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Mr Paul Gabriel  
Headteacher  
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Lancaster Road  
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Lancashire  
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Dear Mr Gabriel

### **Short inspection of Lancaster Road Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 10 January 2017, 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 June 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your strong leadership provides clear direction for the school. The appointment of the deputy headteacher and the leader of the early years since the last inspection have strengthened the capacity of the leadership team to drive improvement. As a result, the quality of education that pupils receive continues to improve.

Your careful and considered management has minimised any potential for disruption to pupils' learning during the school's transition to becoming a large, three-form entry primary school. The recently completed building programme, including extensive development of outdoor learning spaces, now provides pupils and staff with a well-maintained and excellently resourced environment in which to work and study.

You seize opportunities for development and use them effectively to improve the quality of education that pupils receive. The governors and staff share your high ambitions and together you have been rigorous in tackling the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.

Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved. You have used the opportunities presented by your growing school to recruit additional staff who have the necessary skills required to drive improvement. Carefully targeted training has improved teachers' skills and understanding of the

new curriculum requirements. Teachers' increased opportunities to visit other schools to share practice are effective because you ensure that visits have a clear focus and that their impact is evaluated. As a result, pupils' progress continues to accelerate, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.

Leadership of subjects and age groups, including the early years, has improved strongly since the last inspection. Subject leaders are closely held to account for the impact of their actions by senior leaders and governors. Subject leaders have an accurate understanding of priorities and plan appropriate actions to secure improvement as a result of their frequent and rigorous monitoring. This is particularly the case in reading, where the leader has quickly identified the causes of disappointing results of key stage 2 statutory assessments and made effective changes to address the issue by improving how more complex reading skills are taught. Consequently, work in current pupils' books and school's information about their achievement show that progress in reading is accelerating quickly.

Governors have a detailed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They know about the barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged pupils and the steps taken by leaders to overcome them by using the pupil premium funding through the comprehensive information they receive. Governors recognise that more work is required to ensure that information published on the school website fully meets requirements.

Leaders and governors recognise that some pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, do not attend as regularly as they should. Leaders have taken appropriate actions, including the appointment of a family support worker, to begin to tackle this issue. This has led to a rising trend in attendance. However, this group of pupils' attendance continues to be below the national average.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders and governors have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are secure and are followed meticulously. Statutory checks are carried out on the suitability of staff to work with children. All staff have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding requirements and are vigilant about the risks posed to pupils, including radicalisation and extremism, because of the training and frequent updates they receive.

The school has appropriate monitoring and filtering in place for its internet connection and effective online safety procedures. Consequently, on the rare occasions when concerns about inappropriate use of the internet have been identified, school leaders have been quick and effective in their response.

### **Inspection findings**

- You have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. Your school development plan contains the right priorities for further improvement, including an appropriate focus on improving reading,

particularly in key stage 2, and improving pupils' attendance.

- Leadership of the early years and reading is strong. The appointment of additional teachers to the school has developed the capacity of leadership. Subject leaders regularly attend appropriate training and meetings. As a result, they have high levels of skill and up-to-date knowledge. Subject leaders' robust and incisive monitoring means they have a detailed understanding of what is working well and what needs further improvement. You hold subject leaders closely to account for the impact of their actions.
- Governors share the high expectations and ambitions of leaders. They have good professional skills and insight that they use effectively to monitor closely the work of the school. They often ask probing questions and regularly challenge you to ensure that the school continues to improve. Governors have detailed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school because of the quality of information you and your staff provide. New governors feel well supported because of good-quality training and induction procedures that support them in taking up their roles. Governors have not ensured that the school's website meets requirements relating to information about their attendance at governing body meetings, the school's use of the pupil premium funding and the impact of the additional sports funding.
- You make effective use of the good-quality support and guidance you receive from the local authority's adviser and the other services provided to you by the local authority.
- Teachers and other adults have high expectations of pupils and detailed knowledge of each individual's strengths and areas for development. They use this knowledge well to plan learning. Teachers and other adults use questioning effectively to probe pupils' understanding and develop their abilities to explain confidently the reasoning behind their answers. Regular training, targeted at the key priorities for school improvement, ensures that teachers and other adults have secure and up-to-date subject knowledge. Recent training of teaching assistants in phonics has led to the consistent application of the school's policy and improved the teaching of reading in all key stages.
- Pupils respond well to the good quality of teaching they receive and have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to contribute to their lessons. They are polite, well mannered, and proud of their school.
- The teaching of reading has recently been revised. Reading is taught systematically across the school. Pupils quickly grasp basic reading and comprehension skills. Teachers make effective use of reading opportunities presented in the study of other subjects to support pupils' development of research and comprehension skills. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points on entering the school because of the quality of teaching and the additional support they receive through the effective use of the pupil premium funding. Pupils read frequently and use their well-developed phonics skills to help them read unfamiliar words. Recent development of the school library, the introduction of reading clubs that involve parents and an online reading community all ensure that reluctant readers are given the best support they can to improve their skills.
- Over three quarters of pupils enter the school with levels of development below

those expected for age, particularly in the aspects relating to language and communication. Children make good progress in the early years. By the end of the early years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development is in line with the national average. All groups of pupils, including the most able and those who are disadvantaged, make effective progress across key stage 1 from their starting points. By the time they leave the school, the proportion achieving expected standards is in line with national averages in reading and writing. In the 2016 statutory assessments, a small number of other pupils with middle prior attainment did not make the progress expected of them in reading. Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Pupils' rates of attendance are improving over time but remain below average, particularly for the disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders are aware the reasons for a number of pupils' poor attendance. They are taking appropriate actions to address the low attendance of these pupils, including providing additional support for families using the school's family support worker, while also robustly challenging those parents who do not get their children to school often enough.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- governors increase the rigour with which they check the information published on the school's website to ensure it meets requirements
- attendance rates of pupils rise, particularly for those who are disadvantaged.

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

Yours sincerely

John Nixon  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, senior leaders, teaching staff and governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. I had a telephone conversation with an adviser from the local authority. I spoke with pupils during lessons and around the school. I took account of the information contained within responses to the online questionnaires for parents and staff.

I visited classrooms to observe pupils learning, looked at their work in books and listened to some pupils read. I reviewed information about pupils' progress,

attainment and attendance. I scrutinised the school's self-evaluation and action plans and looked at safeguarding, including evaluating the impact of the school's procedures and policies to keep children safe, recruitment checks and record-keeping.