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Mr Andrew Kidd
Duke Street Primary School
Duke Street
Chorley
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Dear Mr Kidd

Short inspection of Duke Street Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 3 May 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 October 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Year after year you have improved all aspects of the school. In helping the school move forward from the previous inspection, you have provided dedicated and insightful leadership. You lead with quiet, humble determination. This is appreciated by the staff of the school, who feel valued and respected and understand what is expected of them. It is very much a team approach at Duke Street Primary, and all pull together with a strong, dedicated work ethic to do their very best for the pupils in your care. Staff are happy, motivated and fully committed to the school's mission and high expectations for good teaching and learning. You have worked hard to ensure that all leaders have the skills and confidence to lead on the areas for which they are responsible. They are appreciative of their development opportunities and, as a result, they have all made improvements in their specific areas of responsibility.

You and your leadership team have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of your school. Along with the deputy headteacher and governors, you have accurately identified the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. The school's detailed self-evaluation and improvement plan clearly identify the priorities for improving the school further. This has ensured that pupils receive good teaching in a calm and purposeful learning environment, which enables them to grow personally and improve academically.

Governors are skilled in their roles and determined to become even more effective. They know the school very well and the journey it has taken to reach this point. They have individual links to key areas of school. Governors take nothing at face value,

questioning and challenging school leaders very effectively. The governing body carefully monitors plans for improvement to ensure that all pupils are making progress. For example, writing is now a strength of the school because the governing body has challenged the quality and progress being made by some pupils. Writing is displayed with great pride throughout the school. The focus of governors has ensured that the attainment and progress in writing is now good.

The school's core values statement 'I CARE' (Individuality, Community, Aspire and Achieve, Resilience and Empathy) is manifest in the daily life of all within the school community. The inclusive nature of the school is driven by an urgency to provide high-quality opportunities which allow pupils to thrive within the school's caring and supportive environment. The value you place on the need to ensure, as you said during the inspection, 'that all the children need to feel loved' is appreciated by the pupils and parents. As one parent said during the inspection, 'Duke Street Primary is a great school and my children love being here.'

The pupils were keen to tell me about the quality of the curriculum and the range of additional activities that they experienced. At the last inspection it was stated that pupils were not always fully engaged in their learning. They now fully appreciate their role in contributing to the development of the school and to ensuring that classrooms are of a high quality. Pupils' behaviour in class and around school remains good. They show good independence in lessons, and work enthusiastically and cooperatively with their classmates to share ideas and discuss their understanding. They are rightly proud of their books and always try to produce work to the best of their ability.

Pupils appreciate the opportunities they have to learn about different faiths and cultures. In religious education, pupils explore moral issues and develop a good understanding of right and wrong. They take care of their school and understand that it is their job to look after it. They take great pride in the well-ordered school environment, both inside and outside, benefiting from high-quality displays in classes and shared areas.

An area for improvement after the last inspection was to raise the quality of teaching so that all is at least good, by ensuring that all pupils benefit fully from lessons. You have worked hard to raise the quality of teaching and learning in all phases. During the inspection, pupils benefited from stimulating resources and useful tools that helped them learn. Teachers create a very positive climate for learning through their detailed preparation and effective questioning. Pupils are appreciative of the efforts of their teachers and they say that lessons are always fun and interesting. In the early years, children benefit from outstanding teaching and learning in a vibrant and stimulating learning environment, with a wonderful outdoor space. They experience a rich curriculum and are provided with many opportunities to develop their imagination. As they enter key stage 1, pupils continue to enjoy learning. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils had great fun and developed some high-quality scientific language when learning about the life cycle of a sunflower plant. There is some good mathematical learning and Year 5 pupils benefited from precise explanations and made good progress in their understanding of the relationship of angles.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that current safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders complete careful safeguarding checks for all staff, governors and volunteers. The safeguarding policy meets the current national requirements and staff understand the procedures and their own responsibilities. Staff and governors receive regular and appropriate training so that they know how to keep pupils safe, including training about how to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism. Summary records of incidents of concern, no matter how small, are meticulously kept using the new online system. The staff are very clear about following the expected reporting procedures and leaders are prompt in their follow-up response. The designated safeguarding leader, supported by a very capable assistant leader, manages referrals to other agencies effectively and seeks appropriate advice from the local authority where required. This ensures that leaders maintain safeguarding procedures to a high standard.

Pupils benefit from having a range of opportunities to learn about safeguarding in the curriculum. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when working on the internet because teachers make sure pupils are taught how to do this in their lessons. They know the different forms that bullying can take and know that staff will help them if they ever have concerns. The school's records show that staff quickly address the limited incidents of bullying. Older pupils show great maturity in their understanding of safety and value their roles in helping the younger children stay safe. Parents agree that their children feel safe in your school and that staff ensure that children are well behaved.

Inspection findings

- Improvements in the quality of teaching have already impacted very positively on outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 2. Results from the 2016 assessments show that progress in writing and reading is above average for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. While progress in mathematics was good, you are ambitious in your commitment to ensure that more of the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are now achieving at the expected standard. While teaching and learning across the school is now good with examples of outstanding practice, pupils, especially the most able, have insufficient opportunities to study mathematics in greater depth.
- During the inspection, you outlined the work the school has done to improve pupils' reading skills. The enthusiasm and achievement of the pupils, supported by very skilled teaching, together make reading a strength of the school. From a very early age, staff are committed to doing everything they can to instil in children a love of reading. There is a real buzz about reading around the school and pupils say that they love reading. Pupils spoke with great enthusiasm about the 'Book Bench Project', supported by Edge Hill University, to explore reading in creative ways. Pupils make a good start to developing their reading ability in the early years and key stage 1, with good quality phonics teaching. Year 1 pupils were very confident in exploring the different sounds of words such as 'through' and 'thought.' Pupils in key stage 2 enjoyed talking about the books they liked most, and were enthusiastic

readers. Year 5 pupils were engrossed in reading an extract from 'World of Warriors – a new hero' by Curtis Jobling. Pupils were confident to read out loud for the benefit of their friends. As in writing, outcomes in reading are now good. Current information suggests that outcomes are improving in all classes and a much higher proportion of the most able pupils in Year 6 are now on track to achieve the higher standard in reading by the end of this academic year.

- The leaders of English and mathematics have prioritised the progress of the most able pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, as an area in need of improvement. They now track progress very precisely and have provided significant support for staff to improve provision for these pupils. In reading and writing, teachers plan work that is pitched well to challenge and stretch the most able pupils, who are given opportunities to work independently. In Years 5 and 6, this group of learners have the opportunity to take the initiative in designing their own learning activities. The most able, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve well, making good progress in reading and writing. While teachers are working hard to raise the performance of the most able pupils in mathematics, there is still work to be done. At the moment the most able pupils have good numeracy skills but do not spend sufficient time on tasks that allow them to attain at greater depth in this subject.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- an increasing proportion of pupils achieve at the above expected standard in mathematics by the end of key stage 2 by having more opportunities to develop their confidence and reasoning skills in mathematics.

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

Andrew Morley
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher and the designated safeguarding officer. I spoke with parents as they brought their children to school. You and I visited lessons in key stages 1 and 2, and I visited the Reception class with the deputy headteacher. I spoke with pupils about their work and their views of the school. We looked at the work in pupils' books, and at their reading records. I met with the chair of the governing body and with other governors, and a representative from the local authority. A range of documents were considered relating to safeguarding, performance management, minutes of governing body meetings and

external evaluations of the school. I examined the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, current information about pupils' attainment and progress, and records of behaviour and safeguarding, including the single central record. There were 24 responses to the staff and 44 responses to the pupil surveys, there were no responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.