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Mrs Sarah Griggs
Valley View Community Primary School
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Dear Mrs Griggs

Short inspection of Valley View Community Primary 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 May 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

The effective restructuring of the leadership team has enabled a sharper focus on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. You are committed to using your best teachers to support all teachers to improve their skills. Senior leaders regularly work alongside teachers, modelling good practice and focusing on key areas to support improvement. Over 90% of staff state they are challenged and supported to improve and feel motivated and respected. The positive approach taken by leaders in empowering staff and refining teaching skills ensures that the school is securing good capacity for future improvement. The school has undergone a significant period of change since the last inspection. It has doubled in size and in September 2015 opened a part-time nursery class within the early years setting. One year group has been significantly expanded to accommodate 90 pupils in order to provide extra places for a 'bulge' year group. This rapid expansion has been well led and managed by the headteacher.

Leaders and governors embrace the new challenges the changes have brought. The extra spaces created have resulted in an influx of new pupils arriving during the school year. Last year 18 new pupils arrived part way through Key Stage 2, many of whom presented significant additional needs and live a distance away from the school. The 2015 Year 6 cohort of 22 pupils consisted of 10 pupils who joined the

school at different points throughout Key Stage 2. Variations within this cohort had an impact on the standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015.

Pupil behaviour and welfare were major strengths during the last inspection and remain so. Pupils told me how much they enjoy having 'bubble time' with the learning mentor when they need to talk about something that concerns them. They were careful to explain that it was not just about school worries, but it could also be about things that bother them out of school. In the classroom, pupils show a mature attitude and their behaviours for learning are exemplary. They listen attentively and remain focused during tasks. They cooperate well in groups, taking turns, supporting each other and listening to each other's views. As a result, teachers are able to extend learning through a variety of approaches and pupils tell me they enjoy learning and find it fun.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the education their children receive from the school. They speak highly of the positive ethos and feel their children are well cared for and nurtured. They know their children are happy and safe. One parent commented about her daughter: 'She is thriving at the school and looks forward to going every day. The school is caring and inclusive and has set her on the right path for lifelong learning.' Many other parents echoed similar views.

Since the last inspection, standards at the end of Reception have risen and are broadly in line with national figures. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are now slightly above the national average, particularly in mathematics. The picture for Key Stage 2 is slightly skewed due to changes in the cohort in 2015. However, attainment has risen over a three-year period.

Safeguarding is effective.

- Leaders ensure that all staff are trained in safeguarding procedures, which are updated annually. Detailed records of concerns and referrals are kept in well organised case files, clearly setting out timely actions and interventions taken to safeguard pupils. Work with vulnerable families is prioritised, particularly with families who struggle to bring their children the distance to school. Absence for this group remains above the national average, and a wide range of systems are fully in place to ensure that it improves.

Inspection findings

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is regularly monitored by leaders using internal assessment information, progress seen in work and judgements of teaching quality. You quality assure your judgements by monitoring alongside other local headteachers and the school improvement adviser. Information gathered is used to set targets for improvement and as evidence towards teachers' performance

management. As a result, consistently good teaching is impacting on standards.

- Leaders regularly review how pupils are progressing across the school. Extra interventions are implemented quickly to ensure that pupils catch up. This has been particularly successful in Key Stage 1, where gaps between pupils in receipt of pupil premium and other pupils have closed. There is a more mixed picture across Key Stage 2.
- Middle leaders have a clear understanding of the steps needed to continue to improve outcomes for all groups of pupils. They are involved in analysing progress information from each class and providing specialist support for colleagues. Their action plans are focused on key areas.
- As a result of self-evaluation, leaders have been sharply focusing on improving writing standards. Work seen in books shows that pupils know how to improve their own writing through the use of checklists and assessment grids. Pupils are given opportunities to talk to each other and discuss any improvements needed. Regular targets are set by the teacher, allowing pupils to evaluate their own work. As a result, the quality of writing is improving.
- Governors are appointed who have an identified skill, enabling them to play an active part in supporting the school. They know the school's strengths and can accurately pinpoint the areas in which the school needs to work to improve further. They understand the challenges faced by the school and are committed to ensuring that the school caters for all pupils within the local area. Governors need to ensure that all the required information is included on the school's website.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the progress pupils make. In one lesson the teaching assistant focused on teaching a small group how to improve the quality of their sentences. Her teaching was well structured, enabling pupils to understand and be successful in their efforts. In another lesson the teaching assistant supported a group who were playing in the water tray. By modelling correct language and using open questions she encouraged pupils to talk in sentences, extending their spoken language further.
- Reading standards have continued to improve throughout the school and reading is a strength. More pupils in Key Stage 1 are reaching higher levels of attainment and in Key Stage 2 progress has been well above national levels for two out of the three years. Phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) is taught well and pupils enjoy their daily sessions.
- Mathematics is well taught in Key Stage 2. Pupils use correct mathematical language when explaining their work and enjoy the challenges of solving problems. All the pupils I spoke to told me they loved mathematics and said they found it fun, which demonstrates positive attitudes to learning. However, there were some missed opportunities to extend the level of challenge offered to the most-able pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- the growing wealth of monitoring and evaluation information is pulled together more tightly, enabling an even sharper focus on agreed priorities
- teaching in writing and mathematics focuses on deepening and extending the learning of the most-able pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged
- the school's website is accurate, up-to-date and provides parents with the information they need to plan ahead and support their children's learning.

Yours sincerely

Janet Lunn
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, senior leaders, middle leaders, four governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority. I visited a range of classes with you to observe teaching and learning. I analysed samples of work in pupils' books and talked to pupils about their learning. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including progress information across the school. I considered the information received from 134 Parent View responses, 25 staff questionnaires and 112 pupil questionnaires. I checked your single central record, safeguarding information and one case study. I spoke to you and the learning mentor about safeguarding procedures. Alongside this I analysed attendance information. Four complimentary letters from parents were read and noted.