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Mr Benjamin Wassall  
Headteacher  
Chillingham Road Primary School  
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Tyne and Wear  
NE6 5XX

Dear Mr Wassall

### **Short inspection of Chillingham Road Primary School**

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 the school was judged to be good in June 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your arrival in 2015, you have provided inspirational leadership and have motivated staff to explore new ways to realise the potential of the pupils in their care. You have brought innovations enriched by theory and research but ensured that they are grounded in classroom practices that are improving outcomes and experiences for pupils. Your wider team is embracing new leadership roles with renewed purpose and this is leading to an improving quality of teaching and higher standards of care. New leaders are taking increasing responsibility for innovating change, although they are still developing their skills in assessing the impact of these innovations. Your self-evaluation is honest and accurate, encouraging your team to explore deeper solutions to achieve ongoing improvement.

You and your team have responded well to the demands of the new national curriculum. In 2016, pupils made outstanding progress in reading and mathematics and achieved standards well above those seen nationally. Initial analysis shows that pupils continued to make good progress in 2017, although standards of attainment were not as strong. You have influenced significant improvement in the teaching of mathematics since your arrival. The improvement journey from dependence to independence in pupils' writing has not been mapped out as effectively as in mathematics.

You and your team are committed to professional development and ongoing improvement. You have established an outward-facing ethos where teachers develop practice and moderate standards in partnership with local schools, providing sustained capacity for improvement. Improvement plans are 'live' documents enriched by thorough annotation and on open display. You encourage your staff to challenge their practice to find deep and sustainable ways to secure improvements in provision for pupils. Assessment systems are evolving to provide meaningful information that supports pupils' progress. You have encouraged colleagues to unpick their practice and this has already secured significant improvements in mathematics and in the early years foundation stage.

You and your team support pupils' academic progress with access to a range of rich experiences and activities that enhance their experience. Pupils participate in a wide range of sports, including football, rugby and karate. They have many opportunities to experience cultural activities, from ballet to steel-pan playing and a host of residential trips and visits, including geography field trips and residential visits. Pupils develop a strong moral awareness and actively appreciate difference. You and your team ensure that the curriculum in its widest sense develops pupils' empathy, respect for others and their abilities to manage their emotions. You and your team have developed excellent relationships with parents and carers, who are deeply appreciative of your inspirational leadership and of the care and commitment of your team. As one parent wrote: 'The school is creative and caring. It provides a stimulating education in a way that encourages all the children to grow and flourish. All the staff, from the dinner staff to the headteacher, know the children and help them to develop as creative, thoughtful and caring members of society.'

Governors are committed to the ethos of the school and have the necessary expertise to hold leaders to account. They have recently revisited the core purpose and key aims of the school and are using this process to work with you to bring the support and challenge that will unlock further improvement. Governors closely track the impact of pupil premium funding and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies to diminish differences for disadvantaged pupils. They make regular visits to the school and track pupils' progress at review meetings. Governors review performance management processes, although the targets that teachers are set are not always sufficiently measurable to enable them to fully hold leaders to account.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and your team maintain a strong focus on pupils' welfare and have established a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff receive up-to-date training on a wide range of key safeguarding issues and receive regular updates at weekly meetings. You work with safeguarding consultants to continually update practice and to add support in responding to any safeguarding concerns. Thorough checks are made on the suitability of adults working at the school. Any concerns over pupils' welfare are swiftly addressed and thoroughly documented. You know your pupils and your community extremely well and these close links support your work in promoting pupils' welfare. Bullying is extremely rare, as a culture of mutual care and respect predominates and pupils are confident in the ability of adults to address any

concerns that may arise. In discussion, all pupils said that they felt safe and happy. Pupils spoken with were able to discuss the actions they could take to remain safe, for example the actions needed to stay safe online. Parents are extremely appreciative of the work of all staff to provide care and support. A significant proportion took the time to respond to Ofsted's online questionnaire. They all felt that their child was safe and happy. As one parent wrote: 'Chillingham Road is a well-led and inclusive school and my children are safe and happy here.'

## **Inspection findings**

- You and your team have instilled a culture of high expectations and built rigour into teaching, learning and assessment that has enabled pupils to respond well to more challenging curriculum demands. In the 2016 national testing at key stage 2, pupils achieved extremely good outcomes, achieving standards of attainment and progress that were well above those seen nationally. Unvalidated outcomes for 2017 are not as strong, but pupils continue to make good progress in reading and mathematics, with good proportions working at greater depth in these subjects. However, pupils' progress in subjects such as science and the humanities is not as strong because they are not given sufficient opportunities to work at greater depth in these subjects.
- You have led significant improvements in the teaching of mathematics, encouraging teachers to reflect upon key aspects of their subject knowledge and their teaching approaches. As a result, standards are high and improving. Pupils have frequent opportunities to consolidate key operations and work at increasing depth.
- Teachers and teaching assistants effectively develop pupils' reading skills and pupils typically achieve outcomes in the phonics screening check that are above those seen nationally. Pupils' reading skills develop strongly as they progress through the school, so that by the end of key stage 2 they achieve better progress than that seen nationally. You have developed a strong culture of reading, as was reflected in the fact that over 200 people attended the 'book week breakfast' in 2016.
- Pupils achieve overall outcomes in writing at key stages 1 and 2 that compare favourably with those seen nationally. However, their progress in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. You have introduced new strategies to further develop writing, from the early years upwards, including strategies to develop pupils' motor skills and writing stamina. Pupils were observed developing effective approaches to suspense writing and reflecting upon their sentence structures. Teachers effectively develop pupils' understanding of grammar and punctuation in creative and relevant contexts.
- As a result of effective teaching and well-focused support, pupils make good progress at key stage 1 and achieve outcomes that are largely above those seen nationally. Leaders are investing increasing challenge into the curriculum and this is contributing to increasing proportions of pupils exceeding their expected standards at key stage 1.
- You have improved continuity in early years from playgroup to Nursery to

Reception by taking actions to create a more coherent learning journey. High standards of care are now complemented by a closer focus upon key learning skills, such as the recent focus on developing strength and fine motor control in emerging writers. The quality of teaching in early years has considerably improved in recent years, with the proportion of children achieving a good level of development now equalling that seen nationally.

- Pupils are well behaved and conduct themselves in a supportive manner around the school site and in lessons. They are confident and articulate, showing a willingness to share their thoughts and opinions. Children are genuinely happy at school because much learning is exciting and engaging and because they value the care and support they receive from adults on site.
- Teachers monitor the progress of disadvantaged pupils closely and work intensively to remove any barriers to their learning. You have introduced evidence and evaluation documents, so that teachers explore ever more closely the impact of their actions on pupils' progress. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress in reading and particularly in mathematics, although their progress is weaker in writing and differences in overall attainment compared with that of their non-disadvantaged peers in school remain.
- Leaders have a close understanding of their pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work closely with parents, pupils and external partners to customise provision. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make very good progress. The most able pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics, although their progress in writing is not as strong.
- You have provided a stimulating wider curriculum where pupils have access to a diverse range of experiences. As yours is a heritage school, your pupils have a clear awareness of both the history and the changing nature of their community. You enable pupils to engage with a range of faiths and cultures, and pupils develop an appreciation of difference. Pupils have access to a range of sports and cultural experiences, from karate to choir to gardening. The steel-pan group has acquired a valued place in the community for its performances at the 'Chilli Jam', community events and national musical competitions. These cumulative experiences greatly enhance pupils' self-confidence and social awareness.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- further develop wider leadership and governance across the school by strengthening accountability systems, including performance management targets, to support even stronger progress for all groups of pupils across the school
- embed new approaches to writing, so that the sustained and substantial progress pupils have made in mathematics is replicated in their writing
- strengthen the curriculum, so that the progress that pupils make in reading and

mathematics is reflected in the wider curriculum, particularly in subjects such as science, geography and history.

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

Malcolm Kirtley  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and members of your wider leadership team. I held a meeting with a group of pupils and talked to pupils less formally in lessons. I met six members of the governing body, including the acting chair. I also talked to the school achievement partner. I undertook a tour of the school with you, observing teaching and learning in process, and I also looked at pupils' work in books and folders. I examined the school improvement plan as well as other documents, including the school's self-evaluation, assessment information and behaviour and attendance information. I examined safeguarding documents, including the record of security and suitability checks on staff. I took into account the 86 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 37 free-text responses from parents.