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Mrs Jane McFadyen
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs McFadyen

Short inspection of Newburn Manor Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 July 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 November 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, your leaders and governors have an accurate and in-depth understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development.

Together with effective and strong support from your deputy headteacher and governors, you have taken the actions needed to ensure that pupils, and especially disadvantaged pupils, make good progress. Since the previous inspection, you have built a leadership and staff team with the skills and ambition needed to drive further improvement. Consequently, the school's capacity for continued success is strong. This is very important, as you will leave the school at the end of the summer term.

Parents are justifiably supportive of the school. They appreciate the care and support that your staff give to their children and to their families. You place a high priority on developing pupils' well-being to ensure that pupils thrive. As a result, pupils show good manners and respect for each other, adults and visitors. There is consistently a high level of concentration and keenness to learn. This school is at the heart of the community. It is inclusive and welcoming. A typical comment from a parent was, 'Lovely school with fantastic staff! A great environment for learning'.

At the time of the previous inspection, the inspector asked you to improve standards in reading and writing, especially the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in key stages 1 and 2. In 2016, the proportion of Year 2 children

achieving at greater depth was above the national average in writing, although the proportion was below average in reading. However, this represented good progress from the pupils' starting points; this year group has always had a significant number of pupils who have additional needs. The current picture remains similar to last year, and you show a determination to continue to improve the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards in reading and writing.

In key stage 2 in 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching expected and higher standards in reading and writing was above the national average. Standards are not as high this year, but the progress over time remains good.

As part of an area for improvement, you were also asked to simplify teachers' assessment strategies to check pupils' understanding and learning in lessons. Teachers have now developed precise ways to check pupils' understanding. In most classes, teachers routinely provide pupils with detailed feedback so pupils know how to make improvements to their work. The information gathered is used to provide additional interventions for any pupils who are falling behind, or to set additional, challenging targets for the most able pupils. As a result, most pupils are now making strong progress in their work. However, this is not always the case in all classes, especially in subjects such as history and science. In some year groups, teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' writing, particularly pupils' spelling. Too many pupils continue to spell words incorrectly because teachers are not tackling the problem early enough.

The previous inspection report asked you to improve the impact of the school's leaders on pupil achievements. You have done this successfully. Very clear action plans have been put in place to improve the quality of teaching. You use monitoring effectively to help leaders and governors develop an accurate picture of the school's performance. This is then used to set targets for improvement with teachers to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent and continues to improve. This work needs to be focused further to ensure that teaching in lower key stage 2 matches the very high quality of teaching currently seen in Years 5 and 6.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture to safeguard pupils at the school. Those responsible for leading safeguarding are vigilant in all aspects of their work. You have strengthened the recording systems to log any concerns and these are robust. You have responded promptly to your safeguarding audits. As a result, policies, procedures and training relating to safeguarding meet requirements and are up to date with current legislation. You work effectively with external agencies to ensure that everything is being done to safeguard children and minimise risk. Your referrals are timely and consistently followed up. I recognise that you often feel frustrated that some external agencies do not respond quickly enough, but you rightly show that you are not afraid to challenge the social care department when this is the case.

You have ensured that staff know how to effectively use and apply their training within their daily routines and work. As a result, you do your very best to ensure

that you keep pupils safe from abuse and sexual exploitation, and from the influence of radical or extreme views.

The safeguarding governor conducts regular compliance visits to ensure that the school's vetting checks and safeguarding procedures are consistently applied.

Pupils said that they feel safe, including online. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were unanimous in their view that they can raise concerns, however small, with school staff. Pupils have confidence that any concerns are quickly acted on and sorted out.

Inspection findings

- Firstly, I wanted to check that all groups of pupils are making the progress of which they are capable. The school makes effective provision for different groups of pupils, including the less able, the most able, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Most are making good progress.
- In almost all years, disadvantaged pupils make at least the same progress as their peers who have similar starting points. Highly effective support ensures that gaps in their attainment are being eradicated. You have ensured that funding has been spent wisely to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils. You also acknowledge that more work is required in some year groups to diminish the difference even further in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils.
- You use the additional special educational needs funding well. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the carefully planned interventions they experience. Leaders regularly monitor these to ensure that they are as effective as they can be, and make modifications where necessary. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in activities and participate well to overcome their particular challenges.
- Standards in writing have shown particular improvement, with the most able pupils being successfully challenged to achieve greater depth in their writing, especially in Years 5 and 6. The standard of pupils' writing in subjects other than English and mathematics is more variable, and expectations are not consistently high enough. On occasion, activities do not sufficiently engage pupils in adding the necessary depth and quality to their work, and this prevents pupils' from working at the highest levels. You have identified that the challenge for the most able pupils is not always high enough in lower key stage 2.
- Strong teaching in the early years is providing children with a solid foundation on which they can build. Children communicate well, both verbally and in writing, from early stages. Children are making strong progress in their phonics. Teaching staff are using a variety of different techniques and methods to help children improve their reading skills. When children start in Reception, they are encouraged to sound out letters and so, by the time they reach Year 1, almost all

pupils are securely reaching the threshold in the phonics screening check.

- Next, I wanted to check whether leaders are providing a curriculum which supports pupils to develop good skills, knowledge and understanding across a wide range of subjects. The curriculum is certainly broad and balanced, enhanced by visits, such as to local museums and the coast and residential visits.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven through the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. The school environment is stimulating and supports pupils' learning well. Staff make good use of the resources available to them and pupils are keen to have their work displayed. There are impressive displays of pupils' art in the style of famous artists, such as Paul Klee, Mondrian and Monet, adorning walls throughout the school. Pupils study a range of faiths and cultures in their artwork, religious education and music. Pupils' studies of festivals, such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year, help them deepen their understanding, and this prepares them effectively for life in modern Britain.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching improves and is consistently good throughout the school so that:
 - the level of challenge continues and extends into all classes so pupils deepen their thinking and learning in the core and wider curriculum
 - pupils embed their literacy skills and improve their spelling when writing extended pieces in subjects other than English
 - the most able pupils achieve their full potential and gain results at a high standard.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephen Bywater
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I spoke to you, senior and middle leaders, and a group of governors. I also had a telephone discussion with a representative from the local authority. I made visits to lessons to observe pupils' attitudes to learning and to scrutinise their work. I talked with a group of pupils to gather their views of the school and I listened to some pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.

I considered a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's self-evaluation, development plans, school performance information, and attendance, behaviour and safeguarding documentation.

In addition, I took account of the 53 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and messages from parents using the free-text messaging service. I gathered the views of staff through Ofsted's staff questionnaire.