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Mrs Janet Drury
Headteacher
Shaw Cross Infant and Nursery School
Leeds Road
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Dear Mrs Drury

Short inspection of Shaw Cross Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 9 November 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 2012.

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 senior leaders have recognised the need to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning continually so that you can recognise where you are successful and where improvements are needed. You have quickly addressed areas of concern as they arise. Through monitoring you are aware that there are some variations in skill levels of teachers in meeting the needs of different abilities.

Areas which were identified at the last inspection as needing improvement have been addressed. You have carefully monitored the progress of girls and ensured that their needs are well met. You and your team have ensured that middle leaders have the skills required to carry out their role and are accountable for the success of that role. You have brokered extra and regular support from the local authority and worked with other schools so that you have external evaluations to verify the accuracy of your own evaluations and moderations.

The dedication you provide in getting to know the needs of pupils in the school, both socially and academically, is commendable. Your leadership team and other adults in school share your dedication in getting to know pupils on a very individual level so that they feel happy, secure and that their needs are well met.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding pupils is a high priority in this school. You yourself are the designated safeguarding lead. You spend a great deal of time making sure this role is carried out effectively. All staff are well trained. They know who they should turn to if they have any concerns. Staff have every confidence that you will be robust in dealing with any issues. Pupils have confidence that any problems they have will be dealt with appropriately. They speak of how the adults in school are always there to help them. You have excellent relationships with parents, and this supports your effectiveness in this role. Your knowledge of every pupil in school is detailed and this helps you to deal with each child in a manner that is appropriate for their needs. Records are appropriately recorded and stored. As the designated safeguarding lead you are tenacious when dealing with other agencies to ensure that issues are robustly dealt with in a timely manner.

Inspection findings

- Pupils behave well. They speak of how they enjoy coming to school and how they have lots of friends in school. A friendship bench in the playground and school council members who have responsibilities at breaktimes reassure pupils that if they are ever unhappy someone is there to help. The excellent relationships they have with adults mean that pupils know they can speak to any adult if they are worried. Both pupils and adults agree that pupils respond to and respect ancillary staff as they do teachers. Pupils have an extremely accurate knowledge of what bullying is and say that 'nobody is a bully at our school'.
- The inspection investigated whether the early years provision is still good following a fall in attainment in the last two years. It is abundantly clear that the progress of these children continues to be good. Issues that have arisen, such as the underachievement of boys in writing, have been addressed, leading to a 10% improvement in attainment the following year. The children in the early years are happy and mix well together. They take advantage of a well-planned, stimulating and extensive environment both inside and outside. Adults make sure that learning is fun and extremely well planned, such as when the children used small pipettes to mix magic potions to improve their fine motor skills. The interactions between adults and children are highly effective. Adults play alongside children, for example in the sand tray where adults modelled mathematical and scientific language and social skills. Parents expressed how happy and safe their children are at school and how well their individual needs are met.
- Phonics is taught well. Teachers continually assess pupils' understanding throughout lessons. Pupils use phonic skills well. Less able pupils use their phonics skills when reading difficult words and they know that other details, such as pictures, can be used alongside phonics to help them read and comprehend text. The most able pupils read with fluency and expression and although they sometimes struggle with more complex vocabulary, they have good comprehension skills and understand what these more difficult words mean.

- I considered whether disappointing outcomes for Year 2 pupils in 2016 are reflective of outcomes across the school. The quality of teaching across the school remains strong and enables pupils to learn well. Overall, pupils in Year 2 made good progress from their starting points. The individual circumstances of a small group of pupils, for example those recently joining the school and some with difficult personal circumstances, meant that they did not make the progress they were anticipated to make. In other year groups, pupils make good progress and work in their books clearly shows how pupils learn new skills, consolidate those skills and move on to harder work.
- Teachers manage behaviour and capture pupils' interests so that they learn well. Teachers know their pupils very well and use this knowledge to ask insightful questions so that the pupils are challenged at an appropriate level. Not all teachers are as skilled at questioning as others. Pupils are given clear success criteria so that they know what they need to do to achieve well. The success criteria are sometimes not adapted to meet the needs of the less able and most able pupils. Teachers give feedback to pupils by writing in books and verbally, so that pupils have a very clear idea of what they need to do to improve. Although teaching assistants are used well to support the needs of pupils when teaching them in small groups, at times their skills are not used well when pupils are taking part in whole-class activities.
- The number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to be eligible for pupil premium are relatively small. The inspection considered whether the needs of these pupils are well met. Many of these pupils have significant needs and adults work well with the pupils, parents and external professionals to evaluate and meet their needs. Individual education plans, as well as regular meetings with those concerned, ensure that these pupils are making appropriate progress towards their targets. Evaluations of the success of interventions are made to ensure that they are effective in helping pupils learn. Teaching assistants are used frequently to support the learning of these pupils in small groups, and they do so well. Parents who spoke to the inspector commented on how the needs of these pupils are met and how the school has a growing reputation for meeting the needs of these pupils extremely well.
- The impact of leaders and managers, including middle leaders, was examined to consider if they were ensuring that this school remains a good school. Senior and middle leaders have a secure knowledge of the quality of teaching across the school. Robust monitoring takes place in the form of regular meetings, learning walks, the scrutiny of pupils' work, observing lessons and sharing good practice so that opinions are based accurately on a range of information. Middle leaders have responsibility to consider the quality of teaching and learning in a particular subject. This they do well. They support other teachers to help them improve and liaise with one of the assistant headteachers to consider the impact of learning on outcomes.
- All leaders have clearly defined roles and therefore other adults know who they need to go to for support. You have recognised that teaching assistants are a valuable resource and have invested in improving their skills with training and support. You have devolved this responsibility to one of your

assistant headteachers. You have been so successful in the professional development of your leadership team that some staff have moved to other schools for higher leadership roles. Consequently, there have been some changes in the leadership team.

- Intense analysis of pupils' outcomes enables you to have an accurate picture of the progress pupils are making. You use this information to address any issues of less than good progress as soon as they arise. You use the information you gather on the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes to inform governors regularly about the school. Governors use this information to offer appropriate challenge, which they do well. All parents who contributed to the Ofsted online survey would recommend this school to other parents.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- better use is made of teaching assistants in whole-class situations so that they are more productive in helping pupils learn
- more teachers become skilled at adapting teaching skills and practices to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities.

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

Jo Sharpe
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection these particular areas were focused on:

- Is the early years still good?
- Are pupils' achievements still good?
- How does the progress of disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs compare with that of other pupils nationally?
- Has overall leadership and management been strengthened by middle leaders?

During the inspection, I met with you, both your assistant headteachers and your middle leadership team. I met with the vice-chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I also met with pupils throughout the day, both informally and formally, and listened to pupils of different abilities read. Surveys

which were completed by pupils, parents and staff were also considered. Parents' views were considered from the Ofsted online survey as well following discussions with them. We visited all classes together and also looked at a number of books to consider the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Behaviour was observed throughout the day, including breaktimes. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including that relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in school.