

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Mrs Sharron White  
Headteacher  
Denton West End Primary School  
Balmoral Drive  
Denton  
Manchester  
Lancashire  
M34 2JX

Dear Mrs White

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

Following my visit to the school on 24 July 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 May 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 lead a happy and hardworking school where pupils are encouraged to live out the school's motto, 'Only our best is good enough'.

Leaders and governors have high aspirations for the school and work very well together to develop pupils' learning. You are keen to provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities and experiences through the curriculum that you provide. For instance, pupils in Year 4 learn to play the violin and were proud to attend a concert at the Bridgewater Hall to play with the Hallé Orchestra. Year 6 pupils spoke with enthusiasm about their 'Macbeth' workshop with the Young Shakespeare Company. Through such experiences, pupils develop their skills and knowledge in different areas of the curriculum.

Governors are very keen to keep their skills up to date and they attend regular training to do so. They know the school very well as they visit often to keep a careful check on how pupils learn. Governors ask leaders challenging questions to ensure that plans for school improvement are successful. For example, governors have kept a careful watch on recent improvements to the teaching of mathematics and this remains a priority for leaders.

You communicate your plans for development very clearly to staff at all levels. Everyone has a sharp understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and work together to raise standards. As a result, the progress that

pupils make in English and mathematics is good. Recent changes to teaching and learning in science have led to a rise in the proportion of pupils reaching expected levels. You and your staff are developing plans to improve how pupils acquire phonics skills in key stage 1.

You lead an enthusiastic team of staff who are keen to achieve the best for all pupils. Teachers appreciate the opportunities you give them to watch each other teach and to work alongside professionals from other schools. As a result of these training opportunities, teaching is good. This is reflected in pupils' writing, where standards have risen. Pupils apply their grammar, spelling and punctuation skills in their work and use ambitious and interesting vocabulary in their writing.

Pupils enjoy coming to school because staff provide an interesting and enjoyable curriculum. Pupils attend school very regularly, including disadvantaged pupils. In lessons, pupils are keen to do their best. They work together cooperatively and answer questions with enthusiasm. Around school, pupils move calmly and with consideration for others. They have impeccable manners and are welcoming to visitors. During my visit, older pupils told me how they relish the many leadership opportunities you provide them, including play leaders, who help at lunchtime, and peer mediators, who support pupils in resolving any falling out. Through such opportunities, your pupils develop confidence and team-working skills. You prepare them very well for their next stage of education. However, you recognise that pupils need to develop their knowledge and understanding of other cultures and religions.

Most parents and carers share pupils' positive view of the school. Those parents I spoke to during the inspection were keen to tell me how much they appreciate good communication between teachers and parents. Teachers listen to any concerns parents have and quickly resolve any issues. On Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, a small number of parents raised concerns about behaviour. Those pupils that I spoke to were confident that behaviour is very good in and around school and that bullying is rare. I found that staff keep a careful check on any incidents of misbehaviour or bullying and act quickly and appropriately to maintain high standards.

At the previous inspection, leaders were asked to improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in mathematics. You have taken steps to improve teaching across the school, including in mathematics. Pupils work collaboratively and develop their confidence to have a go at tricky work. They check their own work and that of their peers and identify how to improve. Teachers plan plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills including problem solving. Some of the improvements you have made to pupils' learning in mathematics are recent and there is inconsistency in the progress of the most able pupils across the school. This is because, in some classes, teachers do not challenge pupils enough. Leaders recognise that recent improvements need to be embedded so more pupils reach the higher standards in mathematics.

You were also asked to ensure that leaders make better use of the information they have about how well different groups of pupils learn. Since the previous inspection,

you have improved the systems you use to measure pupils' progress. In subjects including mathematics, English and science, you use this information to track pupils' progress, including the disadvantaged. You quickly identify where pupils are falling behind and give pupils additional support when needed. This has improved the progress that pupils make, including disadvantaged pupils. In some foundation subjects, including geography, history and religious education, subject leaders are developing monitoring systems to improve teaching and learning.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. You have made sure that safeguarding is a high profile throughout the school. You and your governors carry out all necessary checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. You provide staff with very regular training so that they are vigilant and understand the current guidance. Staff are very confident about how to seek advice and support for any safeguarding concerns.

You diligently follow up all concerns and make sure pupils are safe. You work closely with other professionals and agencies to secure support for pupils when necessary. Staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe in the wider community, including cycling safety. Through very regular assemblies and lessons, pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. Useful information about online safety is shared with parents on a regular basis.

Pupils are confident about how to seek help and support if they have any concerns. Pupils say they feel safe in school and bullying is very rare. They told me that any concerns are quickly dealt with by staff or peer mediators.

### **Inspection findings**

- The inspection focused on a number of key lines of enquiry. The first focus was to see how sharply leaders check the impact of the spending of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders use this additional funding very carefully and make regular checks to make sure that it has a positive impact on pupils' learning and well-being. You and your staff have a clear understanding of any barriers to learning this group of pupils have. You plan additional provision to meet pupils' needs, including providing additional challenge and tuition for the most able disadvantaged pupils. You plan opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to develop their confidence, for instance through learning to play a musical instrument or providing yoga for emotional well-being. Your regular and accurate checks on learning show that this group of pupils are making good progress from their varied starting points.
- My second key line of enquiry was to check whether leaders have planned a curriculum which develops pupils' reading skills. Leaders have taken steps to improve how younger pupils learn phonics. Staff have received training to make sure their skills are up to date and leaders make checks to ensure that teaching is matched to pupils' abilities. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the

expected national standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has remained below the national average. You have improved the assessment of pupils' skills and use this information effectively to put in place interventions for any pupils falling behind. However, you have identified that the plans used by teachers to deliver phonics need improving.

- I found that, by the end of Year 2, pupils read with fluency and understanding and, across the school, pupils read widely and often. This is because leaders have made sure that reading has a high profile. Pupils enjoy visiting the well-stocked school libraries and welcome regular opportunities to read for pleasure. Initiatives such as a school reading challenge ensure that pupils read regularly at home with their parents. Reading is celebrated. During my visit, pupils were excitedly planning a school picnic as an end of term reward for the reading they had completed during the school challenge. As a result of such initiatives, standards in reading by the end of key stages 1 and 2 have risen. Provisional data for the end of Year 6 in 2018 shows that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard in reading has continued to rise. Pupils make good progress, including the most able.
- My third key line of enquiry related to whether pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. As well as paying close attention to reading, writing and mathematics, leaders plan an engaging curriculum which pupils enjoy. Pupils develop their skills across a range of subjects, including science, art and physical education. Your resident artist works with pupils across the school to develop their drawing and painting skills and to support their learning. Pupils' intricate and colourful artwork enhances the attractive school environment. In science, you provide pupils with a wide range of workshops and events to develop their investigative skills, including prediction and fair testing. Pupils told me how they develop their physical education skills through sports, including basketball, tennis and cricket. Pupils enjoy dance lessons and you have recently introduced yoga to help pupils relax and meditate.
- Through the curriculum, you develop pupils' respect for those who may have different beliefs and cultures from their own. However, their knowledge of these lacks depth. This part of the curriculum is limited in the range of experiences teachers plan for pupils to prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- During the inspection, I found that you provide subject leaders with regular training to keep their skills up to date and give them time to monitor standards. In some subjects, including English, mathematics, science and art, leaders keep a careful check on how pupils improve their knowledge and skills. However, in some foundation subjects, such as history, geography and religious education, leaders are developing their roles so that they have a greater impact on standards in teaching and learning.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they embed improvements to mathematics teaching and increase the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standards
- teachers develop further pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures and religions, which may be different from their own, so that they are better prepared for life in modern Britain
- an increasing proportion of pupils reach the expected national standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check
- the roles of foundation subject leaders, including in history, geography and religious education, are embedded so that they have a greater impact on teaching and learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Stevens  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you and your senior leaders. I also met with five middle leaders. I spoke to six governors, including the chair of the board of trustees. I spoke to your school adviser. I met with eight pupils from key stage 2 and spoke informally with other pupils during lessons. I visited classes with you where I observed teaching and learning, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils. I also heard pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.

I took account of the 62 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, including 47 free-text responses. I also met with parents before school. I reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, records of monitoring of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings and pupils' behaviour logs. I evaluated safeguarding procedures, including policies to keep pupils safe, staff training records, safeguarding checks and attendance information. I undertook a review of the school's website.