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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Andrea Tomlinson
Headteacher
Stoney Middleton CofE (C) Primary School
High Street
Stoney Middleton
Hope Valley
Derbyshire
S32 4TL

Dear Mrs Tomlinson

Short inspection of Stoney Middleton CofE (C) Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 17 May 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 2012.

This school continues to be good.

You and the governing body have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. There have been significant changes since the last inspection. All teaching staff are new, including your own appointment as headteacher in September 2016. Many members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, have changed since the previous inspection. You currently have ten pupils on roll with no pupils enrolled in the early years.

Since joining the school, your clear leadership, drive and ambition are bringing about continued improvement. This is reflected in the views of parents. One parent said, 'The school has gone from strength to strength.' You have ensured that the school has sustained and improved its strong focus on pupils' personal, social and emotional development. You are also strengthening the rigour with which pupils' achievement is carefully checked. Parents who spoke with me were unanimous in their praise for the school, describing the nurturing, 'family' atmosphere and how their children had grown in confidence as well as progressed in their learning.

Pupils are proud of their school, respect their teachers and enjoy their learning. Their conduct at all times is impeccable. In classrooms, they concentrate, listen carefully and apply themselves to their work. I observed pupils happily washing up their plates and cutlery in the breakfast club, collaborating well together and developing a sense of personal responsibility. This is representative of the very positive ethos of your school.

Since the last inspection, you have ensured that pupils' understanding of calculation methods in mathematics and that the books they read are appropriate to their ages and abilities.

You and your staff's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength. Pupils enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular clubs the school offers, including multi-sports, coding, film, science and knitting. You provide opportunities for pupils to learn and communicate with groups of pupils in other settings. For example, the 'parliament day' enabled two pupils in key stage 2 to work with pupils from other cluster schools to learn about democracy. Two Year 6 pupils participated in a 'diversity day', and learned about people from different cultures or who have different beliefs. However, you and the governors are aware of the need to develop this work further so that all pupils develop greater awareness and understanding of the lives of people from cultural and social contexts different to their own.

You have developed the expertise of staff in checking the progress of all pupils carefully. A new system that you have introduced enables you and your teachers to identify pupils' strengths and areas of learning in which they are less confident, and use this information to plan lessons that more closely match pupils' needs. This is helping pupils to make increased progress. However, the impact of additional funding to support pupils' achievement is not analysed carefully enough.

You are aware that leadership roles to help support school improvement are not yet sufficiently developed as many of your staff were recently appointed. You have a clear plan to address this and are providing training to prepare staff to assume leadership roles. You ensure that all staff benefit from a range of training opportunities to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and the impact of this was seen in pupils' work.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding requirements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Staff and the governing body have received a wide range of training relating to safeguarding. There is a culture of vigilance in your school. As the designated lead for safeguarding, you take swift and effective action where there is a concern regarding pupils' welfare.

Parents who spoke with me said their children are safe, happy and well cared for in school. Pupils are confident that adults will help them if needed. Pupils spoke with a good knowledge and understanding about the ways they can stay safe, for example when online.

Inspection findings

- The headteacher and governors, working with the support of the local authority, know well the school's strengths and areas in which it can improve. This information is used to successfully drive the school forward. The headteacher regularly monitors the quality of teaching and provision is put in place to support the professional development of new staff.
- Pupils' work in their books shows that pupils of different abilities and in different year groups produce a good standard of work across the curriculum. Pupils' presentation of their work is usually good. Leaders and teachers analyse the progress of the very small number of pupils on roll individually. Work in pupils' books and the school's internal information show that the very large majority of pupils make at least expected progress, and the majority make good progress.
- Pupils' books show that teachers use a wide range of different teaching approaches, including frequent practical, hands-on learning experiences or the use of apparatus or visual imagery, for example to promote pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts.
- The school's policy for giving pupils feedback on their learning is not applied consistently well. Sometimes, pupils' misconceptions are not addressed by teachers, and this slows pupils' progress.
- The headteacher has reorganised the curriculum, taking account of the views of pupils, so that different subjects are more effectively linked together and pupils can better use and apply their English and mathematics skills in, for example, science. However, the school does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to produce sustained and high-quality writing in different subjects, including communicating their reasoning skills in mathematics.
- The pupil premium funding is being used to support a new breakfast club, provide additional resources to support learning, and help fund additional teaching. Work in pupils' books and school information show that the progress made by disadvantaged pupils is close to that made by pupils nationally.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is used to provide an external coach, who has helped staff to identify skills in which pupils are less proficient and to improve these through targeted teaching. Rates of pupils' participation in events outside school are improving.
- However, leaders' and governors' analysis of the impact of additional funding is not precise enough to ensure that it is having the maximum effect on outcomes for pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils have increased opportunities to produce sustained and high-quality writing across the curriculum, including the communication of their reasoning in mathematics

- the policy for feedback on learning is applied consistently, so that pupils' misconceptions are addressed and they make greater progress
- the impact of additional funding, including the pupil premium and sport funding, is more precisely analysed.

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

Yours sincerely

John Lawson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, your school office administrator, three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and the five pupils from key stage 2. I spoke with some parents at the start of the school day and considered the three responses to the online parents' survey. I visited both classes in the school with you and we looked at pupils' work together. I reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, plans for further development, information about pupils' achievement, the management of teachers' performance, how the pupil premium is spent and a number of policy documents, including those relating to safeguarding.