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2 February 2017

Mrs Lisa Armstrong  
Stanley Burnside Primary School  
Mendip Terrace  
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Stanley  
County Durham  
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Dear Mrs Armstrong

### **Short inspection of Stanley Burnside Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 17 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 May 2012.

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

Since the last inspection, you have provided very strong leadership, which has ensured that the continued development of the school and improved outcomes for pupils. Along with the deputy headteacher and other school leaders, you have accurately identified the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Your insightful school evaluation links well to the development plan to drive further improvement. The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You, your staff and governors have a good understanding of the community that you serve. You work hard to ensure that your school provides an inclusive, safe and friendly environment. As a result, pupils grow in confidence, establish good learning behaviours and develop pride in their achievements. At the same time, you and your staff set high expectations and seek to help all pupils achieve the very best outcomes. Your determined approach to consider new ways to capture pupils' interest in learning and improve the impact of teaching means that you continue to increase pupils' progress from their starting points.

The school has successfully tackled the two areas identified for improvement at the previous inspection. Firstly, a range of carefully thought-through approaches has helped to engage more parents and carers with their children's learning. For example, the 'watch me learn' sessions have provided parents with opportunities to see pupils' learning in action and gain a practical understanding of how pupils are taught a range of subjects. Your determined approach to improving the number of

parents who are attending parents' evenings has had a positive impact, with increasing levels of attendance at parents' evenings. While there were not enough responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View, to review parents' views, your own recent survey of parents shows high levels of parent satisfaction with the school.

You have also tackled the second area to address, improving the quality of teaching. Staff work hard to ensure that pupils understand what they are learning about and how to improve the quality of their work. This is because leaders have provided clear guidance of their expectations and regularly check that staff meet these consistently. The teaching of phonics has improved substantially. Training for staff has enhanced their skills and developed consistency of approaches across the school. Pupils make better progress because lessons are well matched to their needs. As a result, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has improved. This placed the school's phonics results above the national average in 2016.

Your review of 2016 pupils' outcomes and pupil attainment information for current pupils has accurately identified the need to increase the proportions of the most-able key stage 1 pupils who are working at greater depth in reading and writing. You and the subject leader for English have taken prompt action to address this area for improvement. Regular checks are taking place to measure the impact of these actions on pupils' outcomes.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You, your staff and governors give the highest priority to keeping pupils safe. Leaders carry out appropriate checks on all staff, governors and volunteers. The updated safeguarding policy meets current requirements and all staff understand the procedures and their own responsibilities. Staff and governors receive regular and appropriate training so they know how to keep pupils safe, including training about how to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism. Leaders manage referrals to other agencies effectively and the headteacher has a determined and resolute approach to following up any safeguarding cases.

Pupils are well taught about how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. They have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take and know that staff will help them if they ever have concerns. They also value the pupil mediators, who they know will provide them with peer support. Pupils say incidents of bullying are rare in their school. The school's records show that incidents of misbehaviour and bullying are infrequent and that the staff quickly address these.

### **Inspection findings**

- You work well with other leaders to identify where the school needs to develop further and you take prompt action to address priorities. Your relentless focus of ensuring that pupils grasp key basic skills in English and mathematics and apply

these in meaningful contexts is having a positive impact. Most pupils make at least good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils' outcomes are improving by the end of early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2. You recognise that there is more work to do to increase the proportions of key stage 1 pupils who are working at greater depth. Furthermore, while key stage 2 pupils' progress in writing is similar to that found nationally, it is not yet as strong as the very good progress that pupils make in reading and mathematics. You and your staff are working hard to address this.

- The subject leader for English has taken a wide range of actions to accelerate pupils' progress in reading and writing. For example, pupils talk enthusiastically about reading regularly and their successes completing online comprehension tests. The range of approaches to improve writing is wide and varied and leaders have reviewed pupils' views of what motivates them to write.
- As a result, pupils' outcomes in English are improving. Test results for pupils' knowledge of phonics are now above the national average, at the end of both Year 1 and Year 2. By the end of key stage 1, the overall proportions of pupils reaching the expected levels in reading and writing are similar to that found nationally. Results in grammar, punctuation and spelling assessments for Year 6 pupils in 2016 were above the national average. However, key stage 2 pupils' progress in writing remains broadly in line with the national average. Analysis of current pupils' progress information shows that your actions are improving the proportion of pupils working at greater depth in reading and writing in key stage 1 and in reading in key stage 2. However, you recognise that there is still more to do in increasing the number of pupils who are working at a greater depth so that this at least matches the national average.
- The subject leader for mathematics has a good understanding of the priorities for improvement. The school's analysis of the 2016 Year 6 mathematics results identified that while pupils demonstrated strong arithmetic skills, an area for development was their ability to apply reasoning skills. The subject leader for mathematics has provided training to address this and has checked to ensure that staff are using this development to improve their teaching. Progress information indicates that a greater number of pupils currently in Year 6 will attain higher standards in mathematics at the end of the year.
- The proportion of children, including disadvantaged children, achieving a good level of development in early years has improved over the last three years. This is because you and your governors have ensured strong teaching and additional resources to improve provision. As a result, more pupils are well prepared to start Year 1 than has been the case in the past.
- The previous inspection report identified a particular school strength as the positive impact it has on developing pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare. The school has maintained this strength. Pupils' attendance levels are high because they enjoy coming to school and recognise the benefits it brings. They know that staff care about their welfare and understand that good behaviour is recognised and rewarded. During the inspection, pupils were very polite, keen to share their learning and displayed good manners.
- The recently appointed chair of the governing body has a good understanding of the community served by the school. He also has a broad understanding of the

school's strengths and priorities. While the governing body minutes indicate that governors provide good support to the school, the evidence of challenge to leaders is more limited. Governors recognise that there is room for developing their strategic impact and have recently commissioned a review of governance.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the plans to further increase the number of pupils, particularly most-able pupils, working at greater depth in reading and writing are implemented and checked for impact
- the recently commissioned governance review is completed and used to develop further the strategic role of governors so that they provide leaders with a balance of support and challenge.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Reeves  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this one-day inspection, I discussed the work of the school with you, the deputy headteacher and the subject leaders for English and mathematics. I talked with pupils about what it feels like to be a member of the school community. I held discussions with your education development partner and with the chair of the governing body, who were both able to provide me with additional information. I also took into account school documentation, assessment information, policies and information posted on the school website. I considered the eight free text responses to Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, and the results of the school's own recent parent survey. Alongside you, I visited six classes to observe teaching and learning, during which time I listened to pupils from a range of abilities read. Together with you and the deputy headteacher, I looked at pupils' work in books to help evaluate the quality of teaching and learning over time. I reviewed behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding.

This inspection particularly focused upon the following aspects of the school's work:

- the effectiveness of the leadership arrangements in the school, including the impact of actions to address the areas for improvement in the previous inspection report
- the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in reading and writing, and

current pupils' progress in these subjects

- the impact of the school's actions to improve the proportions of pupils achieving the higher standard in mathematics by the end of Year 6
- the impact of actions taken by leaders and staff to improve children's outcomes in the early years.