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Mr Des Lee
Headteacher
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Western Road
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Dear Mr Lee

**Short inspection of Featherstone Primary and Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 22 June 2017 with Kanwaljit Singh, 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 October 2012.

**This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since you became headteacher in September 2015, you have led a transformation in the school. You have identified quickly the key areas for improvement and acted decisively and effectively to address them. You have created a successful leadership structure and appointed new leaders and teachers. You, senior leaders, middle leaders and governors work very well as a team to ensure that pupils achieve well. The school continues to improve under your determined leadership.

Your strong and passionate leadership is acknowledged by the local authority that, as a result, regards the school to be good and improving. Your governors share your ambition for pupils and they provide you and your leaders with good support and challenge to ensure continuous improvement. You work closely with your parents and carers, including those who have vulnerable children. Parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were overwhelmingly supportive of the school's leadership. They would recommend the school to another parent.

You have introduced a robust monitoring system to track pupils' progress closely, including different groups of pupils. Through frequent monitoring of pupils' progress, leaders and staff can identify those pupils who are not making the progress they should for timely and effective support. You ensure that teachers have detailed information about your pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, so that their needs are met and they achieve well. Through addressing any potential

barriers to pupils' learning, you ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity.

You and your leaders, including middle leaders, have been relentless in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Staff have opportunities to work with each other and receive effective training and support to improve their practice. You have created a culture of high expectations to support the best possible outcomes for pupils. Governors and staff share your ambition for pupils. Staff are very committed and are highly supportive of the school's leadership.

Pupils are polite, friendly and respectful towards each other and adults. They are keen to share their achievements with visitors. Pupils have strong attitudes to learning and they behave very well. They enjoy coming to school and their attendance is above average.

The previous inspection highlighted an increase in the level of challenge for the most able pupils at key stage 1 as an area for improvement. This was so that a greater proportion of them could achieve at the highest level. Your current information, and work in pupils' books, show that the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress. However, you acknowledged that the most able pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are sometimes not moved on to more challenging tasks quickly enough.

The other area for improvement highlighted in the previous inspection was developing the skills of middle leaders to check the quality of teaching and learning. You have provided effective training and support to your middle leaders to ensure that they have the skills and understanding to monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Middle leaders are involved in checking the quality of teaching, looking at pupils' work in books and visiting classes. Middle leaders are increasingly holding teachers to account for the progress their pupils make. In this way, middle leaders now contribute to the school's capacity to improve further.

**Safeguarding is effective.**

You have established a strong culture of safeguarding, which puts pupils' safety, welfare and well-being at the centre of all that you, your governors, leaders and staff do. Staff and governors receive regular training and updates on safeguarding and child protection procedures. Staff are vigilant, understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know what to do if they have any concerns about a child's safety and welfare.

The designated leaders for safeguarding have received appropriate training on safeguarding and child protection procedures. They work well with parents, staff and with external agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe. The designated leaders ensure that records are detailed and of high quality and that referrals are timely and dealt with effectively.

Leaders and governors ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are in place and are fit for purpose. Record keeping is robust and all staff are vetted to make sure

they are suitable to work with children.

Pupils told me that they are well cared for and feel safe at school. They said that bullying is not an issue at the school. Pupils confirm that staff keep them safe and they are taught to keep themselves safe, for example, when using the internet. Leaders provide workshops for parents on how they can keep their children safe, including when they are online at home.

## Inspection findings

- The first agreed focus for this inspection was how effective leaders are in improving the progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This includes the progress of disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and girls at key stage 2. Pupils' attainment on entry to key stages 1 and 2 was below average; their achievement overall was below other pupils nationally at the end of 2016. Improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has been the main priority for leaders.
- Improvements in teaching are having a marked impact on the progress pupils make. Pupils are currently making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, as seen in pupils' books and confirmed by the school's progress information. Leaders ensure that staff know their disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities well to meet their needs. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support so that they make good progress. The governing body ensures that pupil premium funding is used effectively so that disadvantaged pupils achieve well.
- Pupils love reading and their knowledge of phonics helps them to read unfamiliar or difficult words. One pupil said that 'reading transports me to the world in the book'. Pupils said that they enjoy mathematics. Pupils use their mathematical skills well to solve a range of mathematical problems. Pupils' writing is improving and they show confidence in writing for different purposes. Pupils value the good guidance they receive from staff on how to improve their writing. However, pupils do not routinely write at length to improve their writing skills.
- The attainment of pupils is affected by a higher than average proportion of pupils entering school midway through the year. Most of these pupils are at the early stages of learning English. Assessment information shows that these pupils do much less well than those who start school in the Nursery or Reception classes. A majority of the disadvantaged pupils also have special educational needs and/or disabilities and some are at early stages of learning English. Your monitoring information shows that these additional needs of disadvantaged pupils affect their attainment.
- The second focus of this inspection was on the most able pupils. This was because the proportion of pupils achieving the greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average. In some classes, the number of the most able pupils is small. The work in pupils' books and your progress information shows that the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics

from their starting points. They are provided with challenging tasks that make them think more deeply. One pupil said that he enjoyed tackling the 'extra hot chilli challenges at the end of lessons in mathematics'. However, sometimes the most able pupils have to wait before moving on to harder work. This slows their progress.

- The third focus of this inspection was in relation to the effectiveness of leaders in improving the good level of development of children in the early years. This included reducing the differences in attainment between boys and girls. In 2016, children's good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was below average and boys did not attain as well as girls in the school or compared to other boys nationally. The majority of children enter the early years with skills and abilities that are well below those typical for their age. This is particularly in their communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, reading and writing.
- Leaders have been effective in improving the quality of teaching and tracking children's progress closely to provide any additional support to those falling behind. Consequently, children now make good progress from their low starting points. This includes the nursery-aged children in the speech and language unit who receive good support from well-trained staff. Leaders have been effective in diminishing differences in attainment between boys and girls. Improvements in the outside area are increasing boys' enthusiasm to learn through practical and hands-on activities. Your current information is showing that children's attainment is rising across all areas of learning.
- My final line of enquiry was in relation to pupils' attainment in science and other foundation subjects. In 2016, pupils' attainment in science in key stages 1 and 2 was below average. Checking the progress of pupils in different subjects was an area for improvement in your previous inspection. Although your current information shows that pupils' attainment is improving in science, it is not improving as rapidly as you would wish. Sometimes there is insufficient emphasis on investigative and every day science to bring more relevance to pupils' learning. Middle leaders are now checking pupils' progress more closely. However, the assessment system overall in foundation subjects is not as strong as it is in reading, writing and mathematics.

## Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers accelerate pupils' progress in writing by ensuring that they improve their skills by writing at length in English and across other subjects
- the most able pupils are given challenging tasks earlier on in the lesson, rather than sometimes having to wait
- the proportion of pupils achieving the standards in science is in line with the national figures at key stages 1 and 2
- the assessment systems for tracking the progress of pupils in the foundation

subjects are as good as in other subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Avtar Sherri
**Ofsted Inspector**

## Information about the inspection

- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders and the chair of the governing body together with four other governors. A telephone discussion was held with a local authority representative.
- The inspectors held a meeting with a group of pupils from different abilities and backgrounds in key stage 2 to discuss their learning and views about the school.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 1 and 2 and discussed reading with them.
- The inspectors visited classes in key stages 1 and 2 and early years and observed learning in lessons with leaders. The inspectors looked at pupils' books and spoke with pupils about their learning.
- The inspectors looked at the school's information on attendance, teaching and learning and assessment, safeguarding and recruitment procedures. The school's self-evaluation and improvement plan were also reviewed. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' progress information.
- The inspectors took into account the views of 32 responses to Parent View and considered 28 responses to the survey for staff.