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Miss Gillian McElvogue
Headteacher
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Dear Miss McElvogue

Short inspection of Fellview Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 April 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. Over the past five terms, there have been a number of changes to the leadership of the school. You were appointed headteacher in September 2014. At the same time, a new chair of governors took up post. The governing body has been reconstituted and a number of new governors have been appointed. The most recent appointment to the governing body means that all the vacant posts have been filled. The governing body now has the range of skills and experience required to provide strong strategic leadership for your school.

At Fellview Primary School, you strive to meet the needs of all the pupils in your community. You offer your pupils a broad range of experiences, which help them to enjoy their time at school and prepare them well for the next stage in learning.

Since taking up your post, you have reviewed policies, including those for safeguarding, and introduced consistent approaches to presentation, marking and feedback. You have brought the school website in line with school information requirements. Pupils explained to me how their teachers' marking now helps them to improve their work.

The actions you have put in place to improve writing are bearing fruit, as the numbers of pupils achieving age-related expectations at the end of key stage 1 is now above the national average. In 2015, at the end of key stage 2, all pupils achieved at least in line with pupils nationally and a high proportion of the cohort

achieved above the standards expected for their age. Now that you and the governing body have put the school on a firmer financial footing, you are able to make a start on some of your other plans, including the development of the early years and key stage 1 learning environment, and providing increasing opportunities for reasoning and problem solving in mathematics.

At the previous inspection, inspectors reported that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was above average. This continues to be the case. The majority of pupils achieve at least in line with their peers nationally at the end of early years, and key stages 1 and 2. Most pupils reach the expected standard in phonics in Year 1.

Inspectors also reported further strengths in pupils' behaviour. This continues to be the case. Pupils show respect for each other as well as the adults in school. They get on well with each other and when, on rare occasions, they fall out, they are encouraged to try to resolve the issues between themselves. However, they are confident that adults will step in quickly to help when needed.

The previous inspection identified a few areas for the school to work on. When you joined the school, you identified some more urgent issues that needed to be resolved, and that had not been a concern at the time of the previous inspection. As a result, you are still addressing some aspects of the areas for improvement.

You have increased the opportunities for pupils to work independently. Pupils and parents spoke positively to me about the learning logs you have introduced for pupils' homework. Pupils enjoy the challenges their teachers set them and parents are able to find out about what their children are learning in class. Your mathematics subject leader has introduced more opportunities for pupils to reason and solve mathematical problems. Year 4 pupils enjoyed telling me about how they have grappled with some of the tricky mathematical problems their teacher has set them.

You have implemented a new approach to marking, which is helping pupils know how to improve their work. For example, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils use the feedback they are given to edit and redraft their writing well, making noticeable improvements to the quality of their work. It is important now that all staff consistently apply the marking policy. Teachers have also supported pupils to assess their own work and that of their peers as appropriate. You have identified the importance of teachers using the information about pupils' learning, gathered through their marking, to update pupils' tracking grids and plan next steps, in order to move pupils' learning on more quickly.

You have taken the opportunity, given the changes to assessment nationally, to design a new approach to the assessment and tracking of pupils' attainment and progress, which is aligned to your curriculum. You are making sure that assessment is accurate through marking some of your pupils' work alongside teachers from other local schools, as well as inviting a specialist teacher from the local authority to oversee what you have done. You check teachers' information about how well pupils are doing at key points throughout the year to make sure no one is falling

behind. Governors are considering how this information can be analysed and presented in a format that will be useful to them.

The 'Welly Wednesdays' in early years provide the youngest children with an opportunity to play and explore outdoors, following their own interests. For example, children were fascinated by some bulbs they had found, and eagerly anticipated seeing what they would grow into. Early years staff make use of opportunities for children to access the school grounds to promote their learning. The appointment of an additional member of staff gives you the opportunity to accelerate plans to develop the outdoor area adjacent to the classroom, which will greatly increase children's access to outdoor learning.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school's safeguarding policy and procedures are appropriate and cover all the required areas, including combating radicalisation and extremism. All staff have received up-to-date training and understand their roles and responsibilities. You ensure that pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and social media. You have made sure that systems for checking the suitability of staff to work with children are rigorous and robust.

You and the governing body have reviewed the measures in place to make sure pupils are safe on the school site. You have taken advice from an external consultant to help you do this. The new gate, an additional member of staff supervising pupils at lunchtime, and changes to how the school building is accessed have made a positive difference. You and the governing body are well aware of the need to ensure that pupils continue to be kept safe at all times. The governing body has recently appointed a governor with expertise in health and safety to strengthen this aspect.

Inspection findings

- You and the governing body share high aspirations and expectations for the pupils at Fellview Primary School. You understand the challenges that face you as you continue to implement the necessary improvements to improve the quality of provision for your pupils.
- You and your staff prepare pupils well for secondary school. Pupils are independent, confident and articulate. In 2015, all pupils reached the expected standard by the end of Year 6 and more pupils achieved the higher levels than in the past. Some parents told the inspector about how well their older children were doing at secondary school as a result of the good start they had been given at Fellview Primary School.
- You and your staff have developed your own approach to assessment, following the removal of national levels. As we discussed, since you implemented the new system, you have identified areas for improvement. In particular, you have found that teachers are missing the opportunity provided to use this information to plan the next steps in each pupil's learning more systematically in English and mathematics.

- Pupils achieve well at the end of Year 6. Last year, the numbers of pupils achieving above age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics were much higher than the national average. At the end of key stage 1, half the pupils achieved above age-related expectations in reading and mathematics.
- You and the governing body carefully consider how pupil premium funding can be best used to support disadvantaged pupils' learning. You ensure that they receive a range of support, which is carefully matched to their individual needs. As a result, most disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to their peers from their different starting points.
- Almost all of your pupils enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in their good attendance, which is well above the national average and improving. You encourage pupils to be punctual, making sure that pupils understand the importance of being in school every day, ready to learn. You are well supported by parents who place a high value on their children's education.
- A small minority of parents have expressed some concerns about the new arrangements for teaching in the early years and key stage 1 class. In your strategic plan, you and the governors have prioritised improving communications with parents and have already made changes to the website as part of this. You hope that sharing timetables and information about teaching responsibilities, not only for the youngest children but also across the school, will reassure parents.
- You provide pupils with a wealth of experiences during their time in the school. Pupils enjoy the different after-school clubs offered, including those for gymnastics, art and drama. All pupils were keen to tell me about the different places they had visited, including the beach, museums and the aquarium. Older pupils look forward to their residential trips.
- Pupils are caring and considerate. They listen attentively to their teachers and are keen to do their best. Older pupils enjoy reading with younger pupils each week. Pupils are knowledgeable about British values and enjoy learning about different faiths and cultures; as one pupil explained to me, 'It's not what people are like on the outside, it's what is inside which is important'. They are keen to help others less fortunate than themselves. For example, pupils and their parents have been collecting old clothes to raise money for the local air ambulance service.
- You have established effective links with other local schools. Your teaching staff have welcomed visits to look at good practice in successful schools and settings. Teachers have found the opportunity to moderate assessments of pupils' writing with colleagues from other schools useful. They have also enjoyed sharing ideas with other subject leads at local cluster meetings, which they have been able to bring back to Fellview. For example, your teacher in charge of mathematics has introduced more opportunities for problem solving and reasoning in order to deepen pupils' understanding. Moreover, following an audit of resources, he has purchased new equipment to better support pupils' learning.

- You and your staff recognise the importance of providing a successful transition for children moving up from the adjoining nursery. Parents who spoke to the inspector were appreciative of the support given, particularly to pupils who have special education needs or disability, as well as those pupils who join at different points during their primary schooling.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should:

- accelerate progress across the school to enable more pupils to achieve the highest levels at the end of early years, key stages 1 and 2, and in the phonics screening check, by:
 - making sure that teachers use the information they gather about pupils' learning, during lessons and when marking books, to inform their lesson planning
 - developing the early years and key stage 1 classroom, including the adjoining outdoor area, so that needs, interests and stages of development of all the pupils are considered.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cumbria. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Pippa Jackson Maitland
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke to you, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, a group of teaching and support staff, and a number of pupils. You and I made short visits to lessons, during which I spoke to pupils and looked at the quality of their work. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day. I also considered the views of 10 pupils, parents and six members of staff who completed online questionnaires. I reviewed your self-evaluation, as well as a range of other documentation. I also checked the effectiveness of your safeguarding arrangements and recruitment information. I checked that the school meets the requirements regarding the publication of specified information on its website.