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13 February 2018

Mrs Sally Stoker
Executive Headteacher
Saltaire Primary School
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Dear Mrs Stoker

Short inspection of Saltaire Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 30 January 2018, 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 March 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

As the executive headteacher, ably supported by a range of senior leaders, you have created a culture in which staff and pupils excel. This vision for excellence is supported by the whole school community and has contributed significantly to the school's improvement. Pupils feel well prepared for the next stage of their education. For example, the Year 6 pupils expressed how they are taught to be confident and to have a voice. They understand the importance of their education and the need to develop a good vocabulary and speak articulately, something which the school works hard to encourage. Staff also feel very well supported and are keenly involved in their own professional development. They take shared responsibility for improving pupils' outcomes and enabling every child to succeed. In fact, many staff have been inspired to progress their careers through the encouragement they have received and consequently the school has a reputation for growing its own teachers and leaders. Staff feel that the culture is a nurturing one where everyone helps and supports each other. They also appreciate that leaders are mindful of their well-being and work-life balance.

Leaders have been determined to increase the level of challenge for pupils as this

was identified as an area for improvement at the last inspection. Leaders' astute actions have led to much improved outcomes so that now proportions of pupils exceeding the expectations in almost every subject and at both key stages are above average. Additionally, pupils' progress by the end of key stage 2 has at least matched national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics for the last two years. Leaders are aware of any relative weaknesses which emerge and take prompt action to make sure that these are quickly addressed. Your effective partnership work as a local leader of education, along with four of your staff who are specialist leaders of education, supports both the school's continual development and that of the wider educational community. Consequently, the school has a strong capacity for continued improvement.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and recognise the caring ethos, academic achievement and wide range of opportunities and experiences that the school provides. They value the staff, who they find approachable and enthusiastic, and are confident that their children will be developed as rounded individuals. Parents' views can be captured by this typical comment, 'I feel this school displays a genuine sense of care about their children, and wants every child to succeed.' Pupils also appreciate how the school staff enable them to be successful learners who are prepared to try new things. They particularly enjoy the interesting curriculum and opportunities such as trips and overnight stays which broaden their experiences.

Governance is extremely strong and has supported leaders in making the right appointments to ensure the school's continued success and improvement. Governors are highly skilled and thorough in their checks of leaders' actions, taking care to make sure that evaluations are accurate through their link roles and visits to school.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is systematic attention to detail in safeguarding practice from leaders, governors and every member of staff in school. Leaders have created a vigilant culture where staff regularly have the opportunity to reflect on their training which improves their confidence and ability to recognise and respond to signs of concern. You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders also have a clear understanding of the prevent duty and take measures to ensure that pupils are protected from radicalisation, for example through the strong sense of community and belonging which the school instils.

Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare and they trust that adults will sort out any incidents of misbehaviour. They know whom to talk to if they have any concerns and are aware of different types of bullying which could occur. They confidently explain how to stay safe online. They appreciate taking responsibilities such as buddying for younger pupils. This helps the younger pupils to feel safe and included within the school community but also develops older pupils' understanding of the importance of making a contribution to their school.

Inspection findings

- The school places a firm focus on helping every child to learn to read. Leaders are clear about expectations for attainment and progress in phonics. They track this carefully so that leaders and teachers quickly identify if anyone is struggling with their learning. Effective strategies, including more frequent reading and phonics intervention sessions, are in place for those who are not on track to meet the expected standards. These support pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, to catch up with their peers. Evidence in writing books also shows that pupils have a secure knowledge of their phonics skills, applying them successfully in their independent writing. Consequently, the proportion of pupils reaching the standard in the phonics screening check by the end of Years 1 and 2 is improving over time and has been consistently above the national average for the last two years. However, leaders are not complacent and appreciate that there is more to do to enable even more pupils to reach the expected standard by the end of Year 1. They recognise that checking the impact of phonics teaching on pupils' learning more rigorously would help them to identify where a more consistent approach would accelerate pupils' progress further. For example, during the inspection it became apparent that for those pupils in the earliest stages of learning to read, books are not always matched closely enough to pupils' stage of learning in phonics. This prevents them from being really successful in their reading and is a missed opportunity to build their confidence and fluency.
- In almost all year groups and subjects, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress. Leaders and governors identify potential barriers to pupils' learning to make sure that provision is targeted well for this group of pupils and that effective use is made of the pupil premium spending. Leaders are clear that the main focus is the highest standard of teaching for all pupils. They aim to include all pupils with their peers where possible by adapting learning to meet the needs of each individual. This is very successful and results in less need for additional interventions. Pupils' well-being is also considered very carefully. The inclusion leader has a thorough understanding of all vulnerable pupils in school and ensures that external expertise is used to identify the most appropriate provision for pupils.
- The whole-school team have focused on providing pupils with a high level of challenge in their learning. This has paid dividends and is resulting in more pupils reaching higher standards in their work across the curriculum. Current pupils are making strong progress as evidenced in their books and in lessons. Pupils are fully involved in their learning and understand how it is closely matched to their needs. They are motivated by the opportunity to move on once they have grasped a concept and puzzle over even more challenging tasks. They do this with enthusiasm and are fully aware what to do if they are stuck. As one pupil in a mathematics lesson said, 'I'd ask a partner or try an alternative method like the inverse operation and if I was still stuck, I'd ask my teacher.' Pupils demonstrate resilience in their learning and are highly motivated by the purposeful activities which teachers provide. This results in strong attitudes to learning, and pupils

show great pride and care in the presentation of work in their books.

- Attendance has continued to be above average for pupils overall and persistent absence has remained consistently below national figures. This is testament to pupils' enjoyment of school and the interest that they show in their learning. Leaders' actions to improve attendance and reduce frequent absences for disadvantaged pupils have been partly successful. However, attendance for these pupils, although rising, is still below the national average. Consequently leaders have prioritised further work to do in this respect through the school improvement plan.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- rigorous use of monitoring information about the effectiveness of phonics teaching results in an even higher proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.

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

Yours sincerely

Kirsty Godfrey
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the head of school, and a range of leaders. I also met with four members of the governing body, including the chair, and I had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I evaluated documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, information about pupils' progress, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance records, and information about safeguarding. We visited classrooms together to observe teaching and learning. Together with you and a range of leaders, we scrutinised the work of a sample of pupils. I listened to four pupils read. I spoke with several parents and carers at the start of the school day and considered the 116 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I met with a group of pupils from a range of year groups and spoke with a group of teachers. I also took into consideration the 30 responses to the staff survey and the 21 responses to the pupil survey.