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29 January 2018

Mrs Jones
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Jones

Short inspection of Kirkham and Wesham Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 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 October 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your strong and caring leadership provides a clear direction for the school. Kirkham and Wesham Primary has recently faced some significant challenges. Throughout this time, you have ensured that teaching, learning and assessment remain good and that staff and pupils have received appropriate support. Leaders have carried out an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and have identified appropriate areas for further improvement. You have correctly focused on ensuring that pupils receive more opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding at greater depth in English and mathematics.

Governors visit the school frequently. As a result, they have a detailed knowledge of standards, including the progress that pupils make in their learning. Governors use their professional skills and detailed knowledge to hold leaders to account. They provide a good balance of challenge and support for leaders and staff.

You lead an enthusiastic team which strives to do its best for pupils. Staff feel well supported and value the leadership of the school. Support staff work closely with teachers to ensure that pupils make good progress in their learning. The school is a hive of activity where no learning time is lost. You have provided staff with well-planned training and visits to other schools. As a result, you have improved teaching, learning and assessment.

Parents and carers have a very positive view of the school. Those who spoke to me

at the start of the day or who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, said that the school is well led. They were keen to share how caring and helpful staff are in meeting the varied needs of pupils. These were typified by one parent who said, 'The children are at the heart of everything that the school does.'

Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good. They share parents' positive view of the school. Those pupils who spoke to me during the inspection said that bullying does not happen but were confident that adults would deal with any incidents effectively. Pupils value the varied and interesting curriculum that you provide. They enjoy the opportunities that they have to take part in after-school clubs such as archery, multi-skills and cheerleading. Pupils relish opportunities to play a musical instrument, such as the saxophone or clarinet, and to play in the school's orchestra. They are proud of their attractive art work, which enhances the school environment. You encourage pupils to take part in decision-making through the school's house system, the school council and eco council. Pupils enjoyed helping to plan and name the school's new eco garden, the Chill Zone.

You have addressed the areas for improvement identified by the previous inspectors. Teachers give pupils time to discuss their ideas and work things out for themselves. During lessons, I saw that pupils are articulate and can explain what they have learnt. Pupils know what they need to do to improve their work further.

Previous inspectors also asked you to make sure that teachers' appraisals contain higher targets for pupils' progress. Since then, you have put in place appropriate targets for teachers' performance. These are taken from your accurate monitoring of pupils' learning. The targets reflect leaders' ambition to raise pupils' achievements further.

You have taken effective steps to ensure that leaders make full use of the school's assessment system to check the progress of different groups of pupils. Assessment information is detailed and fit for purpose. The system that you use enables leaders to track the progress of all pupils, including groups such as those who speak English as an additional language. Leaders and governors use this detailed assessment information to monitor the effectiveness of teaching across the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, staff and governors place a very high priority on keeping pupils safe. Leaders have made sure that safeguarding arrangements are of high quality and effective. You provide appropriate and frequent training. As a result, all staff have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding and the school's procedures. You keep meticulous records in relation to safeguarding concerns. You and your staff work well with other agencies. You are vigilant in ensuring that pupils receive the correct level of support and care. The school's website is used to give parents useful information about safeguarding. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is filled with opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

Leaders have made sure that statutory checks are carried out on the suitability of staff to work with children. Governors check that the appropriate monitoring and filtering arrangements are in place for the school's internet connection. You have taken effective actions to make sure that the school is a safe and secure place for children. Parents and staff agree that pupils are safe and well cared for.

Inspection findings

- The inspection focused on a number of key lines of enquiry, the first of which related to the achievement of boys in the Reception Year. This was because in 2015 and 2016 boys achieved less well than girls. You have worked with other professionals to improve teaching and learning in the early years. As a result of improvements that you have made, children, including boys, achieve well. Last year, children started with skills and development below those typical for children of this age. By the end of the year, their attainment was in line with the national average and children had made good progress. Boys' achievement was in line with that of girls. During the inspection, I saw that boys quickly develop their early English and mathematical skills. This is because teachers plan engaging and imaginative opportunities for children to learn.
- My second key line of enquiry related to the progress that key stage 1 pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able, make in reading. You showed me that leaders have raised the importance of reading across the school. Teachers quickly intervene to make sure that pupils falling behind in reading are brought back on track. You use the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively to ensure that the support that pupils receive closely matches their needs. Current pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in reading, including disadvantaged pupils. However, you rightly identify that there is still more to do to raise achievement for the most able pupils.
- My next key line of enquiry related to the achievement of the most able key stage 2 pupils in mathematics. Pupils' work indicates that the curriculum has a good impact on pupils' learning. They gain confidence in their understanding of number. However, in some classes, pupils do not have enough opportunity to develop their understanding through problem-solving and teachers do not challenge them enough. You recognise that the development of these mathematics skills will raise achievement, including for the most able.
- My final key line of enquiry related to the achievement of key stage 2 pupils in writing, including the most able pupils and disadvantaged pupils. Pupils develop their skills in grammar, spelling and punctuation, sentence structure and expressive language. This is because teachers plan lessons to meet pupils' needs. Teachers give pupils frequent opportunities to develop their writing skills across other subjects. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make good progress. However, you are aware of the need to accelerate further the progress that the most able pupils make in writing so that more achieve greater depth. You are taking the right action to achieve this.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- a higher proportion of pupils achieve greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics
- in mathematics, teachers challenge pupils more and give them more opportunities to develop their skills through problem-solving.

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

Elizabeth Stevens
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher and four teachers. I also spoke to five governors. I met with a representative of the local authority. I talked to eight pupils from key stage 1 and 2 and spoke informally with other pupils during lessons. I visited all 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 55 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, including free-text responses. I also spoke to two parents before school. I looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, pupils' behaviour logs and staff appraisal records. 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.