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Mr P Berry
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Dear Mr Berry

Short inspection of Great Moor Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 21 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 June 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of what the school does for their children and for them. They all say that their children are taught well and staff know their children as individuals and take good care of them. The school is a calm and happy place where staff help pupils to develop well academically and personally. There is a buzz of activity in classrooms as pupils go about their learning, help each other and contribute to the life of the school. Pupils benefit from a curriculum that is greatly enriched by visits, visitors and a wide range of clubs at lunchtimes and after school. These add to pupils' personal development and their enjoyment of learning, and provide them with many memorable experiences.

The previous inspection report suggested ways to improve teaching by making sure that teachers used assessment information in their planning and to determine the next steps in pupils' learning. It also asked that teachers give pupils time to improve their work and that they manage and use teaching assistants more effectively. When we visited classes together, and when I checked pupils' books and talked with pupils, it was clear that pupils know what they are learning and understand the feedback they are given. They talk knowledgeably about age-related expectations, what they need to do to achieve them, and how they know they are on the way to doing so. Teaching assistants are now briefed well and used effectively to support pupils' learning.

The previous inspection report also asked governors to monitor school improvement

more rigorously and to evaluate the impact of what the school does more sharply. The governing body has been completely restructured. Governors now provide a good level of challenge for school leaders. They can do so because they attend training, visit the school regularly and receive reports from the headteacher or subject leaders.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your leadership team ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are met and they are fit for purpose. Staff and governors have completed all relevant training. Recruiting and vetting procedures are thorough and records are systematically maintained. The safeguarding of all pupils is paramount to staff and is an integral part of school life. For example, there is a dedicated timeslot during the weekly staff meetings to discuss any safeguarding issues and highlight those pupils who might require extra support. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They say that they can turn to any adult for help, and particularly their teacher. They also say that adults listen to them and make them 'feel comfortable again'. Pupils are very clear about how to keep safe when using the internet. They also know how to deal with what they describe as 'nasty texts' and other unsuitable materials.

All parents who spoke with me, and almost all who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, reported that their children are happy at school and feel that they are looked after well. They said that the school is a happy place, and that children 'skip into school' in the morning because they want to be there.

We discussed the level of support you provide for pupils who find it difficult to learn, to manage their own behaviour or to conform to school routines. I found that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds get on well together. I was impressed by their understanding of British values, and the help and support they give each other in and out of lessons.

Inspection findings

- You explained that the school had been disappointed with the 2016 national test results in mathematics for pupils in Year 6, particularly girls. My first line of enquiry was to explore how you had responded to this outcome. You provided evidence to show that the apparent issue with girls was specific to that year group, and not ongoing. You had swiftly analysed the test results and found that several pupils had not finished the paper because they took too long over some calculations, and that there were gaps in their reasoning skills. You acted quickly to address these issues through, for example, opportunities for staff to visit other schools to see good practice. You also provided training for teachers and teaching assistants to raise their confidence in teaching the new mathematics curriculum.
- When I visited mathematics lessons with you, I saw a common approach to teaching mathematics throughout the school, with a strong emphasis on rapid calculation, reasoning and solving problems. Staff confidence has increased and I

could see that pupils enjoy mathematics. Teachers and pupils use practical resources and visual prompts well in all year groups to support the development of mathematical concepts. Pupils eagerly tackle word problems, help each other, and challenge themselves and others to do even better. Nevertheless, there are still some variations between classes. For example, it was evident in a small number of books that pupils are not always moved onto problem-solving as soon as they demonstrate their ability to calculate accurately. This prevents them using their reasoning skills to full effect. In addition, although staff emphasise the importance of setting calculations out correctly, avoidable errors occur because pupils do not do so consistently.

- My next line of enquiry was to look at whether you were doing enough to diminish the differences in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. I found that you had restructured staffing, and trained teachers and teaching assistants to support these pupils more effectively. You have organised the curriculum to enable teachers to spend dedicated time with these pupils, and ensured that teaching assistants support them well in class. Your emphasis on 'keep up' rather than 'catch up' is paying off. Data for disadvantaged pupils currently in the school shows that, in most year groups, the differences are diminishing and this group of pupils is making good progress.
- My next two lines of enquiry were to do with safeguarding, including examining what you were doing to tackle the poor attendance of some pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. I found that you keep a close eye on those pupils who do not attend school regularly or who arrive late. You have effective systems for making sure that parents notify you of the reasons for absences and parents respond well. You also carefully analyse attendance data to check for any periods or patterns of absence that might give cause for concern, especially in relation to safeguarding. In 2015/16, the absences noted were the result of personal family situations and poor health or medical issues, some of which required hospitalisation.
- Finally, you told me you were proud of the curriculum you offer to pupils and of the way that subject leaders manage their subjects, and we agreed that these would be a key line of enquiry. I found that all subjects are covered well, subject leaders check teaching and learning in each one and ensure that pupils' progress is being tracked in relation to the skills they need to make progress. For example, in history, pupils' work includes research, comparing the past with the present, and learning to distinguish between fact and opinion or fiction. Investigative work in science is ensuring that pupils learn to think like young scientists, and realise that not all experiments work and that it is possible to reach different conclusions from the same investigation. Leaders also ensure that pupils use their reading, writing and mathematics skills well as they record learning in different subjects. Subject leadership is strong. You have ensured that all leaders and staff understand their responsibility for preparing pupils for Year 6 and beyond. Leaders spoke passionately about their roles, saying, 'None of us work in isolation, we work as a team.' All said that they felt well supported by senior leaders.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the improvements in mathematics become fully embedded throughout the school and:
 - pupils' progress in mathematics catches up with that seen in reading and writing
 - teachers ensure that pupils consistently set out numbers accurately when completing mathematical calculations
 - pupils use and apply their calculation skills in problem-solving activities as soon as they have understood them.

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

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and your deputy headteacher throughout the day. We talked about the improvements that had been made since the previous inspection, as well as how you were addressing the issues arising from the 2016 Year 6 test results. I also considered your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I examined all safeguarding records, including those relating to attendance, and explored your recruitment and vetting procedures. I held a discussion with five middle leaders and met with three governors and a representative of the local authority. Together, you and I visited mathematics lessons and sampled books in all four year groups. I sampled a further selection of mathematics books and books that showed pupils' work in different subjects. I held a formal discussion with eight pupils and talked to many others informally in the playground. I also listened to pupils in Year 3 and Year 6 read. I met with parents at the start of the school day and considered the 79 responses submitted by parents through Parent View. I also considered the 12 staff questionnaires, which staff had completed manually.