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Mrs Sue Preston
Headteacher
Clifford CofE Infant School
108 Psalter Lane
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
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Dear Mrs Preston

Short inspection of Clifford C of E Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 19 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 2012.

This school continues to be good.

You have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have nurtured a dedicated and hard-working teaching staff. Teaching over time is very effective, resulting in the high attainment of the vast majority of pupils in the school. By the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment has been well above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics for the last four years. Between early years and key stage 1, pupils made better progress than that seen nationally. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been above national averages for the last three years.

Since the previous inspection, you have taken effective action to improve teaching in mathematics. You have introduced a new way of teaching the subject which is very effective in supporting pupils to regularly practice their mental and calculation skills. Teachers plan sequences of learning that really help pupils to embed new knowledge in mathematics. Teachers' secure subject knowledge is supporting them in the precise delivery of the mathematics curriculum, so that pupils are making strong progress in this area of the curriculum.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured effective safeguarding procedures are in place in school. You and your staff are appropriately trained to spot pupils at risk of radicalisation and those in danger of harm. However, some risk assessments of pupils' activities, including in

the early years, lack detail and are not sufficiently adapted to reflect specific risks that pupils meet within the school.

Attendance overall is above national averages. Last year the persistent absence of some of the more vulnerable pupils was of concern. There has been some improvement in this area due to actions taken by you to support pupils in coming to school more frequently.

Inspection findings

- You are a teaching headteacher and as such, know every child in school extremely well. You demonstrate passion and dedication, and care deeply for the pupils and staff in school. As the only senior leader, you are challenged to meet the heavy demands of monitoring all aspects of school life and are still developing middle leaders so they can support you more effectively. You have successfully maintained a focus on the progress of individual pupils, leading to many pupils attaining high levels. However, there is insufficiently precise evaluation of some areas of the school's work and analysis of the progress of groups of pupils has been overlooked.
- Not all required information is present on your website. Omissions include explanations about the impact of funding for those pupils for whom the school received the pupil premium and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Going forward, your governors are well prepared to challenge and support you – they are committed to ensuring 'no child is left behind'. The new chair of the governing body is particularly well equipped to question you on financial matters as well as on assessment information.
- Teachers keep a wealth of information on individual pupils and plan additional teaching for those who have not made enough progress. Staff respond swiftly to support all pupils, including boys and disadvantaged pupils, to try and help them understand and prevent gaps in learning occurring. This method has been particularly effective for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Although these pupils are working below levels expected for their age, they are making progress in line with other pupils with similar starting points.
- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge above that typically seen for their age. Secure teaching in the Reception class ensures children make at least typical, and in some cases, rapid progress. By the end of Reception, children are very well prepared to take on the challenges of Year 1. Teachers plan to meet the needs of individual children, taking care to amend resources and activities so that those who have not securely acquired new skills can have further practice. The early years teacher is a reflective practitioner who uses research to inform her practice. This has resulted in improved outcomes over time, so that very high proportions of children are now attaining a good level of development.
- Currently, almost all disadvantaged pupils are making secure progress. Pupil premium funding has thus far been spent on providing additional teaching within school and resources for pupils to enable them to read and write more frequently

at home, but the impact of this is unclear.

- The teaching of reading is effective for the vast majority of pupils. They read regularly and are given challenging texts. The most able pupils write extremely well, using accurate punctuation and spelling that is advanced for their age.
- Pupils are articulate, talkative and happy in school. They value the many opportunities they have to take part in extra-curricular clubs and activities. Theatre company visits to school and trips out to places such as Bolsover Castle ignite pupils' interests and add to their enjoyment of coming to school. Pupils take part in a wide range of activities that develop their confidence and skills, with before and after school clubs, running, football, art, cheerleading and choir, among other events all forming part of the menu.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- a more cohesive cycle of monitoring and evaluation of the school's work is put into place that leads in turn to more precise actions to deliver improvement
- leadership at all levels is further developed so that leaders, in addition to the headteacher, can take responsibility for driving improvement
- all statutory information is on the school website, including the impact of funding on disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- more precise risk assessments underpin safe practices in school.

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

Yours sincerely

Lesley Butcher
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this one day inspection I was able to discuss the work of the school with you and your staff. We visited classrooms together to observe teaching and learning. I was able to look at pupils' work in books and to speak with pupils throughout the day. I heard pupils read. Discussions with a representative of Learn Sheffield and three members of the governing body helped to provide me with additional information. School documentation, assessment information, policies and information posted on the school website were also taken into account. I looked at

letters from parents and the online questionnaire (Parent View) to gather 30 parents' views about the school. There were no responses to the Ofsted staff or pupil online questionnaires. My main areas of focus during the inspection included checking, what leaders have done to improve the quality of teaching across the school, including in the early years. I looked at how well they have raised pupils' attainment in mathematics and the effectiveness of teaching to support all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.