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Mrs Suzanne Clawley-Welton
Principal
Godley Community Primary Academy
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Dear Mrs Clawley-Welton

Short inspection of Godley Community Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 16 January 2019, 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 your predecessor 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 previous 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 specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Pupils are at the heart of everything that happens at Godley Primary Academy. All pupils receive a warm welcome and their individuality is respected.

Since joining The Enquire Learning Trust in 2016, and under your effective leadership, the school has gone from strength to strength. Outcomes have improved considerably across the school, most notably in reading and mathematics at key stage 2. The progress that pupils make in both subjects is significantly above the national average.

You and your staff have created a nurturing and inclusive school where pupils flourish. Classrooms and, most notably, school corridors provide a vibrant learning environment with displays that magically bring the curriculum to life. Your self-evaluation is honest and insightful. School priorities for further improvement feed into your school development plan. However, some targets are not measurable. This makes it more difficult for governors and trustees to monitor, with rigour, the progress that the school is making toward achieving its goals.

Staff are exceptionally proud to work alongside you. They operate well as a team and morale is high. Staff describe you as 'positive, hardworking and driven'. They eagerly told me that you give everyone 'a voice' and have a strong belief in your staff. You encourage staff to take risks and be innovative with their teaching. With your support and encouragement, staff feel empowered to further their careers and develop their roles in education. Staff are aware of school priorities and share your high aims and ambitions. The following comment typifies the feeling of many staff: 'Working at this school has changed my whole ethos with regard to education.'

Most parents and carers are equally resounding in their praise. Many are delighted with the exceptional progress their children make. Some parents were keen to talk to me as they brought their children to school. They told me that they are kept well informed about their children's progress. Some parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire did express concerns about how the school responds to bullying. However, inspection evidence does not support this view. The following comment sums up the views of many parents: 'My child is excelling in every way – this is a testament to all the staff at Godley.'

Pupils are delightful, a credit to the school and their families. They talk avidly about the school's values of respect, aspiration, courage, responsibility, care and support and what they mean to them on a personal basis. They told me that bullying and the use of derogatory language are rare. However, they are confident that if they did happen staff would soon sort them out. Pupils relish the responsibilities that you give them as school councillors, eco warriors, PE (physical education) ambassadors and digital leaders. They value their education and are keen to do well in life. Many told me of their hopes and desires to go on to higher education to become nurses, teachers and fashion designers.

Governors and trustees provide high levels of challenge and support in line with the trust's scheme of delegation. They have an accurate understanding of the school's many strengths and development points. The trust provides extensive support in the form of training, moderation and the sharing of expertise with staff.

Safeguarding is effective.

Procedures to safeguard pupils are well embedded and there is a culture of vigilance throughout the school. Entry to the school is secure and visitors' credentials are meticulously checked. Staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding procedures, including the latest national concerns about radicalisation and sexual exploitation. All staff have read part one of 'Keeping children safe in education' published in 2018 and safeguarding issues are always on the agenda at staff meetings. Those who have responsibility for safeguarding and safer recruitment have completed training at the appropriate level. Checks made on new staff comply with current regulations. Families facing challenging circumstances receive good levels of support in a timely manner. All documentation that I examined during the inspection was in good order and fit for purpose.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when online. They are aware of the

importance of not disclosing personal details or passwords. A filtering system is in place to protect children when accessing computer technology in school.

Inspection findings

- Children start school with knowledge and skills that are broadly typical for their age. However, their skills in speech and language, reading and writing are lower than those typically seen in children of a similar age. In 2017, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was below the national average and outcomes in reading and writing were not strong. You did not stand still, and swift action was taken to address these issues. Whole-class teaching in reading and writing was introduced and more exciting activities were set out in independent play areas to encourage children to write, particularly boys. Stronger emphasis was put on developing boys' fine motor skills to prepare them for holding writing tools correctly. More books were displayed in the environment to foster children's love of reading. While visiting the early years, I observed these initiatives in action. For example, boys were working together using pincers to pick up objects in the water tray, helping to develop their fine motor skills. Children were enjoying looking at books with their friends in the book area and there was a varied range of writing materials to encourage children to make marks, form letters and write words. As a result of these initiatives, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development improved in 2018 along with outcomes in reading and writing. However, it remains an area for further improvement for the school.
- You were able to provide me with secure evidence that most pupils make very strong gains in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 1. However, the proportion of pupils reaching greater depth in reading dipped slightly in 2018. Again, swift action was taken to reverse this decline. For example, more challenging texts were introduced, and the most able pupils were given targeted support to develop further their comprehension skills.
- I listened to pupils in Year 2 read. Most read with fluency and expression. They made effective use of their phonic knowledge to sound out unfamiliar words. Comprehension skills are developing well, and some pupils were able to talk about the types of books they like to read and their favourite authors.
- The progress that pupils made at key stage 2 in reading and mathematics in 2018 was outstanding. Although improving, progress in writing was not as strong. Immediate action was taken to address this issue. All staff have had additional training to improve their skills in teaching writing. They also work closely with other schools in the trust to share good practice and learn from each other. 'Word of the day' has been introduced across the school to extend pupils' vocabulary. All of these initiatives are now bearing fruit. The school's information on pupils' progress and attainment shows that outcomes in writing are improving quickly. Work in current pupils' books also confirms that this is the case. Teachers now have much higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils write for a variety of purposes and across subjects, including history and science. They apply their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills accurately and their handwriting is neat and well formed.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- outcomes in reading and writing in the early years improve further so that even more children achieve a good level of development
- targets in the school development plan are measurable.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Tameside. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Iwaskow
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, staff, members of the governing body and trustees from The Enquire Learning Trust. I also had informal discussions with parents as they brought their children to school. Together we visited the Nursery, Reception and Year 1 classes to see the learning that was taking place. I listened to pupils from Year 2 read and looked at examples of pupils' work in books and on display. I reviewed a range of documentation including the single central record, the school's self-evaluation and development plans. I took account of the school's own assessment information relating to pupils' progress and attainment as well as the published data. I took account of the 57 responses from parents and seven staff to the Ofsted online questionnaires.