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Trevor Patterson  
Executive headteacher  
Thackley Primary School  
Town Lane  
Bradford  
BD10 8PJ

Dear Mr Patterson

### **Short inspection of Thackley Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 20 October 2015 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 November 2011.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

You and your leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. This is because, despite the recent turbulence in staffing and leadership, you and the governors are sustaining high expectations and are working effectively to ensure that pupils make the progress that they should. You have made sure that the outcomes for pupils continue to be good through your careful and detailed monitoring of the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Because of these actions pupils are well prepared for secondary school.

The governing body is very knowledgeable about the school and makes robust checks on its work. Governors evaluate the impact of leaders' actions and provide challenge that contributes to keeping the school on track. Strong teaching and pupils' good achievement have been maintained during the period of significant changes in leadership and staffing over the past 12 months.

At the previous inspection in November 2011 inspectors identified a strong team spirit and sense of pride pervading the school among both adults and pupils. This is still the case and this strength may well have helped reduce any negative impact of the recent turbulence that the school has experienced. The school is a calm and purposeful place. Pupils move around the school with a keen awareness of the needs of others. They are polite and helpful. Staff are thorough in their planning of

teaching and have high expectations for achievement to which pupils respond positively.

Most parents who spoke informally with me were very positive about the school and about both the education and care it gives their children. They spoke of the commitment of staff and high-quality teaching. It is good to note that the uncertainty some parents felt about the changes to leadership arrangements has now been addressed and explained clearly to all parents in a recent letter.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and your governors are very clear about attaching the highest priority to ensuring that all pupils are safe. There are robust and very detailed systems in place that are followed rigorously. Frequent review helps to ensure that safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose and pupils' safety is assured. Regular training helps staff and governors understand clearly what constitutes risk and keeps them up-to-date with best practice. Pupils report that they feel safe. Should they feel uncertain, pupils are clear that they could turn, with confidence, to any member of staff and their concern would be dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils work and play well together. They are confident and thoughtful. They are well aware of the needs of others in their community and the wider world. This is because the school works hard to ensure that what pupils learn and experience takes account of, and develops, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

### **Inspection findings**

- The executive headteacher and head of school have quickly established themselves. They have earned the confidence of staff and, increasingly, of parents. They have built successfully on the work of the previous executive headteacher and further developed robust systems for monitoring the quality of teaching.
- Effective evaluation of the outcomes of monitoring has given the leadership team a detailed and accurate understanding of the school's strengths. This awareness has enabled them to continue to raise standards even higher. Leaders have identified how to raise further the expectations of staff about how well pupils should and must do. The introduction of 'The Thackley Way', with its focus on writing, is helping staff and pupils to focus firmly on how to improve and develop their skills.
- The gaps between the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and their peers continue to close. This is because leaders are refining the educational tracking of this group of pupils. The school is using this detailed information and combining it with well-established approaches to supporting pupils and their families.
- Most children make good progress in the majority of year groups. They make good and better progress during their time in the early years and are well prepared for Year 1. Pupils' early reading skills are well developed and the

standards they reach at the end of Year 1 are above national expectations. During Key Stage 2, pupils make good and often outstanding progress. Attainment in national tests at the end of the key stage is above the national average.

- Leaders' own monitoring has identified that teaching does not always challenge the most-able pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1, to achieve their very best. Leaders have introduced further training to improve this aspect of teachers' practice and are carefully checking its impact. These actions are helping to ensure that the needs of these pupils are being more carefully addressed.
- A wide range of actions have been taken since the previous inspection to widen and deepen pupils' understanding of world faiths and life in modern Britain. Multi-cultural weeks and assemblies celebrate and explore world faiths and cultures as well as the range of cultures across Britain's diverse landscape. Pupils say that they enjoy and welcome this and benefit from the opportunities it gives them to understand themselves and value the views of others.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- all teaching enables pupils to deepen their understanding and extend their skills so that more pupils, especially the most able, reach higher standards in subjects across the curriculum
- the gap between the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and those of their peers continues to narrow through focusing relentlessly and specifically on each pupil's needs and removing barriers to learning.

Yours sincerely

Mark Evans

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this short, one day, inspection I met with you, members of your senior team, with a range of staff and with three members of the governing body, including the Chair. I also spoke with a local authority officer on the telephone. I visited a range of classrooms with you and with one of your team and spoke with staff and pupils about their work and experience of the school. I also scrutinised a range of pupils' books. I spoke more formally with a group of pupils at lunchtime. I spoke informally

with individual and groups of parents and reviewed information on Parent View. I evaluated a range of documents including the school's most recent evaluations of its performance and records and logs of behaviour. I took into account twenty eight staff questionnaire responses.