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Mr David Marshall
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Dear Mr Marshall

Short inspection of Cale Green Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 26 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 October 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 leaders have sustained the position of the school as the heart and hinge of this local community. Your commitment and devotion to the pupils and their parents is valued. Parents trust you and have every confidence that their children are in safe hands, will learn well and make good progress. This inspection supports their view.

The pupils at this school are friendly and upbeat. They are keen and eager to please. This energy and enthusiasm is captured well in the classroom and especially in the early years and key stage 1. What I saw in this part of the school was captivating. Children and pupils purposefully learning and playing. From very low starting points the progress made is fast.

Teaching over time continues to be good. As discussed, the impact is more evident in the early years and key stage 1 because progress is faster. The work in pupils' books shows that learning is not as challenging or as deep in key stage 2. Nonetheless, the proportion of pupils who achieve similar standards to the national average at the end of key stage 2 is better than it ever has been, especially in reading and mathematics. The dip in standards in writing was due to challenges around the application of assessment criteria and you rectified this immediately.

Since the last inspection you have raised the bar with regard to the aspirations and

expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving. This applies to all pupils but to the most able in particular. Everyone is rising to the challenge and standards are continuing to improve. However, the most able pupils are still not achieving as well as they should.

You have maintained the excellent standards in attendance, and your work to ensure that pupils attend school regularly has paid off. For the very few pupils who do not, leaders do all they can to support parents and carers in getting their children back into school. The rates of attendance are similar to the national average, but you are not complacent and want to improve them further.

This lack of complacency is a hallmark of your leadership. You are unyielding in your drive to get things done. Leaders know what needs to be done and how it can be realised. Your systems to monitor, evaluate and plan are probing and are helping to move the school forward all the time.

The treasure in your school is the strong sense of community. Cale Green Primary serves a very diverse area made up of different cultures, ethnicities, languages and religions. At your school, community cohesion is not an initiative from a past era but a living reality. It motivates everyone. As one pupil told me, 'even though we are all different we are treated the same. We are all special and unique.' This has come as a result of hard work and investment in time and resources. Pupils who come to this school are given the skills and confidence they need to be positive contributors to life and society in Britain today.

Governors are proactive and single-minded in the carrying out of their statutory duties and responsibilities. Governors often challenge you, but they do so because they share your passion to do the very best for the pupils. At no time do they lose sight that the core purpose of a school is teaching and learning. Governors' minutes, meetings and discussions are about improving standards and getting even better. For example, the pupil premium funding is spent on specific strategies that are proven to meet the needs of the large number of disadvantaged pupils. The fact that these pupils achieve well is proof that governors ensure value for money.

Safeguarding is effective.

The arrangements, policies, procedures and records are robust and detailed. There is no ambiguity. The checks you carry out on staff's suitability to work with children are thorough and you provide extensive training at least annually.

The information and advice that you provide for parents is current and includes guidance on Snapchat, Instagram and other forms of social media. The pupils told me that they feel safe at school and know what they would do if they were worried or had concerns about themselves or others. Parents support this view.

Inspection findings

- By the end of key stage 2, pupils make faster progress than other pupils nationally in mathematics. The progress made in writing is slower than in reading. Leaders have been aware of this and have implemented strategies to address it, the impact of which can be seen in the information that the school keeps on pupils' learning.
- Phonics is taught effectively and serves pupils well as they learn to read and write. However, the most able pupils are not yet using a full range of advanced skills in reading.
- The most able pupils are not yet given enough opportunities to achieve at a higher level in reading and, especially, in writing. They are given work that challenges their thinking in mathematics and so they make faster progress and attain at a higher standard. Your tracking of pupils' progress over time shows a similar pattern.
- The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development in the early years has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teaching is highly effective and meets the learning and developmental needs of the children very well. This is sustained into key stage 1, as can be seen by the standards reached in the national phonics check and end of key stage 1 assessments.
- Teaching continues to be good and leaders use a variety of sources to inform their view on the quality and impact of teaching. This evidence, alongside inspection activities, indicates that teaching is not as strong in key stage 2 as it is in early years and key stage 1.
- Rates of attendance have been similar to the national average in previous years but is now higher. It had been lower for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities but there were significant circumstances as to why this was the case. The work that leaders undertake to ensure good attendance is extensive and thorough.
- Although not a focus of this short inspection, the quality of cohesion in this school between the different faiths, cultures, languages and ethnicities is tremendous. The work of the bilingual teaching assistants is instrumental in involving parents in the life of the school and their children's learning.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the fast progress made in the early years and key stage 1, as a result of highly effective teaching, is sustained as pupils move through key stage 2
- the strategies in place to raise the achievement of the most able pupils are further embedded.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this short inspection, I met with you, senior leaders, four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Along with you and members of your leadership team, we conducted a learning walk and visited all classes and had the opportunity to speak to pupils and see their work. I also listened to a number of pupils read. As part of the inspection, I checked that all the welfare requirements were being met in your Nursery provision. I met with a group of pupils throughout the day, spoke with more than 20 parents at the school gates and took account of 31 free-text comments. There were 51 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents, 14 responses to the online staff questionnaire and 14 responses to the pupil questionnaire. I scrutinised your assessment information, school improvement planning, attendance data, risk assessments, the single central record and other safeguarding procedures and practices.