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Ms Julie Jenkins
Headteacher
Northfield Primary and Nursery School
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Dear Ms Jenkins

Short inspection of Northfield Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 15 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 February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

This is a school that enacts its core values of 'developing children mentally, spiritually and physically in preparation for the experiences, opportunities and responsibilities of life'. Pupils and staff alike were pleased to show me what they were doing, reflecting a clear and shared sense of pride in their school community. You are successfully creating a culture where all staff are working together with a shared vision to provide the very best for every pupil. As a result, pupils are ambitious, enthusiastic and confident learners.

Areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been effectively tackled. You were able to explain clearly to me the many strengths of the school, as well as the areas that still need to be developed. You and other senior leaders have evaluated the school accurately and have the capacity to make improvements successfully. Clear school improvement plans accurately identify the areas where more work is needed and you are tackling these effectively. You are rightly aspiring to become an outstanding school and are making strides in this direction.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school which is woven through all

aspects of the school's work. The single central record indicates that all required checks are made to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. You ensure that staff receive the appropriate training, including training relating to protecting pupils from extremism and radicalisation. All the staff I spoke with understood the basic principles of child protection. As a result, they are vigilant and well aware of the actions they need to take if they think a child protection issue has arisen.

Pupils are taught effectively about everyday risks and how to manage these in a sensible way. Pupils who I spoke to said that they felt safe in all parts of the school. They told me that any rare instances of bullying or name-calling are dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils understand the behaviour policy and say that teachers use this fairly and consistently, so that there are very few disruptions to lessons. Pupils are alert to the dangers of using the internet and social media. Parents confirm that their children are safe, happy and well at school.

Inspection findings

- You are providing strong, enthusiastic and effective leadership. You are well supported by capable and ambitious senior leaders and, together, you are continually and successfully improving outcomes. As a result, pupils are making good progress and enjoy learning together.
- Governors are a keen, committed and effective team who know the school well and provide appropriate support and challenge to you and your senior team. Their sharp focus on impact and meeting the agreed targets in the school improvement plan ensure that they hold you and other senior leaders rigorously to account.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are very well developed. This is reflected in their positive attitudes to learning and the respect and care they show to each other. Pupils enjoy participating in the performing arts, particularly in music. The school choir recently represented the school at the 'Young Voices' concert at the Sheffield Arena with great success.
- Pupils excel in writing. Writing is embedded throughout the curriculum and pupils display high levels of confidence in writing for a variety of purposes. Pupils' work shows that they are provided with a good range of stimuli for writing. They use their technical skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation correctly and know how to apply the features of good writing across different genres. Pupils' handwriting and presentation is neat and of a very high standard. Almost one third of pupils were working at greater depth in the writing assessment at the end of key stage 2 in 2016.
- Teaching is successful in helping pupils to develop a love of reading. Reading has a high profile around the school and pupils enjoy many opportunities to become familiar with different types of texts. However, reading standards at the end of key stage 2 are below those in writing, particularly for boys and disadvantaged pupils. You have rightly identified that teachers need to focus more on developing pupils' inference skills from text to develop their comprehension skills at key stage 2.

- Children in the early years enjoy a very positive start to school life. The early years environment is bright, happy and welcoming. Children play and learn well together and quickly develop independence and gain confidence. Children in one Reception class demonstrated excellent knowledge of their number bonds to eight and could find the inverse, displaying obvious delight at their success!
- Leaders at all levels are uncompromising in their commitment to improving the life chances for disadvantaged pupils. Disadvantaged pupils are generally supported well to make good progress. This is evident in the outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2, which demonstrate that you have been successful in your drive to narrow the gap in attainment for these pupils. You acknowledge, however, that at key stage 2, the gaps are not closing as quickly for some of those pupils. As a result, they are not reaching the standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour around school are good. In lessons, pupils sustain good concentration and try hard with their work. In the playground at breaktimes and lunchtimes, pupils' behaviour is calm and considerate. Their conduct reflects the school's effective strategies to promote high standards of behaviour.
- Pupils' active involvement in the life of the school through the pupil parliament contributes strongly to their mature attitudes, high levels of confidence and sense of responsibility.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and hold you in very high regard. Parents value the high standards of care, support and guidance which the school provides to pupils and their families. One parent said, reflecting the views of many, 'I think this school gives children a great start to life.'

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils reach as high standards in reading as they do in writing, particularly boys and those who are disadvantaged
- they continue to extend strategies to enable all disadvantaged pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.

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

Yours sincerely

Dorothy Bathgate
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and the deputy headteacher, the English subject leader, two representatives of the governing body and a group of pupils. We visited several classes together to see pupils and staff at work. I observed pupils' behaviour around the school, at breaktimes and during lessons. I met a number of parents informally at the beginning of the school day and considered the views of 27 parents posted on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I considered 29 staff questionnaires. I evaluated a range of documents, including safeguarding records and policies.