

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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28 June 2017

Ms Sarah Cooper  
Acting Headteacher  
Fiddlers Lane Community Primary School  
Fiddlers Lane  
Irlam  
Salford  
Greater Manchester  
M44 6QE

Dear Ms Cooper

### **Short inspection of Fiddlers Lane Community Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 June 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 your 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. You lead a highly inclusive school. Parents are rightly generous in their praise for the support you give to pupils, especially those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school is a vibrant and thriving community. In the mornings, children arrive to music and scootering on the playground. Parents are welcomed in to Reception Year to 'stay and play' with their children. This typifies the school's culture of openness and trust.

The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress across a range of subjects, including mathematics, punctuation, spelling and grammar. We observed Reception Year pupils who were engrossed in learning phonics. They had fun, made great progress, and likely forgot that they were learning.

At your last inspection you were asked to focus on raising attainment in reading. Pupils make good progress in reading through key stage 1 and it is improving in key stage 2. You have raised the profile of reading in key stage 2 and pupils benefit from more guided reading, leading to improved progress. In Year 4, pupils make accelerated progress in reading. Progress elsewhere in key stage 2 is good and improving.

Inspectors also asked leaders to improve attainment in writing. We observed pupils in Year 5 making good progress using figurative language in their writing. Careful planning ensured that pupils were very clear about what they were learning. They produced high-quality writing and behaved very well due to a high level of respect for their teacher and strong relationships. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that standards of writing in key stage 1 are not consistently good. Pupils, particularly the least able pupils, do not always get the support they need to help them write with technical accuracy or form their letters correctly.

Governors regularly receive information about pupils' progress. They offer very effective support and challenge to senior leaders. However, they do not probe enough about the achievements of disadvantaged pupils in order to accelerate their progress.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The single central record meets requirements. All staff have regular child protection training. Child protection records are kept securely; they are well maintained. You and your pastoral team work closely with a range of agencies to support children and families whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. All child protection concerns are followed up swiftly and appropriately.

The school's safeguarding team work very closely to ensure that pupils' social and emotional needs are met and that pupils feel safe in school. There is much early proactive and therapeutic help for pupils and families. There are very strong working relationships with families.

### **Inspection findings**

- Pupils make good progress in reading in Key Stage 2. It is most effective in Year 4 because expectations are high and the curriculum is tailored to the promotion of reading. Every term, pupils' reading ages are calculated. They read in groups at least twice per week to discuss comprehension and how inference is used in texts. Reading and comprehension activities in Year 4 are matched very closely to pupils' abilities, resulting in rapid progress. For example, there was evidence of some pupils improving their reading age by two years in two terms. Reading for pleasure has been a big focus. Pupils are enjoying 'reading their way around the world'. They are given 'miles' for every book they read. One boy told me that he is 'aiming for the moon' once he's completed the world.
- Although progress is good there is some variability in reading in key stage 2 because other classes do not have the same high expectations of reading for pleasure, as seen in Year 4. There is not as much time spent reading with pupils in other classes.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics in key stage 1. Scrutiny of pupils' work showed a stimulating curriculum and a good understanding of topics such as estimation and problem-solving. There is good support for the least able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- Middle-ability pupils make good progress in writing in key stage 1. However, the quality of writing for the least able pupils remains variable. Pupils do not always get the help they need to form letters correctly or to write with technical accuracy. There are lower expectations of writing in topic books than in English.
- Another focus for the inspection was the apparent discrepancies in outcomes for girls in key stage 1, boys in key stage 2 and for disadvantaged pupils. The school's own data shows that any variations in achievement between girls and boys or disadvantaged pupils and others are beginning to diminish due to improvements in teaching and the careful tracking of pupils' progress.
- Pupils' behaviour and attendance were reviewed during the inspection. Pupils behave well. They are good ambassadors for their school. Attendance is improving and the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school has significantly reduced due to strong relationships with parents and the well-focused efforts of the safeguarding and pastoral team.
- Although governors ask about the achievements of disadvantaged pupils, they do not challenge enough about the progress of this group.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- governors challenge senior leaders more rigorously about the achievement of disadvantaged pupils'
- the best practice in reading is shared across key stage 2
- the quality of writing improves in key stage 1, particularly for the least able pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Sally Kenyon  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

The headteacher has been absent from school since March and will leave to take up a new post in the summer. You are acting as headteacher, supported by a senior leadership team.

I met with you and your leadership team. I spoke to the local authority. I met with members of the governing body. I spoke with a range of pupils in lessons and at social times. I scrutinised a range of workbooks across a variety of subjects and

year groups. I looked at the school website and analysed the school self-evaluation and school improvement plan. I analysed the school's record of checks made on the suitability of staff, records of child protection and staff training, and discussed other aspects of safeguarding with you. I spoke with parents in the playground at the beginning of the school day and considered four free-text responses and 42 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.