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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



11 July 2016

Mrs S Gallivan
Acting Headteacher
Purlwell Infant and Nursery School
Purlwell Lane
Batley
West Yorkshire
WF17 7PE

Dear Mrs Gallivan

Short inspection of Purlwell Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 15 June 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 November 2010.

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 team have worked tirelessly to further improve the quality of teaching and learning and enhance provision for all pupils. Leaders and governors have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. Your systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are robust, enabling your team to act swiftly to meet emerging needs. You have been swift and imaginative in the actions taken to address areas of improvement identified at the previous inspection. Outdoor spaces have been substantially developed to enrich learning. Teachers' planning closely addresses the needs of pupils and consistently effective teaching and learning enable pupils to make good progress.

You have worked with middle leaders to build capacity. They are now more actively involved in monitoring the quality of the teaching and in providing guidance for colleagues as they address the new curriculum. Middle leaders are closely involved in checking pupil progress, although further training is required to enable them to use new tracking systems more effectively. Shared planning and moderation, including additional moderation with local authority partners, enables teachers to have an accurate view of standards. Assessment is strong in the early years and at key stage 1 and actively informs pupils' progress. Leaders ensure that teachers have a sustained focus on the needs and progress of disadvantaged pupils through regular discussion at progress meetings and by setting teachers clear performance management targets. Teachers are enriching the curriculum through the integration

of creative activities and an imaginative and purposeful use of the school's considerable outdoor spaces.

The governing body is committed to on-going improvement and provides support and challenge for school leaders. Governors' minutes show evidence of thorough questioning of school leaders as governors explore the impact of improvement strategies. The governing body has a range of expertise and has recently restructured to improve its effectiveness in holding school leaders to account. Leaders nurture positive relationships with parents, carers and the local community, providing parental support on courses in areas such as language and phonics (the sounds that letters make). These relationships contribute to the welcoming and supportive ethos that is further reflected in the courteous, orderly behaviour of children and the positive morale of staff.

Safeguarding is effective.

Senior leaders are committed to the welfare of children and ensure safeguarding issues have a high profile across the school. Teachers and governors receive up-to-date training on a range of key safeguarding matters. Rigorous checks, carried out in conjunction with the local authority, ensure the suitability of those working at the school. Teachers act swiftly to address any concerns about pupils' welfare. Both parents and pupils agree that pupils feel safe at school. The school works closely with external partners, including nursing services, to further support the welfare of pupils.

Inspection findings

- Teaching is enabling children to make good progress in the early years and at key stage 1. Staff plan thoroughly and work closely with teaching assistants to meet pupils' needs. High-quality teaching in the classroom is supported by effective interventions. Teachers use activities such as cake-making and music to develop pupils' language skills. Effective questioning in an outdoor mathematics lesson made pupils listen carefully and explain the reasons behind their choice of shape. Teachers' and teaching assistants' verbal and written feedback provides pupils and teachers with a good understanding of progress. The consistent strength of teaching has contributed to the upward trend in standards at key stage 1 over the last five years.
- Leaders have acted decisively to improve provision and outcomes for key groups. Teachers are acutely aware of the language needs and wider educational needs of pupils. They provide intensive support for pupils to accelerate progress, with increasing opportunities for the development of independence as key skills are acquired. These actions contributed to a substantial reduction in reading gaps between boys and girls in Year 1 in summer 2015. Close monitoring and effective support for pupils eligible for the pupil premium has led to improved attendance and strong progress. Gaps are closing and disadvantaged pupils achieve better outcomes in key stage 1 than disadvantaged children nationally. Teachers work assiduously to support pupils with special educational needs, whose books reflect

evidence of sound progress. Leaders have engaged positively with parents and pupils to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, pupils of Pakistani heritage and pupils with special educational needs, although further work is needed to sustain improvement. Considerable action has been taken to redress the underperformance of pupils of Pakistani heritage, resulting in significant improvements in Year 1. On occasions, the improvements achieved in Year 1 are not always carried through to Year 2.

- Pupils benefit from an imaginative, responsive, broad and balanced curriculum. In the early years, plans are modified to reflect pupils' interests. Considerable action has been taken to enhance the use of outdoor spaces to the benefit of pupils' play and learning. There was evidence of pupils developing their awareness of measuring by using differing water containers and their understanding of shape by playing maths hopscotch. In Year 2, phonics skills were developed by outdoor relays and chalking digraphs on the playground. Gardening spaces are used to develop pupils' scientific understanding of plant growth. External coaches have provided stronger sports coaching in football and extra-curricular opportunities have been enhanced.
- Standards in the early years are strong. In 2015, the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development was above the national figure. This is particularly impressive as many pupils arrive with knowledge, skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age. Increasing proportions of boys achieved a good level of development in 2015, although girls improved at an even more accelerated rate and gaps increased. Teachers have introduced reading texts and activities that continue to interest and motivate boys. Pupils benefit from a mixture of child-initiated and adult-led activities that engage interest and sustain attention. The improvements to the outdoor learning environment have considerably enhanced learning opportunities. The transition from early years to key stage 1 is managed in a deft and effective manner.
- Pupils are consistently polite and courteous and show respect for one another and adults. The lead inspector was frequently greeted and welcomed on arrival to classes and this courtesy typifies the respectful culture that permeates the school. Classrooms have an orderly, calm atmosphere as a result of purposeful teaching that encourages consistent focus. Additionally, pupils develop confidence through activities that promote talk, group interaction and independence.
- Leaders have ensured that the school remains committed to sustained improvement through effective staff development and target-setting. They have built high staff morale by encouraging teachers to participate in self-review of their work, leading to a community of reflective practitioners with the will to improve. Middle leaders are providing training to help staff understand the new requirements for teaching grammar, and for teaching problem-solving in mathematics. Teachers have a clear understanding of improvement priorities and share a collective commitment to achieve the very best for all pupils. Leaders work effectively with the local authority and neighbouring schools to share good practice, validate assessment and ensure effective transition to junior school.
- Governors share the school leaders' commitment to sustaining

improvement. They commissioned their own review of governance to determine how to further improve the effectiveness of the governing body. Governors have a wide range of expertise, including many with educational backgrounds, enabling them to ask pertinent questions about the impact of improvement work. Governors make regular visits to the school to monitor progress and attend parents' evenings to listen to parents' views and encourage parental involvement in the life of the school community.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to narrow gaps in achievement for key groups of pupils
- improve attendance for those groups of pupils with lower rates of attendance
- develop the leadership skills and experience of middle leaders.

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

Yours sincerely

Malcolm Kirtley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the assistant headteacher and middle leaders. I also spoke to a group of governors, including the chair, and the local authority school improvement partner. I talked to the school council at lunchtime and discussed aspects of pupils' work in visits to lessons. I undertook learning walks with the acting headteacher and assistant headteacher in Nursery, Reception and key stage 1. I examined the school improvement plan as well as other documents, including school self-evaluation, assessment information on current progress, attendance information, and pupil tracking and intervention documents. I looked at pupils' work along with middle leaders. I also examined safeguarding documents, including the single central record. I took into account 20 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, eight free text responses, one parental phone call, and 29 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no answers to the online questionnaire for pupils.