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10 July 2017

Mrs Alison Gibson
Headteacher
Farington Moss St. Paul's C.E. Primary School
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Dear Mrs Gibson

Short inspection of Farington Moss St. Paul's C.E. Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 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 the school was judged to be good in December 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and other leaders work closely together so there is consistency in the drive to improve the school. You have ensured that teaching is consistently good and pupils' progress is tracked carefully. You successfully support teachers in meeting the challenges you set. You make good use of all assessment information to ensure that staff address different pupils' needs and identify the impact of their teaching on pupils' progress. The work in pupils' books, including the 'Milestones' books, shows that pupils make good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and a range of other subjects.

The work that teachers give pupils to do is interesting, engaging and exciting. It makes pupils think for themselves, reason things out and become good learners. You also take full account of the need to develop pupils as young people and help them take their place in the wider world as valuable members of society. Pupils told me how much they enjoy school and learning. They appreciate the trust you put in them by giving them a range of responsibilities and helping them to fulfil them well. Pupils talk about everyone being kind and considerate and willing to help each other.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They deepen their knowledge by asking incisive questions and by visiting the school to find things out at first hand. They support you well in the drive to help pupils reach higher standards.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. You are vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe and well cared for. You regularly review and update procedures in response to changes in national guidance. Regular training ensures that all members of staff are clear about the possible dangers facing pupils in and out of school. Governors share your vigilance in checking that you all implement safeguarding procedures rigorously.

Pupils say they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. You and the staff make sure that they understand the dangers they might face and how to deal with them. E-safety training for staff and pupils is thorough. Pupils know the potential dangers associated with using the internet, mobile phones and social media. They know to tell a responsible adult, whom they know they can trust, should they have any concerns. They say that you or any member of staff would always help them. Behaviour is good. Pupils very much enjoy school and they are eager to learn. They have a good understanding of British values and explain how you make them into assembly themes so that they understand them. They make everyone very welcome and say that it is important to do so because 'we are all equal'.

All parents to whom I spoke said that they were very satisfied with the school and what it does for them and their children. The vast majority of responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire were also very positive.

The leadership team makes sure that the whereabouts of all pupils are known. You are very rigorous in ensuring that all absences, including lateness, are recorded accurately. Actions you have taken, for example contacting parents or, where relevant, the local authority, are proving effective in raising attendance so that it is currently above average. You explained the reasons for persistent absence being higher than found nationally in 2016 and it is obvious that you did everything possible to avoid it happening.

Inspection findings

- During my visit, I examined how well leaders had responded to last year's national test results, when boys made less progress than girls in writing, and girls made less progress than boys in mathematics. You are successfully diminishing these differences and all are making good progress.
- I noted that relatively few pupils exceeded expectations for their age in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6 last year. I checked to see whether you and your staff had remedied this. I found that more pupils, especially the most able, are now working securely at greater depth in each subject.
- By introducing different texts and topics to engage boys, you have made them more eager to write. In all year groups, boys still tend to write less than girls but they are using their writing skills increasingly well, including in different subjects.

- In mathematics, staff now make sure that pupils know their tables and can recall number facts quickly. This and the greater emphasis on reasoning and solving problems mean that all pupils are becoming more fluent and accurate when calculating mentally or using written methods.
- I examined the progress that pupils currently in key stage 1 are making and I found it to be good too. I noted that pupils' knowledge of phonics remains very strong and that pupils use phonics well to help them read and spell.
- You could explain clearly why last year's results appeared to show that some potentially more-able pupils might not have done as well as expected in Year 2 given how well they did at the end of Reception. Your in-depth knowledge of each pupil and of factors affecting their learning is impressive.
- The support programmes for pupils in Year 1 and 3, who looked to be in danger of falling behind when in Reception and Year 2 respectively, are effective. Staff carefully check them for impact and readily adjust them to ensure progress.
- Improved provision in Reception means that more Reception children have reached a good level of development than did so last year. You make sure that children are well supported when starting school and as they move to a different year group or key stage, and that their learning remains continuous.
- You check and analyse everything very carefully and showed me how the increasing number of pupils who join the school other than at the normal times change the nature of relatively small year groups. You make sure that staff check pupils' attainment on arrival at the school so that they and you can measure progress accurately.
- In checking pupils' books and overall curricular planning, and looking at the work on display around the school, I could see that the curriculum is planned well to meet the school's aims. You make sure that pupils who show gifts and talents in, for example, sport, art, music and drama all have the chance to succeed.
- The wide range of experiences you provide is carefully balanced with developing pupils' academic and personal skills. Such experiences, of which the pupils speak highly, include many opportunities to enliven and extend pupils' learning in different ways. For example, pupils enthused about the recent topic when they found debris in the playground and investigated whether aliens had landed, and they thoroughly enjoy performing and learning musical instruments.
- Systems for tracking pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics are robust. Staff use the information well in planning further work and pupils make good use of the feedback that teachers give them to improve their learning.
- You have recently identified that insufficient attention is paid to assessing how well pupils are developing skills specific to other subjects, and you are right. I noted, for example, that learning objectives for work in history and geography focus on developing writing skills but not historical or geographical skills.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- when planning learning in different subjects, teachers make sure that:
 - learning objectives relate to the skills being taught in each subject
 - when measuring how well pupils are doing in different subjects, staff give due attention to progression in skills in each one.

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

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I carried out the following activities during the inspection:

- We visited lessons and looked at pupils' books together and I met with you several times throughout the day. I also met with the chair of governors, five other governors and a representative from the local authority. After school, I spoke with staff to find out how well they performed their leadership roles.
- I spoke to pupils of all ages, formally and informally, to gain their views of the school. I heard pupils read and observed them in lessons and as they moved around the school.
- The 13 responses to the online questionnaire for staff, the 29 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, the views parents expressed online or when I met them at the end of the day, gave me an insight into what staff and parents think of the school.
- You and I talked about the improvements that had been made since the previous inspection. I considered documentation relating to governance, the school improvement plan and your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I also examined case studies relating to several pupils.
- I considered your analysis of pupils' recent performance and evaluated safeguarding procedures, including policies to keep children safe and records of training and safeguarding checks. These included procedures relating to attendance and recruitment and vetting procedures.