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Mr Andy Jones  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Jones

### **Short inspection of Kelvin Grove Community Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 December 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 September 2011.

#### **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 welcome pupils from a wide range of backgrounds into an inclusive school community, provide them with a rich and stimulating curriculum, and accomplish the school's aim of 'achieving success together'. Almost all pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school, including the disadvantaged, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, the many pupils who speak English as an additional language, and the most able pupils.

You and the leadership team know the strengths and weaknesses in provision and outcomes well because you check the quality of teaching thoroughly and keep a close eye on pupils' progress. Leaders are systematic in the way they address the needs of those pupils who are at risk of underachievement. Leaders' and teachers' actions to meet the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language are particularly effective.

At the last inspection, inspectors identified two areas for improvement. The first was to accelerate progress and raise attainment. Attainment has indeed risen from below average to consistently in line with the national average because of strong progress, especially through key stage 2. Progress in the early years and in key stage 1 is good. Leaders recognise the few areas where there is a need for yet further improvement. Outcomes in phonics by the end of Year 1 have been below average over the last few years. Leaders have reorganised the teaching of phonics

and this is bearing fruit; more pupils are set to meet the standard in 2017 than in previous years.

The second area for improvement identified at the last inspection was to raise attendance. The high levels of persistent absence have been stubborn. However, a redoubling of efforts brought about some improvement last year. Rates of absence this term have fallen dramatically for all groups of pupils because of strong leadership and the rigorous application of agreed policies.

The governing body holds you and other leaders to account. Governors are well informed because you provide them with detailed reports on all aspects of the school's work, including pupils' outcomes. This helps governors to ask challenging questions and to check on progress where improvements are needed. Members of the governing body visit the school to question leaders, teachers and pupils and to check for themselves that what you tell them is accurate. The governing body also receives reports from a local authority representative who knows the school well because she also keeps an eye on leadership, teaching and pupils' outcomes. Governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities, including their safeguarding duties.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders and governors have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders are thorough in their recruitment and vetting checks. Staff receive regular, up-to-date training so they know their duties, including for example, what to do if they believe a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation. They carefully report and record any concerns about actual or suspected abuse of any kind. You and other leaders take appropriate action to protect pupils and keep detailed records of communications and decisions, following up to make sure appropriate and timely action is taken. Adults teach pupils how to look after themselves. For example, pupils learn about how to stay safe online, so they know what to do if they come across inappropriate content or are subject to online bullying.

### **Inspection findings**

- You and other leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is because you make careful checks on the quality of teaching, paying close attention to the difference teaching makes to pupils' learning and progress. Leaders take effective action to improve weaker aspects of the school's work and hold teachers to account for pupils' progress. As a result, teaching remains effective and pupils therefore make good progress.
- As a result of effective leadership and teaching, pupils' attainment by the time they leave the school has risen since the last inspection. In three out of the four last years, progress through key stage 2 has been especially strong. Key stage 2 assessment information in 2016 shows that the progress of pupils overall was significantly above average. In reading and mathematics, progress was in the top 10% nationally, including for disadvantaged pupils.

- Over the last few years, pupils who speak English as an additional language have made especially strong progress and they continue to do so. In 2016, the progress of these pupils, including for the increasing number of pupils of Eastern European heritage, was in the top 10% nationally. Consequently, these pupils are well prepared for their secondary school studies. This is because leaders and teachers assess these pupils carefully when they enter the school. Teachers know how to meet the needs of these pupils in everyday lessons. Pupils who enter school with no previous schooling and/or very little English naturally make a slow start, but the systematic approach helps them eventually to fly.
- You are acutely aware of the below average outcomes in phonics by the end of Year 1 over the last few years. Too few pupils who have not reached the required standard by the end of Year 1 have managed to do so by the end of Year 2. However, teachers are making more accurate use of assessment information to group pupils and teach them precisely what they need to know. As a result, more pupils are on target to meet the required standard in 2017.
- The most able pupils overall make good progress. For example, the proportion of pupils in Year 2 last year who reached above average standards, whether from low, middle or high starting points was above the national average. At key stage 2 last year, the proportion of pupils achieving high scores in the tougher 2016 tests was in line with national figures.
- Most children make good progress in the early years. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the time they enter Year 1 has increased year on year, and in 2016 was almost in line with the national average. A number of children who entered school with very little English have been targeted for a specialist talk intervention and consequently have made strong progress in speaking and listening. However, though a few adults intervene well in children's independent play and exploration, a few do not exploit opportunities to develop children's talk through everyday activities, so some pupils do not develop as well as they should.
- Despite above-average numbers of pupils achieving greater depth in their learning by the end of Year 2, there was a small handful of pupils who did not reach the expected standard in reading and writing last year. Further improvements in early years provision and in the teaching of phonics are likely to help those pupils who are behind in their learning to catch up more quickly.
- Over the last several years, too many pupils have been persistently absent and the overall attendance figures have been consistently below the national average. However, attendance improved last year. Since September this year, the rates of persistent absence have fallen dramatically, including for disadvantaged pupils, for whom absence was especially high. This is because the deputy headteacher has reviewed the way adults tackle pupils' absence and has applied policies with greater rigour. Improved communication, incentives for pupils and a tougher approach with parents where needed have been key to improvement.

- Behaviour is good. Pupils of different cultures and backgrounds mix in the playground and play safely together. Pupils are polite and well-mannered, remembering to say 'please', 'thank you' and 'you're welcome'. Adults manage well the few pupils who struggle with their behaviour, helping them to engage with their learning and join in with others.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the proportion of pupils reaching the required standard in phonics rises to at least the national average
- adults interact more effectively with children in the early years to develop their speaking and listening skills
- the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 rises to at least in line with the national average.

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

Yours sincerely

Philip Riozzi  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I came to your school with a few lines of enquiry. I wanted to check that the outcomes for children in the early years represent good progress. I also wanted to look closely at the teaching of phonics, as this has been an area of relatively poor performance for some time. Attendance has also been below average for a number of years so I wanted to check what leaders had done about this and whether their actions were making a difference. Assessment information suggested that pupils who speak English as an additional language make very strong progress, so I was keen to find out what leaders and teachers do to bring this about. Finally, fixed term exclusions were above average in 2015; I therefore wanted to check whether behaviour is good and how effectively the school helps pupils with behavioural difficulties.

We visited a number of classrooms together to observe teaching and learning. Along with the English subject leader, we looked at some pupils' workbooks. I listened to two of the most able and two of the least able pupils read aloud. I questioned pupils about what it is like to be a pupil at the school. I observed pupils as they moved around the school and in the hall at lunchtime. We had several discussions together, some with other school leaders. I met with a few governors. I

looked at a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding. I examined information about pupils' achievement. There were 29 responses to the staff questionnaire, which I analysed. There were too few responses to the online parent survey (Parent View) to analyse. However, I spoke with a number of parents and considered a small number of written responses from parents.