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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Lucy Campbell
Headteacher
Woodplumpton St Anne's CofE Primary School
Woodplumpton Road
Woodplumpton
Preston
Lancashire
PR4 0NE

Dear Mrs Campbell

Short inspection of Woodplumpton St Anne's CofE Primary School

Following my visit on 2 March 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 January 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education since the last inspection. Since your appointment, you have made significant changes at the school in a short space of time. Prior to your arrival, the new curriculum had not previously been implemented as well as it could have. It is now more structured and the benefits of this are evident in the improved rates of progress evident in pupils' work. You have established a strong senior leadership team with your highly effective assistant headteacher and this has been essential in establishing an unfailing focus on outcomes for pupils across the school.

Ambition is seeping into the school's culture. Middle leaders are enthusiastic about the support and development that they receive for their roles. Their accurate monitoring is driving improvements and there is a sense of purpose about the school. Governors are constantly seeking to improve the school's provision and leaders are aware of the school's strengths and aspects to improve.

Pupils value the changes that have been brought into their learning and they are very positive about the education they receive. They comment favourably on the engaging tasks and they enjoy all aspects of their learning. Classrooms are bright and welcoming and visitors to the school are greeted with a range of trophies which celebrate the school's sporting prowess. Pupils are proud to be part of their school.

At the last inspection, the school was asked to improve pupils' independent learning skills in writing and to make sure that older pupils took more care with their spelling and punctuation. Actions taken against these areas have been successful in

improving the quality of pupils' writing. The spelling in pupils' writing is more accurate and punctuation is used precisely. We agreed that pupils have greater opportunities to work independently and that this has improved since the last inspection. However, with the introduction of the new curriculum, it was also agreed that challenge for some of the most able and most able disadvantaged pupils in writing would be the next step for the school to improve. We also agreed that the quality of pupils' presentation in their written work was found to be inconsistent, particularly that of the boys. In science, we agreed that the development of pupils' investigative skills would enable them to make even better progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership of safeguarding is a strength of the school. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Processes are kept under continual review so that they are relevant to the school context and pupils within the school. Staff have a very good awareness of up-to-date guidance and are vigilant. The pupils I spoke to resoundingly agreed that they feel safe and that they are happy to come to school. The results of Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, show that parents agree. Governors have undertaken appropriate training for the recruitment of staff and the record of checks done on new staff is exemplary.

Inspection findings

- The first key line of enquiry for this inspection focused on the challenge that the most able pupils receive in their learning when writing. In response to the last inspection's recommendations for improvement, pupils work with an increasing degree of independence from the earliest years. I observed pupils in Reception and Year 1 challenging themselves to answer difficult questions. Staff use carefully phrased questions to challenge pupils and to promote their confidence in working unaided. Well-planned, imaginative tasks ensure that pupils are engaged in their writing. Pupils say that they enjoy writing because of the imagination and creativity that they can then use in their work. There are good opportunities for cross-curricular writing. Progress is improving, as seen in school assessments which accurately reflect the work in pupils' books. However, some of the most able pupils felt that they could be challenged more and the work in their books supports these views. Pupils' use of spelling and punctuation has improved since the last inspection. However, the quality of handwriting varies, particularly that of boys. They are, at times, in a rush to complete the tasks they are given at the expense of the neatness of their work.
- A focus on teaching phonics revealed that pupils respond well to teachers' questions and engaging tasks. Activities capture pupils' interest. For example, Reception children enjoyed a game of musical chairs which involved sounding out the words on the chairs. It was clear that they found their learning fun. Pupils' progress is improving because of this high level of involvement. The pitch of lessons suited the vast majority of pupils and lessons sustained pupils' interest and extended their knowledge of the sounds they learn. By Year 2, pupils apply their knowledge of sounds to be able to read texts with fluency. By the end of

Year 6, pupils are reading texts of greater complexity with expression and a good understanding of what they have read. More importantly, they persevere with difficult words and use a range of strategies to work out their meaning.

- By the end of key stage 1 and the end of key stage 2, all pupils reach the expected standard in science. This is due to the strong promotion of pupils' scientific knowledge. There are examples of scientific investigations in pupils' books and they know how to conduct fair tests. However, the work in books is very similar for different ability groups. The new subject leader is highly effective and has started to address this with staff in a very short space of time. Her accurate monitoring of the subject has identified that pupils could be provided with a wider range of opportunities to conduct experiments by following their own lines of enquiry and achieve even higher standards.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' presentation of their written work, particularly that of the boys, improves to at least match the expectation for their year group
- teaching consistently challenges the most able pupils and the most able disadvantaged pupils to reach the highest standards in their writing
- pupils are encouraged to follow their own lines of enquiry when conducting scientific experiments.

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

Yours sincerely

Steve Bentham
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

- I met with leaders and governors to discuss safeguarding and aspects of school leadership and management.
- I visited all classes along with the headteacher, and spoke to pupils informally during lessons about their work.
- I heard a small sample of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils read.
- I reviewed safeguarding documentation, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- I discussed a wide range of topics about school provision with pupils, both

formally and informally.

- I watched pupils at playtime and reviewed safeguarding arrangements.
- I conducted scrutiny of key stage 2 pupils' books in writing and science.
- I reviewed documentation which included the monitoring of teaching and learning, governors' minutes, the school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and the school development plan.
- 14 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were received.