

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



27 April 2017

Mrs Carol McDermott
Rainbow Primary School
Nelson Street
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD5 0HD

Dear Mrs McDermott

Short inspection of Rainbow Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 4 April 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. Since your arrival as interim executive headteacher in February 2016, you have brought stability to the school and succeeded in making rapid improvements. You are ably supported by an effective deputy headteacher and a recently formed leadership team that have enthusiasm and a real desire to move the school forward. The impact that school leaders have had over this period of time is impressive. The quality of teaching in all areas of the school has improved and, as a result, the progress that current pupils are making has accelerated.

It was a pleasure meeting pupils, who clearly enjoy being at the school. Pupils are articulate and well mannered and have excellent attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is exemplary. Classrooms are calm, purposeful environments where pupils have an appetite to learn. Several pupils commented on how much they enjoy the challenges that teachers plan for them, which makes them think harder about what they are learning. Pupils at Rainbow Primary School are a credit.

The school is fully inclusive, and you have a high number of pupils who have limited English language skills or are new to the country. You and your leaders ensure that these pupils get the support that they need, including those pupils who are in the school for a relatively short period of time. When we looked closely at pupils' outcomes for 2016, it was clear that a variety of factors, particularly the high mobility of pupils entering and leaving the school, contributed to lower than average achievement. However, what also became clear was that pupils who are in the school over a longer period of time make good progress.

You have taken affirmative action to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. You have introduced an effective coaching model, which enables teachers to improve their practice and learn from each other. As a result, teachers now set challenging learning experiences for pupils and they have developed good questioning skills. The rapid improvement in the quality of teaching means that the different needs of pupils, including those of pupils who are new to the country, are well met. Your leaders ensure that opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills are well planned. Your middle leaders are new to their roles and they relish the opportunities to make a difference. You rightly agree that, to drive continued improvement and build leadership capacity for the future, the roles and responsibilities of all leaders in the school need to be enhanced and firmly embedded, so they have a wider influence and greater accountability.

Although attendance has improved since the last inspection, it remains stubbornly below the national average. High pupil mobility and extended periods of absence impact negatively on the overall attendance of pupils, especially those pupils who are disadvantaged. Nevertheless, you are not complacent and are working hard to address this.

Safeguarding is effective.

Keeping pupils safe and secure is at the heart of the safeguarding culture in your school. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of good quality. All your staff, including those responsible for safeguarding and staff recruitment, have completed appropriate training. They are aware of such risks as radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. Staff know their pupils very well and follow up concerns swiftly; nothing is left to chance. You have formed good relationships with external agencies, which offer support to families where this is appropriate. You regularly have your safeguarding procedures checked so they remain robust and meet statutory requirements.

There are well-planned opportunities for pupils to learn to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. All pupils who spoke to me said that they feel safe in school and well cared for, as did the vast majority of the 103 pupils who responded to Ofsted's pupils' survey.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to focus on the following aspects of the school's work:
 - how pupils who are new to the school and have low starting points are supported
 - what leaders have done to address the noticeably declining trend in the number of children attaining a good level of development in the early years
 - what actions school leaders have taken to ensure that the most able pupils in key stage 2 are challenged, especially for reading and writing
 - what actions leaders have taken to improve attendance.

- You have been innovative in your approach to improve provision for pupils who are new to the school and have limited English language skills. Your 'new to English' team supports teachers with planning learning activities, so that the needs of pupils who require additional and tailored support are met. The 'language through art' project is used very effectively to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills through the work they do in art.
- Teaching assistants are highly effective in supporting pupils with their learning, particularly for those pupils who need help with their reading. Both in the classroom and through additional intervention activities, they provide a good level of support for pupils who are new to the school or need to catch up.
- Changes to the leadership of early years have rapidly improved provision. The early years' leader has brought about much-needed changes. This has resulted in significant improvements to the quality of the learning environment, teaching and the progress that children are currently making.
- A scrutiny of pupils' books showed that pupils, including those pupils who are most able, are writing at a high standard. Pupils use a range of interesting and adventurous vocabulary that engages the reader and brings their writing to life. The quality of written work in subjects other than English is equally impressive. In science, for example, pupils are producing written work that is of a similarly high standard to that produced in their English books.
- Reading lessons are well planned and provide effective challenge for pupils of different abilities, including those who are most able. The most-able pupils who read to me read with fluency and expression and had good comprehension skills; less-able readers used decoding strategies very effectively to read unfamiliar and difficult words.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They remain on task and relish the challenging activities that they are asked to complete. Pupils take a real pride in the presentation of their work and are rightly proud of their accomplishments. Their attitudes to each other, and to adults and visitors, are equally impeccable.
- Your middle leaders share your passion for pupils' entitlement to a good all-round education. However, you rightly acknowledge that the roles of middle leaders need to be developed further, so that recent improvements in teaching and learning are firmly embedded, and pupils' progress continues to improve.
- You are rightly disappointed that, despite your best efforts and the additional support that you have put into place, attendance remains below average, especially for those pupils who are disadvantaged. You fully understand the barriers that the school faces when trying to improve attendance, but you and your staff are determined that the small gains that have been made continue, and attendance improves further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the roles of middle leaders are enhanced further, so they take more responsibility for pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- the absence levels of disadvantaged pupils are reduced, so they are not missing valuable learning time.

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

Yours sincerely

Alan Chaffey
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, senior leaders and other staff. I took account of the 16 free-text opinions from parents and the 19 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I considered the 103 responses to the pupil survey and the 16 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. I met with a group of pupils and talked to pupils informally during breaks and lessons. I listened to several pupils read. I visited lessons with your deputy headteacher to observe learning in progress and examined pupils' work in their books with your senior and subject leaders. I considered a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, and leaders' records for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.