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13 December 2017

Miss Joanne Ramsbottom
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Dear Miss Ramsbottom

Short inspection of Daisyfield Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 30 November 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 July 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your recent appointment as the headteacher has strengthened the capacity of leadership in the school. You have high expectations, which are shared by staff and governors. You and your deputy headteacher have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because of your thorough monitoring and perceptive self-evaluation. You have correctly turned your attention to enhancing the monitoring of the progress that pupils make in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics. Additionally, you rightly identify the need to capitalise on the improvements made to the quality of teaching in key stage 1 so a greater proportion of pupils attain the highest standards.

Pupils are enthusiastic learners. They enjoy coming to school because it offers an enticing place to learn. Those who spoke with me during the inspection said that they feel safe in the school and that their teachers help them. They feel that their views, presented through articulate school councillors, are valued and acted on. For example, pupils are excited at the prospect of their involvement in the first winter fair. They have also rightly raised concerns about the inconsiderate behaviour of drivers parking at the school entrance.

Parents share their children's positive view of the school. This is typified by a compliment received on Parent View, Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, which stated, 'My children love coming to school. For them it's like another home.'

Senior leaders have taken effective action to address the areas for development identified at the last inspection. These included enhancing the quality of teaching in the school and improving the proportion of pupils making expected and more than expected progress in writing and mathematics in key stage 1.

Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved. The well-considered appointments of new phase leaders, who are responsible for a range of classes, has increased accountability and raised teachers' expectations. Appropriate amendments to policies and procedures mean that pupils now benefit from high-quality teaching that systematically develops their knowledge and skills, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers have received appropriate and effective training in English and mathematics and had opportunities to visit other schools to see high-quality practice. As a result, teachers and teaching assistants have increased their knowledge and understanding of a range of strategies they can use to promote learning. Senior leaders frequently check that teachers' actions on pupils' learning are having the desired impact. Pupils make good progress from their starting points because of better-quality teaching. School assessment information and work in pupils' books show that pupils quickly consolidate their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics and make good progress from their starting points. As a result, the proportion of pupils attaining expected standards in the 2017 reading, writing and mathematics assessments was close to the national average. However, you are not complacent and recognise the need to build on this success to ensure that a greater proportion of pupils attain the highest standards.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are of high quality and fit for purpose. Knowledgeable staff diligently implement the school's policies relating to safeguarding. Statutory checks are carried out on the suitability of staff to work with children.

Staff have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding. They are vigilant about the potential risks that pupils may face. Records are fit for purpose and meticulously kept. Leaders share information with parents and the appropriate authorities effectively to ensure pupils' safety. Governors have ensured that the appropriate monitoring and filtering arrangements are in place for the school's internet connection.

Inspection findings

- The quality of teaching in key stage 1 is similar to that in the other key stages and is typically good. Teachers, some of whom are new to the profession, have secure subject knowledge. Appropriate training ensures that teachers have good knowledge of a range of strategies to teach English and mathematics, which they use effectively. This is particularly the case in phonics in which pupils attain well. Teachers make good use of links to other subjects to provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to write at length and consolidate their skills. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning well, particularly in mathematics in which they commonly encourage pupils to explain the reason for their answers.

- As a result of improvement in the quality of teaching, pupils in key stage 1 make good progress from their typically low starting points. In the 2017 national assessments, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standards in English and mathematics was close to the national average. You have correctly identified the need, and are taking action, to build on the successful improvements in the quality of teaching in key stage 1 to ensure that greater proportions of pupils attain at greater depth.
- In the 2017 key stage 2 national assessments, boys did not attain as well as girls and made less progress, particularly in writing. You have recognised this and are tackling the issue. Boys now in the school have good attitudes to learning and are typically eager learners because of the consistent implementation of your new behaviour policy. Your carefully chosen revisions to the curriculum for subjects other than English and mathematics engage all learners, but particularly boys. The outcomes for all groups of pupils in key stage 2, including boys and those who are disadvantaged, are improving because of better-quality of teaching. Typically, teachers have high expectations of all of their pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. Teachers make good use of practical experiences to engage pupils in learning about abstract concepts. For example, in a computing lesson, pupils developed their skills in creating and debugging algorithms through the production of a jam sandwich. However, some teaching in key stage 2 is less effective, and this limits pupils' progress in some year groups. Leaders are aware of this and are taking appropriate action to bring about improvement. Occasionally, and particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers do not plan activities with the precision needed to ensure that most-able pupils develop their knowledge at greater depth.
- Leaders and governors have reviewed and carefully considered how they can make best use of the pupil premium funding to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils. Your refinements to the deployment of teaching assistants ensure that disadvantaged pupils now receive more targeted support. Changes to leadership ensure that the impact of teaching assistants' work is closely scrutinised so that it has the desired impact on pupils' learning. Governors carefully monitor your actions and hold you closely to account for the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils. Work in pupils' books and school-based assessment information show that disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points and are catching up with the other pupils.
- The appointment of phase leaders, who are responsible for groups of classes, has strengthened the lines of accountability in the school. This, coupled with sharper monitoring, ensures that leaders hold teachers closely to account for the impact of their actions. However, leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics have not fully developed the tracking of pupils' attainment and progress.
- In 2015/16, the number of absences of some groups of pupils, including boys, rose above the national average and was in the lowest 10% in the country. Detailed records, maintained by the school's secretary, show that the vast majority of absences are for good reasons and are often linked to medical needs or genuine illness. Current and more up-to-date information shows a more positive picture. You ensure that good attendance is celebrated and challenge unauthorised absences strongly. Despite this, a small number of pupils miss out on some learning at times because their parents choose to take unauthorised holidays.

- At the start of the inspection, the school's website did not contain the required information about the school curriculum. However, this does not reflect the detailed information held in the school. The school's recently revised curriculum is interesting, broad and well balanced. As a result of governors' and leaders' immediate actions, the school's website now meets requirements in respect of the information it must contain.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the improvement in the quality of teaching in key stage 1 is further built on so that greater proportions of pupils attain the highest standards in English and mathematics
- developments to the school's systems to track pupils' progress in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics allow teachers to plan with greater precision to promote pupils' understanding and knowledge at greater depth.

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

Yours sincerely

John Nixon
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the deputy headteacher and some subject leaders in the school. I held a meeting with governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, and with the local authority adviser who works with your school. I spoke with pupils during lessons and around the school. I took account of the information contained in the responses to the online questionnaire for parents, Parent View, and those for staff and pupils.

I visited classrooms with you to observe pupils' learning, and looked at their work in books and their records of achievement. I reviewed information about pupils' progress, attainment and attendance. I scrutinised the school's self-evaluation documentation, action plans and other policies. I looked at safeguarding and evaluated the impact of the school's procedures and policies to keep children safe, including while they are online. I also scrutinised your recruitment checks and record-keeping.