

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Mr Timothy Sutcliffe  
Executive headteacher  
Fairfield Community Primary School  
Cheshire Drive  
South Wigston  
Wigston  
Leicestershire  
LE18 4WA

Dear Mr Sutcliffe

### **Short inspection of Fairfield Community Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 29 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in October 2010.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment as executive headteacher in January 2015, the school has undergone significant improvement. You acknowledge that outcomes for pupils were not good enough in 2014 and, on your appointment, took immediate action to improve these. There was not enough time to ensure that all pupils had made good progress by the end of 2015. Staffing and leadership absence adversely affected how well pupils did. These issues are now resolved, and you have a stable leadership and staffing in place. However, despite these problems, pupils taking tests in 2015 did achieve more than those who took the tests in the previous year. There were particular improvements in writing.

You lead the school well. Your senior and middle leaders are knowledgeable and also provide good leadership. Governors are skilled and carry out their roles effectively. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved, and outcomes for pupils are rising.

You have introduced a new assessment system that tracks pupils' progress carefully against the areas of the new curriculum, and you ensure that leaders and teachers use this system well to identify and take action against underperformance.

Pupils enjoy their learning and behave well. The relationships between adults and pupils are good and contribute to the calm, positive learning environment in all classrooms. As a result, pupils are able to concentrate and learn well.

Improvements to teaching are having a positive impact on the outcomes that pupils in all key stages achieve. In the early years, the proportion of children who have reached a good level of development has risen significantly and is now closer to the national average. The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who meet the expected standard in the phonics screening check has also risen. Outcomes for pupils at key stage 1 and 2 have improved as a result of the action you took on the specific areas of underachievement in last year's results. For example, you have reviewed the teaching of mathematics across the curriculum and have set up a 'GLAM' (girls love and adore mathematics) club for girls, to increase their engagement and enjoyment of mathematics. Pupils across the school are responding well to the imaginative reasoning tasks that their teachers set them, which allow them to practise their calculation skills in more challenging tasks.

There are further improvements to be made. There are now more opportunities for pupils to write at length and develop into good writers, but these are not consistent across all areas of the curriculum.

The school tracks attendance well and takes action when a pupil's attendance drops. As a result, attendance is above the national average for all groups of pupils.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that training for staff has kept them up to date with the latest safeguarding requirements, including their responsibility to help protect pupils from radicalisation and female genital mutilation. Although you feel that such risks are low, you have, as a precaution, undertaken a risk assessment on the possible risks of extremism in the local community. The school has a culture where staff feel supported to report any concerns, no matter how minor they may seem, and to act on their instincts when they feel something is not quite right. Records are made of conversations with parents so that concerns can be followed up, although some of these lack sufficient detail. For example, they do not always note the parents' responses.

All the necessary checks on staff meet the current requirements. The governors monitor the school's safeguarding policies and procedures closely. The nominated safeguarding governor has undertaken an audit of safeguarding practices in school; this ensures that you have an external perspective on the effectiveness of the arrangements. The school's leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

### **Inspection findings**

- You and your team closely check the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils are making. Where you judge progress not to be good, you take

decisive action; this has led to improvements in the quality of pupils' work. Performance management arrangements are effective in ensuring that teachers have a good understanding of how their work links to whole-school priorities.

- Your middle leaders contribute well to the leadership of the school. By carrying out their own monitoring and evaluation, they gain a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects throughout the school. They take care to ensure that subsequent monitoring activities are effective in securing improvements where they are needed. For example, leaders identified that in one class pupils' presentation was not good enough. Subsequent monitoring focused on this issue, which resulted in quick improvements.
- The school is in a partnership with one other school which is judged outstanding. You have used this link to good effect to improve leadership and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. For example, a specialist leader of education from the partner school has supported staff to improve the leadership and teaching of mathematics.
- You have introduced a new marking policy and have provided guidance for teachers to ensure that they provide appropriate and useful feedback. However, not all pupils use this feedback to improve their work.
- Teachers have provided more opportunities for pupils to reason mathematically and they ask pupils to explain how they have reached their answers. Consequently, most pupils are now making good progress in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress through the school. The appointment of a new leader for this area of the school's work has led to improved tracking of the progress that these pupils make. All teachers now understand their role in ensuring these pupils achieve well. They make sure to plan learning that addresses their specific needs.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. The vast majority of parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, felt that the school was well led and would recommend the school to other parents. Their responses to whether pupils receive appropriate homework were less positive, however. You have decided wisely to reissue the home-school agreement to ensure that all parents fully understand the school's strategy on homework.
- Children make a good start in the early years. For example, during the inspection the children were inspired to use their recent learning on minibeads to mould their own insects and play counting games. The children counted the number of spots on each insect with ease and could tell me confidently how many would be one more and one less. As a result, they were making very good gains in their learning.
- Children's learning journeys show good progress is being made over time in all areas of the foundation stage curriculum. There is more work to do to ensure that parents' contributions from home are also used to inform how well the children are progressing. You have identified the need to ensure

that when children do not understand a concept they are supported well in small groups with an adult. Consequently, outcomes by the end of the Reception Year are rising.

- Pupils continue to make very good progress with their writing. Evidence in books shows that pupils throughout the school use sophisticated and imaginative vocabulary to write good-quality sentences. This is particularly true of the most able pupils. However, opportunities for pupils to write at length are not consistent in all subjects. Consequently, some of the key stage 2 pupils do not, for example, use paragraphs as well as they should to structure their writing in their curriculum work.
- Teachers take care, from the youngest class upwards, to use high-level language in their classrooms. As a result, pupils become confident in the correct use of technical language and linguistic terminology. For example, in the Year 6 class, pupils could explain the meaning and function of modal verbs confidently. In Year 1, the pupils used sophisticated and imaginative language to describe the Gruffalo.
- There is a range of skills and expertise on the governing body which enables governors to hold school leaders to account. Governors rigorously monitor the progress against the key priorities set out in the school improvement plan and ask challenging questions about the progress that pupils are making. Consequently, governors are well informed about leaders' work and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Pupils have a good understanding of, and respect for, different faiths and cultures. During the inspection, pupils were enthused by their learning about the festival of Eid. They offered thoughtful suggestions of the different ways in which they could support charities. From the youngest class upwards, teachers make the most of opportunities to teach children about different faiths and cultures. As a result, pupils have a secure understanding of British values and the school's values. As one boy told me, 'Teachers help and encourage us to respect each other.'
- Staff morale is high. You described the school as a 'happy, positive place to learn and to work'. My inspection findings confirmed this view.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' skills in writing continue to improve, by ensuring that teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length and use a range of writing skills in different subjects
- pupils use their teachers' feedback to improve their work, in line with the school's expectations
- the parents of children in the early years are more involved in their child's learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Deirdre Duignan  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I met you, the head of school, the early years leader and the literacy and numeracy coordinators. I spoke with parents and observed pupils as they arrived at school. I met with a group of pupils from Years 5 and 6 and looked at the work in their books. I toured the school with you and we carried out joint observations of learning in the early years, and in Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. During these observations we looked at pupils' work. I met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. I reviewed documents relating to safeguarding and pupils' behaviour and attendance. I scrutinised the school's self-evaluation and planning documents. I looked at documents relating to performance management and the work of governors. I considered the 31 responses to Parent View and spoke by telephone with a parent.