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Miss Dianne Rowbotham
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Rowbotham

Short inspection of Swain House Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 24 January 2017 with Julia Norton Foulger, Her Majesty's Inspector, 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 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 the governors are enthusiastic ambassadors for the school and its pupils. You have high expectations for good manners and respectful behaviour in the school. As a result, relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils are friendly and respectful. The learning environment in the school is bright and stimulating. The vast majority of the parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were positive about the school. Parents value the way you lead the school. All of the parents who responded would recommend the school to another parent. Pupils feel happy and safe.

You were rightly disappointed in the key stage 1 outcomes and the key stage 2 outcomes in reading and mathematics in 2016. However, you have carefully analysed the reasons for these outcomes and you and your leadership team are driving improvement through appropriate actions to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the outcomes for pupils. The positive impact of these actions can be seen in the progress information for current pupils. The work you have done to improve writing at key stage 2 led to outcomes in writing in 2016 which were significantly above the national average, including for disadvantaged pupils.

Since the last inspection you have added provision for two-year-olds to your early years setting. You have provided a stimulating environment for the two-year-olds

whose learning is encouraged by staff following children's interests, for example in mixing coloured paints and learning about dinosaurs. Across the early years children are making good progress because of high-quality interactions between adults and children. Children behave well and engage in the activities which develop their reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the early years has increased over a three-year period and was in line with the national average in 2016.

At the last inspection you were asked to improve the planning for learning to more closely match pupils' needs. Work for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well matched to their needs and these pupils are well supported by adults in the classroom and in the resourced provision for deaf and hearing impaired pupils (the ARC). As a result, these pupils are making good progress. In writing lessons work often provides challenge to all pupils, including the most able. However, in mathematics lessons the most able pupils are insufficiently challenged to really deepen their understanding and sometimes repeat a lot of the same type of questions, getting them all right. In the response to the pupils' online questionnaire 40% of pupils thought their work was sometimes too easy.

You were also asked at the last inspection to accelerate progress in mathematics and improve problem solving. You recognised that the mathematics curriculum was not helping pupils to develop their mathematical skills at a fast enough rate. You changed the mathematics curriculum a year ago and, as a result, gaps in pupils' knowledge are being filled. Pupils now enjoy regular opportunities for problem solving and were seen during the inspection working enthusiastically in groups to unpick difficult problems and explain the method to each other.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are meticulously kept. Records of the checks on adults working in the school are exemplary. Staff training is up to date. All of the staff have been trained to understand child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation and, consequently, have a good understanding of the risks to children. Staff have also had the 'Prevent' duty training and, as a result, are able to recognise the signs of radicalisation and extremism.

Your team of designated safeguarding persons are well trained and fully understand their roles. You and the team know the pupils and families in the school very well. The school communicates effectively with parents and other agencies to help safeguard children, including the police and social services. Consequently, causes for concern are reported quickly and appropriately. You make sure that cases are responded to in a timely way by other agencies.

You and the governing body have considered the risks associated with the premises and have detailed risk assessments. Leaders ensure that children are safe on the site as a result of high levels of supervision on the playground and in the school. Staff and pupils agree that the school is a safe place.

Inspection findings

- The senior leadership team are dynamic and driven by a strong desire to improve the outcomes for pupils in the school. Leaders speak in one voice as they describe the actions they have taken to address the disappointing results in 2016. They are monitoring the progress of pupils in detail to ensure the impact of the actions they are taking. The governors hold senior leaders to account rigorously for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' progress in their area of the school. Senior leaders are similarly rigorous in holding teachers to account for the progress of their pupils. Consequently, leadership has strengthened.
- You and senior leaders use monitoring and evaluation effectively to gather evidence of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. For example, following the key stage 1 outcomes in 2016 you have identified which pupils in Year 3 need to make accelerated progress. As a result of well-planned and carefully monitored interventions, these pupils are now making better progress. The teaching of small groups of pupils who need extra help is a strength of the provision for pupils who need to catch up, including boys and disadvantaged pupils. These pupils are thoroughly engaged and enjoying their learning in English and mathematics.
- Following the key stage 2 results in 2016, you have reviewed and developed the teaching of reading to positive effect. Readers listened to during the inspection read fluently and were able to decode new words using their phonics skills. More frequent work on comprehension in lessons, and more reference to materials similar to the end of key stage reading tests, are helping pupils to gain the reading skills they need to be successful at the end of key stages 1 and 2. As a result, progress in reading has improved. The proportion of pupils reaching the required standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 in 2016 rose and was in line with the national average. Almost all pupils reached the standard in phonics by the end of Year 2 in 2016.
- You have focused on improving pupils' progress in mathematics. You have built a team of teachers to lead on mathematics in the school. Four members of staff have been trained to become accredited mathematics specialist teachers and have shared their learning with other teachers. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics is improving. In 2016, too few disadvantaged pupils and most-able pupils made the progress they should have in mathematics. Your new curriculum, including the challenges pupils undertake and the mathematics passports for mental arithmetic, are having a positive impact on pupils' progress in mathematics. There is a strong focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, but there is not a similarly robust focus on the most able pupils.
- You have worked hard to improve attendance and punctuality. The importance of good attendance is evident in the displays around the school. As a result, after a dip in attendance at the start of 2016, attendance is now in line with the national average. There has been a significant reduction in the number of pupils arriving late to school. You acknowledge that the school needs to continue the drive to maintain good attendance, particularly for those who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics lessons continues to improve, leading to better outcomes across the school
- the most able pupils are appropriately challenged by their learning, particularly in mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Lane
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection inspectors met with you, senior leaders, other staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and a range of documents provided by the school, including safeguarding information, risk assessments, minutes of governing body meetings and the school's self-evaluation document. An inspector listened to pupils read. The inspection team made short visits to see pupils learning in all classes in the school. You and I visited key stage 2 lessons together. Inspectors took account of the responses to Parent View, and staff and pupil questionnaires.