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Mrs Sue Oakes
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Oakes

Short inspection of Todwick Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 February 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 November 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained and improved upon the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your deputy headteacher, who took up her post in September 2014, make a strong leadership team.

Since September 2016, you have strengthened further this leadership team by moving middle leaders to new senior leadership roles. These new leaders have quickly become instrumental in continuing the rate of improvement since the last inspection. You and your team have tackled areas of development that were raised at the last inspection, such as improving the learning of phonics and better meeting the needs of the most able pupils. This you have done well.

You have ensured that leadership in your school is working at all levels, with all teaching and non-teaching staff taking important and very active parts in different roles around the school. This strong leadership model means that the school vision of 'be the best that we can be', is wholeheartedly shared by all staff in school. You have created a cohesive team which ensures that teachers and teaching assistants have regular opportunities to learn from each other and from staff in other schools. This very open approach to sharing means that the different skills of teaching staff can complement each other to promote better learning.

Since the last inspection, you have implemented a new curriculum and approach to delivering this curriculum. You and your team make sure that learning for pupils is

active and exciting. You have placed an emphasis on learning outside. This is particularly successful with the creation of the forest school and in improvements in the outside environment in the early years. Resources and classroom environments are generally of an extremely high quality. This high quality does not yet extend to current reading materials available in school.

Governors are well informed about all aspects of school life. They have a range of skills that they use extremely well to benefit the school's development and improvement. Governors go to great lengths to ensure that they have an accurate picture of what is happening in school through activities such as detailed analyses of pupils' progress information and regularly interviewing pupils to gain their opinions. They use all the information they receive to challenge and support the school to ensure that improvements are continuous.

Pupils joining the school talk of how easy it is to settle in, as everybody is friendly and welcoming. Pupils know that behaviour is good and learning is rarely interrupted by disruptive behaviour. Pupils move around the school in a calm and relaxed manner and are extremely polite and courteous to those they meet. Adults in school act as excellent role models for pupils, instilling the need for kindness and respectfulness to all they meet and accepting and welcoming difference. As with all aspects of learning in school, pupils develop life skills through extra-curricular experiences, for example taking on the responsibility for the care and nurture of chickens which they have had since incubating the eggs. Pupils enjoy and want to come to school and parents and carers recognise the importance of regular attendance and supporting the school in instilling high standards of behaviour. Consequently, rates of attendance are consistently high. Any minor incidents of inappropriate behaviour are logged but not always as carefully as they could be.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils I spoke to said they feel safe. Adults take great care when considering pupil safety. All staff are well trained on a regular basis. As the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) you and your deputy attend regular training, including termly forums held by the local authority. You then cascade this information to all staff through a regular training schedule. You and your deputy feel well supported by the local authority, who are readily available for advice and guidance. Your staff are aware that any concerns, however minor, regarding pupil welfare should be reported; as DSL, you ensure that these records are detailed and of high quality. However, records of minor incidents are not documented with such rigour. Governors and staff, such as the caretaker, make good use of the skills they have in areas such as health and safety to support safeguarding pupils' welfare and ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Governors raise safeguarding as an agenda item at every half-termly full governors' meeting. This means that any relevant information is shared, and if appropriate, acted upon.

Pupils take an active part in being responsible for their own safety and the safety of their peers. Pupil ambassadors, in the form of cadets, are trained on such aspects as road safety and e-safety. They then share this information with others in

assemblies and lessons to help keep them safe.

Inspection findings

- Teachers plan lessons so that learning is exciting, and pupils talk about how much fun they have in lessons. You and your team have embedded well the ethos that learning should be active and stimulating. The caretaker created life-size cages in classrooms, which promote interest and debate about, for example, keeping animals in zoos.
- Pupils' progress and skills learned in art are strong and help stimulate learning in other subjects as well as enhancing the learning environment. Pupils create exceedingly high-quality pieces of art work, such as enormous Chinese dragons that hang from the ceilings, as well as rock pools and Robin Hood hats.
- You and your team ensure that pupils' learning is enhanced by extra-curricular activities. For example, through Project Ability they, with pupils from different schools with a range of needs and abilities, take part in activities which challenge them, such as a mile a day, girl power day and the Kielder Challenge.
- Pupils read well and the improving outcomes, for example, in the phonics check is a testament to the impact of your strategies. However, pupils have identified that some reading material is outdated, too gender specific and not age and ability appropriate. Following a review of resources, leaders are now aware of the need to make more appropriate reading material available; however, this is not happening fast enough to meet pupils' needs.
- You and your team have addressed the decline in standards seen in key stage 1 in 2016. A number of strategies such as extra teaching support, activities to help pupils catch up and more rigorous monitoring, have meant that these pupils are now beginning to make better progress.
- Your careful monitoring has enabled you to identify and tackle the declining attainment in reading and mathematics in the early years. Your team reviewed the learning environment, received extra guidance from the local authority and from other teachers in school, as well as from teachers in your learning community schools. Pupils' learning is beginning to strengthen in these areas and now needs to be sustained.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- reading resources are made available to pupils that more closely match their needs, so that pupils of all abilities and genders have access to more stimulating, appropriate and current reading materials
- there is more rigour in the recording of minor behavioural incidents, such as dates, times and where incidents have occurred, so that antecedents, patterns and trends can be more easily identified and monitored.

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

Yours sincerely

Jo Sharpe
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your senior leadership team. I met with members of the governing body including the chair and a representative of the local authority. I also took into account school documentation, assessment information, policies and information posted on the school website. I also met with pupils throughout the day, both informally and formally, and heard pupils read. Fifty-four responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire were considered. We visited classes together and looked at some books and spoke to pupils to consider the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Behaviour was observed throughout the day including lunchtime. A range of documentation was scrutinised including that relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in school.