

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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



7 January 2016

Mrs Cathy Moore  
Headteacher  
Duston Eldean Primary School  
Main Road  
Duston  
Northampton  
Northamptonshire  
NN5 6PP

Dear Mrs Moore

### **Short inspection of Duston Eldean Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 15 December 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 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. Leaders have continued to develop a safe, friendly, and inclusive school where all members of the school community value and respect each other as individuals. Leaders and teachers encourage pupils and adults to question, challenge and reflect on their learning and strive to be the best they can be. You have worked hard to ensure high expectations and consistent practice across the whole school and, consequently, pupils make good progress. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with or above the national average in each subject at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils attaining a good level of development at the end of Reception has also improved and is in line with the national figure.

You have improved standards of teaching in a number of different ways since the last inspection including: rigorous monitoring of standards; holding teachers clearly accountable for pupils' outcomes; a strong performance management process; professional development and coaching. The use of questioning by teachers and support assistants is now a strength of the school. Whole-school approaches to teaching and classroom management contribute to the good learning behaviour of pupils and the high levels of their engagement observed in each classroom. Similarly, the use of the three task levels (red, amber and green), closely monitored

by teachers, ensures that all pupils are suitably challenged in their learning.

Since the last inspection, leaders have identified more opportunities for pupils to apply writing and mathematical knowledge and skills to other areas of the curriculum. Leaders have also made learning a more creative experience for pupils. While the 'learning challenge curriculum' contributes to this, the most important aspect is the learning culture that leaders have developed and the way adults enable pupils to learn. For example, when starting a new topic, pupils are asked what they would like to know about it. The class then formulates a key question such as, 'What would the fourth little pig use to build his or her home?' The initiatives you have introduced are clearly having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. However, leaders and governors could evaluate more precisely the effectiveness of such measures, and of additional funding like the sport premium.

Following the previous inspection, leaders were set the challenge of improving pupils' understanding of diversity. To address this, you revised the curriculum and the way you track the progress made by specific pupil groups. It is now necessary to focus particularly on tracking and evaluating the progress of those very few pupils who do not do as well as the others.

More recently, leaders have ensured that British values underpin every aspect of school life. For example, the pupils' understanding and application of democracy, freedom, responsibilities (the rule of law) and respect are strengths of the school because the views of pupils and the choices they make are informed by these values. When I spoke with pupils, they enthusiastically provided me with examples such as having the freedom to choose how they will learn best.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and your deputy headteacher are clear about your roles and responsibilities and have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You and your colleagues take your responsibility to keep children safe seriously. You have developed a culture in which members of staff work conscientiously to identify vulnerable pupils as early as possible in order to work with families and outside agencies to keep pupils safe and enable them to learn. When you or your deputy headteacher make a safeguarding referral to the local authority, you are tenacious in following it through and diligent in your record keeping.

You and your deputy headteacher have ensured that all staff, including those who are new to the school, are trained regularly. At the most recent training in September, staff were trained on the 'Prevent' guidance to help combat extremism.

Pupils were keen to tell me that they feel safe and happy at school. This view is shared by parents. Pupils enthusiastically told me how 'the FAB group' (the Friendship and Anti-bullying Pupil Voice group) developed a policy which helps to keep the pupils safe and happy.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders and governors know the school well. They regularly review the achievement of pupils and standards of teaching, and identify areas for further improvement. They then formulate development plans to implement the improvements. Year on year, this approach has supported the improvements the school has achieved. However, in order to build on these improvements, leaders and governors need to develop their understanding of how they can best use pupils' performance information to review the school's work. This includes understanding how effectively funding such as the sport premium is being used.
- You have developed a team of middle leaders who are supporting senior leaders and governors effectively. Middle leaders willingly and enthusiastically undertake professional development, which has enabled them to take responsibility for standards in their areas and to provide colleagues with support. Some middle leaders provide support to other schools.
- The standards pupils attain are good. The proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year has improved and is now in line with the national figure. Standards at Key Stage 1 have improved and they are above the national average in reading and writing and broadly in line in mathematics. Similarly, at Key Stage 2, standards have also improved since the last inspection. Pupils now attain above the national average in mathematics and broadly in line with national averages in reading and writing. Overall, the progress of pupils is good. However, there are a few pupils with additional needs or a history of underachievement who do not make as much progress as other pupils.
- This is an inclusive school. Governors and leaders are rightly proud that they welcome all pupils to their school irrespective of their needs or background. This inclusivity is founded on a culture of high expectations and British values. Pupils are clear that their views are important and that their choices matter. They understand that they have a responsibility to themselves and each other to learn and stay safe, and they respect each other and each other's faiths. Adults are equally committed to the aims and culture of the school. This is seen, for example, through the consistent and successful implementation of whole-school initiatives such as coaching.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers and support assistants use questioning to good effect to check pupils' learning and to challenge pupils' thinking. The questions we observed during our tour of classrooms were interesting, stimulating and creative. They helped to engage the pupils in their learning. We also noted how teachers' consistently high

expectations contributed to the calm atmosphere and positive learning behaviours in each classroom. Pupils are increasingly able to stick with their learning when it gets difficult. Some of their quotes displayed include: 'I learn from my mistakes so that I don't make the same mistake again', and 'At first I didn't like reading and got angry with myself. Now I have got used to reading with my partner and I am getting better and better.' Pupils are also appreciative of the feedback teachers give them, saying that it really helps them to learn.

- Leaders have introduced a new curriculum that fulfils statutory requirements, and a new assessment and tracking system. They track pupils' progress rigorously and effectively every half term and this process helps teachers to plan accurately for individual pupils. It also enables leaders to identify areas of underperformance and to take the necessary action to ensure pupils make good progress. This now needs to be more sharply focused on the very few pupils who do not make as much progress as the others.
- Every parent I met with was positive about the school and its staff. They all said that the school was well led, that teaching was good, their children made good progress, and their children were safe and happy. Parents also told me that teachers dealt with any concerns raised by them promptly. Parents' responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were also very positive.
- All the pupils I spoke with enjoy coming to school and appreciate everything that the adults do to enable them to learn. They like the fact that they can make choices about their learning, have their say about their school, and take responsibility for their behaviour and safety. This is because of the culture of high expectations and inclusivity that leaders have established. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils care for each other and learn well together.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements are secure because you and your deputy headteacher provide effective leadership. Staff are well trained and know that they must report concerns promptly to you and the deputy headteacher as the designated leads. Your records are appropriately detailed, well organised and maintained to a high standard. They show a clear and logical progression of actions taken, with evidence that the school makes appropriate referrals to external agencies. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe at school, outside school and when using the internet and social media.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they evaluate more effectively the impact of support programmes, initiatives and additional funding such as the sport premium
- they focus more sharply on tracking and evaluating the progress of the very few pupils who do not make as much progress as the others.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Northamptonshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Derek Myers  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, four middle leaders including those responsible for English and mathematics, and two members of the governing body. We discussed your current school self-evaluation and your development plan. I reviewed both of them. You and I visited classrooms and learning areas to observe teaching, talk to pupils, and look at their work. We evaluated information about pupils' progress, attendance, and exclusion. I reviewed the records of the monitoring of teaching. I observed and talked with pupils in their classes and met with nine pupils. I met with you and your deputy headteacher and reviewed your systems, processes, and records relating to safeguarding. We undertook a scrutiny of work from a sample of pupils and compared it to curriculum plans. I met with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day and considered their views alongside the responses from Parent View.