you rightly identified the need to improve writing across the school. As a result, writing now has a high profile. The whole school has embraced a consistent approach and there are increased opportunities to write for a purpose. Writing is celebrated in school and pupils clearly enjoy writing activities. For example, in Years 1 and 2 pupils were immersed in writing about the imaginary animals they had created in response to a Spike Milligan poem. Now that the firm foundations for higher-quality writing have been established, your plans to explore further ways to extend pupils in English will be valuable in supporting all pupils who can achieve higher standards.
- Early years was another focus for the inspection. It is clear that this provision has undergone a transformation since the beginning of the academic year. In particular, the attractive new outdoor area offers children many opportunities to practise the skills they have learned, explore and try out things for themselves. Adults use assessment effectively to plan the next step in a child's learning. To

this end, activities are adapted constantly to match interest and ability. This has had a significant impact on raising the expectation that children will achieve a good level of development. The enthusiasm and motivation of your early years leader and her team to continue this improvement are admirable.

- Overall attendance is above national averages and persistent absence is low because being in school is valued and good attendance is celebrated. As the number of pupils on roll is small, a prolonged absence can have a significant impact on the school's attendance figures. However, you are quick to tackle any individual pupil absence where it is not as high as it should be and your systems for monitoring attendance are appropriate.
- There are a number of strengths within the school. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are very proud of their school. The care and consideration the older pupils display to younger ones is touching. Pupils talked with pride and affection about this relationship. Many older pupils play with younger ones and they are quick to pick up on a pupil playing on their own or looking sad. Older pupils speak to younger ones with gentleness and affection.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- middle-ability and the most able pupils are challenged and extended in lessons, so that more achieve greater depth and higher standards
- pupils are encouraged to be further involved in their learning by being offered opportunities to work things out for themselves
- the school's website is kept up to date with the required information.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Eastwood
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, the assistant headteacher and the person responsible for maintaining safeguarding records. I met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body. I met with a representative of Lancashire local authority and also a school's adviser for the diocese. We visited lessons and I scrutinised pupils' work. I took account of the 13 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the views of four parents who talked with me before the school day. I took account of the 10 responses to Ofsted's staff

questionnaire and spoke to staff during the day. I also met with a group of pupils. I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. I looked at school documents, including: information about pupils' achievement; your school self-evaluation; the school improvement plan; behaviour and incident logs; and documents relating to safeguarding.