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Mr James McBride  
Headteacher  
Oswaldtwistle West End Primary School  
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Dear Mr McBride

### **Short inspection of Oswaldtwistle West End Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 20 February 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 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, alongside leaders, have created a caring and understanding community. Pupils explained to me how everyone is 'kind to each other' and that they would recommend their school to a friend. The school's culture is one that is supportive. Pupils speak highly about how teachers encourage them to 'try new things'. For example, in Year 6, pupils value the chance to be a 'buddy' for younger children in Reception. Pupils welcome the opportunity to be members of the student council or to be 'sports representatives'.

Parents and carers are also supportive of the school. They are confident their children can 'excel'. Parents generally feel they are able to approach staff if they have any concerns. Staff feel proud to be part of the school community. You have led by example to create a team of staff who are ambitious for their pupils. Staff are committed to their own professional development. They are a reflective and enthusiastic team who welcome feedback. This helps them to improve further their own practice. Ongoing improvements to teaching are securing better outcomes for pupils.

Governors provide a range of skills and expertise. Some governors have backgrounds outside of education. This diverse skillset is helpful to the efficient running of the school. Governors have an accurate and incisive view of all aspects of the school. This allows them to ask pertinent questions of leaders. They do not shy away from challenging leaders about all aspects of performance. This ensures

that leaders make well-considered decisions. Governors also provide support for leaders. The healthy balance of challenge and support governors offer ensures that there is capacity for continual development.

You have an accurate view of the school's strengths. More importantly, you are eager to develop those aspects of the school that need your further attention. You review the effectiveness of your work and refine your approach when needed. For example, you acknowledge that assessment in history and geography requires further development.

You have addressed the areas identified at the previous inspection with considerable success. For example, you have allowed staff to share strong aspects of their teaching with each other. Staff are enthusiastic about the opportunities they have to share ideas with teachers at other local schools. They also value the training they are able to provide each other within the school. This is helping to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics.

At the last inspection, inspectors asked you to ensure that pupils understand teachers' instructions. During the inspection, we observed how teachers' clear explanations allow pupils to make strong progress. For example, pupils in Year 2 explained to me how they were using counters to help with their division calculations. They went on to complete these calculations with success. We also observed pupils in Year 3 solving problems involving capacity. Pupils used their knowledge of fractions and proportion to solve 'real-life' problems. Over time, teachers challenge pupils to apply their skills to more difficult tasks. This helps to develop pupils' reasoning skills.

Inspectors also asked you to increase the level of challenge for pupils. This was particularly the case for those pupils who are most-able. You have put a number of measures in place to ensure that teachers challenge the most able pupils. There have been considerable opportunities for staff to benefit from training in this area. When checking on teaching, leaders focus on how well teachers challenge pupils. Pupils with whom I spoke explained to me how they find their learning in mathematics challenging. Most-able pupils are making more rapid progress in mathematics, particularly at key stage 2.

Teachers plan learning in mathematics which meets the needs of pupils, including those pupils who are most-able. This was evident in pupils' books. Nonetheless, you acknowledge that there is still some work to do. On occasion, pupils spend time completing a large number of similar questions. You acknowledge that, sometimes, teachers are not allowing pupils to apply their mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills soon enough.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The system for ensuring that adults are safe to work with children is secure. Training for staff and governors is up to date. Regular briefings ensure that

staff remain vigilant to signs and symptoms of abuse. Records of work with external agencies are well organised and sufficiently detailed.

Staff understand safeguarding procedures. Pupils with whom I spoke say they feel confident that an adult in school will help them if they have worries or concerns. Incidents of bullying in school are rare. Parents and staff are confident that children are safe in school. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including online. Pupils value the 'bikeability' programme which helps them to stay safe on the roads.

## **Inspection findings**

- I was interested to find out more about the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. In the past, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils was below the national average. The rates of absence for other pupils at the school have been consistently below national figures.
- To ensure strong attendance, leaders track closely the attendance of all pupils. Disadvantaged pupils are no exception. This allows staff to put support in place for those pupils whose attendance is below the national average. Where necessary, staff work closely with pupils and their families to improve pupils' attendance. As a result of this support, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is improving.
- I was also interested to find out about leaders' use of the pupil premium funding to support the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. In the past, the progress made by disadvantaged pupils has not been as rapid as that of other pupils who attend the school.
- You were able to explain to me how you carefully track the progress of all pupils, including the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, staff support pupils if they fall behind in their reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils benefit from additional help from teachers and teaching assistants. You also provide pupils with carefully tailored programmes of support with the help of external agencies. The help you provide disadvantaged pupils who fall behind allows them to catch up.
- Finally, I was interested to know how the curriculum prepared pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. In particular, pupils value the 'memorable experiences' programme. Pupils are encouraged to develop morally and socially through charity fundraising. The student council and 'sports representatives' help to develop pupils' understanding of the value of democracy. However, you acknowledge that the quality of assessment across the wider curriculum is not supporting teachers to meet pupils' needs in some subjects. This is particularly the case in history and geography.
- You and the leadership team are aware that the curriculum for history and geography does not fully meet pupils' needs. The quality of assessment across the wider curriculum is not as strong as that in reading, writing and mathematics. You are already addressing assessment across the wider curriculum. Leaders

have changed the way in which teachers assess pupils in science and PE.

- Improvements in assessment are allowing teachers to better meet the needs of pupils in these subjects. Leaders have recently introduced an improved assessment system in history and geography. However, leaders acknowledge that they still need to refine and develop this model to allow teachers to better meet the needs of pupils.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers develop further pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills by allowing pupils to apply their knowledge at the earliest opportunity
- leaders refine and develop the quality of assessment in history and geography to allow teachers to better meet the needs of pupils in these subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Emma Gregory  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you and other senior leaders, and a group of teachers and teaching assistants. I also met with an adviser from the local authority and some members of the governing body. I met with parents at the beginning of the school day and I met formally with a group of pupils. Leaders accompanied me on visits to classes where I observed teaching and learning across subjects. I looked at work produced by pupils in mathematics and the wider curriculum. I examined a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding and the school's improvement plan. I also looked at the school's website. I considered 50 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, 18 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 55 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.