

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



2 February 2016

Miss Fiona Bee
Headteacher
Urmston Infant School
Wycliffe Road
Urmston
Manchester
M41 5AH

Dear Miss Bee

Short inspection of Urmston Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 19 January 2016 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 February 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your staff team are passionate about ensuring that every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. You have created a culture, which is shared by all staff and the governing body, of continually looking for ways to improve the school. You have recognised appropriate priorities for your school and what it has to do to continue to be good. Any underperformance is tackled with vigour. This is reflected in the way that you swiftly responded to the dip in standards, particularly in mathematics and phonics (letters and the sounds they make), in 2015. You very quickly identified the particular combination of circumstances that led to this drop in standards and set about putting strategies in place to address these.

The school is highly regarded in the local community. A number of parents told me that they had moved to Urmston so that their children could attend this school. Parents identified the school as a special place and commented on the many meaningful experiences that are provided for their children. The family atmosphere provided by the school and its caring ethos are features which parents greatly appreciate.

You and your staff team place great importance on the emotional well-being of pupils in your school. Those who have difficulty controlling their own behaviour are very well supported by external agencies and through effective interventions. In

most lessons that you and I visited, behaviour was exemplary and children were very keen to learn. The school is a friendly and welcoming place. Displays are bright and show the breadth and balance of the curriculum being delivered. Relationships between staff and pupils are caring and respectful. Pupils move around the school calmly and with smiles on their faces. One group of pupils, who had been learning about penguins, put on their coats and giggled with delight as they 'waddled' outdoors to play.

You and your staff have addressed most of the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection. Governors have completed a health and safety audit which ensures that any safety issues are identified promptly and resolved. Pupils that I spoke to during the inspection told me that they are aware of their targets and that teachers clearly identify what they have to do to improve their work. Parents also confirmed to me that they are provided with much more detailed information about the progress that their child is making towards age-related expectations.

Safeguarding is effective.

All of your staff understand the importance of safeguarding and of keeping children safe and free from harm. The school site is safe and the identity of visitors to the school is closely checked. When I arrived at the school, appropriate and extremely careful steps were taken to verify my identity. Governors informed me that they have completed a recent and detailed audit of all aspects of safeguarding. As designated lead for safeguarding, you have completed relevant training and those responsible for recruiting staff are also suitably trained. The single central record is compliant.

Staff I spoke to confirmed that they had completed safeguarding training. They have a good awareness of the indicators of abuse or neglect and procedures to follow. They also spoke quite confidently about issues relating to extremism and radicalisation. Examples of referrals that I examined during the inspection confirm that staff record concerns well and prompt action is taken to inform external agencies should the need arise.

Pupils whom I met during the inspection told me that they felt very safe in school. They are aware of the different forms of bullying and the distress it can cause. All pupils emphatically told me that bullying at Urmston Infant School is rare and that if it did occur, 'teachers would sort it out quickly'. Teachers also make pupils aware of how to keep themselves safe when they are on the internet or away from school, for example by not talking to strangers.

Inspection findings

- You and other leaders are clear sighted about the school and the areas that can be further improved. Based on accurate self-analysis, your plans for future improvements are robust and accurate. You have a clear vision for the school and its journey towards excellence.
- You have the full support of all your staff and morale is high. Staff typically comment that they 'are proud to work at the school', and that you are 'highly driven and passionate about providing the best possible opportunities for all groups of pupils in the school'.
- Current assessments show that, in 2015, pupils achieved best in reading and writing. Pupils whom I spoke to confirmed that they love reading. They read regularly at home for pleasure and with adults in the school. From displays and pupils' work, it is evident that pupils have many opportunities to write across different areas of the curriculum.
- In 2015, pupils did not achieve as well in mathematics in the end-of-year assessments and in the Year 1 national check on phonics as they had done in previous years. Immediate action has been taken by the school to address these issues. However, after observing lessons, you agreed with me that more work needs to be done to develop staff's confidence in teaching phonics and monitoring and tracking pupils' progress. Looking in pupils' books and observing the teaching of mathematics also highlighted to both of us that more-able pupils are not being consistently challenged.
- You and your deputy headteacher monitor the quality of teaching with rigour. Consequently, you both have a secure understanding of staff's strengths and areas that could be further improved. Staff access regular training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. Teachers also have opportunities to observe good practice within the school and at other schools in the locality.
- Questioning is used effectively by a significant number of teachers to develop and deepen pupils' understanding. For example, through highly skilled questioning, Reception Year children learned factual information about polar bears and penguins.
- The role of the literacy and mathematics coordinators is well embedded. They carefully monitor and track pupils' progress as they move through the school. However, systems in place for other subjects such as history, geography and art are not as effective in giving the school a view of pupils' progress over time.
- Although the number of disadvantaged pupils attending your school is low, careful consideration is given as to how the pupil premium funding is spent to ensure that these pupils make the best possible progress. Targets are set for each child, which leaders carefully monitor and track. As a result, this small group of pupils makes good progress.

- You and your staff have made significant changes to the school website and it is now bright, informative and a valuable resource for parents. Parents told me that they really appreciate the teachers' weekly blogs and the information provided about the curriculum being taught to their children.
- Governors are knowledgeable and very committed to the pupils, families and staff at Urmston Infant School. They know how well pupils are achieving and can talk confidently about the school's priorities. They share your high expectations and they offer the school support and challenge in equal measure.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- teachers' confidence in teaching phonics continues to improve and that pupils' progress is tracked with rigour to ensure that the numbers meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check return to the high levels of 2013 and 2014
- the most-able pupils are consistently challenged in mathematics
- as is already the case with English and mathematics, systems to monitor pupils' progress in other subjects are strengthened.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Iwaskow

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

- During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the deputy headteacher, middle leaders, five members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I also had informal discussions with a group of parents, staff and pupils from Years 1 and 2 to seek their views of the school.
- I went on a tour of the school accompanied by you, and visited classrooms to see the learning that was taking place. I looked at examples of pupils' work and observed their behaviour during lessons and as they moved around the school.
- I reviewed a range of documentation, including the single central record, the school's self-evaluation, the school's development plan and records relating to the monitoring of teaching and learning. I also took account of the responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire completed by parents and staff.