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Ms Gill Turner
Headteacher
Greenholm Primary School
Greenholm Road
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Dear Ms Turner

Short inspection of Greenholm Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 19 September 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 May 2014.

This school continues to be good.

Under your inspired direction, the leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have ensured a strong focus on improving teaching and learning through effective training of staff, including newly qualified teachers. This has been successfully achieved during the school's extensive building work and expansion. Outcomes for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics are improving strongly and compare very favourably with national results at the end of key stages 1 and 2.

Almost all staff and the very large majority of parents who responded to surveys agree that the school is well led. All staff who replied said they are proud to be a member of the school. All pupils who expressed a view in their survey said they would recommend the school to a friend.

The school provides a very positive learning environment. In lessons visited during the inspection, pupils were completely engaged in their learning, free from interruptions or any disruptive behaviour.

From a scrutiny of pupils' books from the last academic year and the school's assessment information, pupils currently in school have made rapid progress from their different starting points. This includes disadvantaged pupils and most pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

At the time of the last inspection in 2014, inspectors recommended that leaders should improve teaching further, embed recent improvements in the quality of pupils' writing in key stage 1 and ensure that governors' visits to school regularly focused on progress towards school improvement priorities.

Through placing a high emphasis on training and staff development, you have ensured that teaching and learning have continued to improve. Newly qualified teachers are quickly integrated and retained, and go on to become successful teachers and leaders. This is building the school's capacity to improve further. Attainment for pupils in writing, reading and mathematics is high at the end of key stages 1 and 2. Outcomes in writing are high for children, including for disadvantaged children, when they leave Reception. Governors, in partnership with external support and challenge, carry out the headteacher's performance review with rigour, focusing on the school's priorities.

You and your leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development well and recognise why the school is not yet outstanding:

- Improving outcomes for boys in writing remains an ongoing challenge.
- The most recent assessments show the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard at the end of Reception and then went on to achieve high standards in reading and mathematics, or greater depth in writing by the end of Year 2, was low.
- You recognise the need to develop further the outdoor environment in the early years.
- You are working to improve the attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Arrangements for governance are not in line with the recommendations of the Department for Education. They strongly suggest that only a minority of governors should also be trustees. This enables each group to independently check and challenge each other's work. As a consequence, the governance structure is not sufficiently robust.
- The school does not meet requirements for information academies must publish on their website concerning 2016 tests and assessments at the end of key stage 2, the curriculum, the school's policy for excluding pupils, information about governance, and information on the school's equality policy.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have successfully promoted a strong culture of safeguarding. This ensures that the care and well-being of pupils is highly effective.

A number of leaders take lead roles for safeguarding so that there is sufficient seniority and time for the work to be carried out efficiently. Designated leaders are well trained. They make sure that all staff are very knowledgeable and aware, and that they are kept regularly up to date through notices, briefings and team

meetings. Any concerns raised are responded to quickly and thoroughly investigated including, where necessary, by the governing body. Referrals are made in a timely manner and records are kept confidentially and securely. As a result, procedures and policies are very thorough. Pupils are well informed on how to keep themselves and others safe through assemblies and lessons. Following a number of local road accidents, they have been well prepared on road safety. They also know how to keep themselves safe on the internet. Those pupils spoken to said they feel very safe in school because of the way staff look after them. They said bullying is very rare but isolated incidents are dealt with very well.

Inspection findings

- Work in pupils' books and the school's assessment information shows that most pupils in school made rapid progress from their different starting points over the last academic year, including in writing.
- In the most recent tests and assessments in 2017 at the end of Year 6, outcomes were high for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, including for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils also performed well in assessments at the end of Year 2, achieved high standards in phonics at the end of Year 1 and above expectations by the end of Reception.
- This has been achieved by the headteacher's relentless drive on improving teaching and learning and focusing on specific groups and individuals. Teachers have received a high level of training and support, especially newly qualified teachers. Leaders analyse pupils' outcomes in great depth so that teachers can be held to account for how individuals and groups are doing.
- Interesting and challenging learning activities ensure that pupils are fully engaged with their learning. Pupils also benefit from effective small-group teaching as well as support from well-trained staff. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and they want to learn.
- The leadership of special educational needs is developing well after recent changes. The majority of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in most year groups are making good progress.
- In Reception, children quickly settle to their learning and classroom routines. This includes those children seen during the inspection visit who were experiencing their first day in school. The indoor environment promotes learning well. Outcomes are consistently high for children by the time they leave Reception. The outdoor environment is underdeveloped, reducing children's opportunities for learning, including developing their creativity.
- Overall attendance continues to be high and levels of persistent absence are low. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not improving fast enough.
- Leaders and governors are outward looking in securing suitable external advice and challenge for performance management, the early years, and teaching and learning. Governors are highly committed and very active in the life of the school, meeting leaders and pupils and observing lessons. The size of the

governing body is much higher than the recommended maximum number of 12.

- Not enough pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, who achieved the expected standard at the end of Reception made sufficiently rapid progress to achieve a high standard in reading and mathematics in the most recent teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2. Similarly, too few of them were working in greater depth in writing. By the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils, particularly boys, working in greater depth in writing was not as high as it was in reading and mathematics.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- an external review is carried out as soon as possible to review arrangements for governance
- progress of pupils in key stage 1 improves more rapidly so that more middle-attaining pupils can achieve the higher standards in reading and mathematics and work in greater depth by the end of Year 2
- boys make as much progress in writing as they do in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 2
- additional funding for special educational needs and the pupil premium are used more effectively to improve attendance for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the early years outdoor environment is developed further to promote more opportunities for children to develop their creativity
- the school meets all the requirements for what academies should publish on their website.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Sims
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met you and other members of staff. I also spoke to the chair of the governing body and four other governors. I met the school's external consultant for the early years and spoke by telephone to the school's improvement partner. I conducted a learning walk of lessons with the headteacher and a scrutiny of pupils' work from the last academic year, focusing on higher-attaining pupils in

writing in key stage 1. I observed pupils as they moved around the school and met with a group of pupils to find out what they think of the school. I scrutinised the school's self-evaluation and pupils' performance information, as well as safeguarding and child protection records. I analysed 38 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 34 responses to Parent View free text. I spoke to a parent on the telephone. I considered 18 responses to the pupil survey and 28 to the staff survey.

The inspection visit focused on the impact of the trust and governors on leadership and management, the culture of safeguarding, the progress of middle-attaining pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in key stages 1 and 2, the leadership of special educational needs and the impact of the pupil premium on outcomes and attendance for disadvantaged pupils.