

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



27 October 2017

Mrs Julia Rodwell
Headteacher
Park End Primary School
Overdale Road
Park End
Middlesbrough
Teesside
TS3 0AA

Dear Mrs Rodwell

Short inspection of Park End Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 3 October 2017 with Ofsted Inspector Christopher Pearce, 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 February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. As a new headteacher, you have established a committed leadership team that is full of energy and enthusiasm. You are very well supported by your deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers. Staff and governors share your relentless determination to overcome the challenges faced by many of your pupils, and their families, within the community the school serves.

You constantly reflect on how to improve the school for your pupils. There is a strong culture of professional dialogue, support and challenge among all staff in the school. You are doggedly determined to empower teachers through good support and challenge, backed up by good resources and training. You work closely with other schools in the area to share good practice. This has resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching in the school and the progress pupils are making.

You and your staff have also worked effectively to address the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection. There are now more opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces in a range of subjects. Teachers regularly share good practice, not only in writing but also in other subjects across the school. However, you acknowledge that there is still a need to ensure that all pupils are given work that challenges them to use reasoning and problem solving in their work.

With regard to how well pupils achieve, information following the provisional 2017 results shows that outcomes for pupils are good and improving. However, not enough pupils are working at greater depth in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

An overwhelming majority of parents commented positively, through Parent View and through questionnaires that you undertake during the year, about the care that you give to their children. Parents are positive about the information they receive about their child's learning and appreciate how welcome they feel when visiting the school and talking to you about any concerns they may have. Parents also say that your emphasis on good behaviour is having a positive effect on their child outside school.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They appreciate the many opportunities that you provide to enrich and enhance their learning. Those spoken to during the inspection were enthusiastic about the school clubs, especially the breakfast club and the wide range of after-school activities, including sports, reading and mathematics activities. Pupils have a strong sense of respect for each other and the world around them. They talked about helping new pupils to settle into school and when asked about what made Park End so special, a pupil said: 'We get to do some great learning here because teachers are always helping us to get better.'

Safeguarding is effective.

The leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are effective. Staff follow procedures appropriately and any concerns are followed up rigorously. Records are accurate, detailed and of high quality. Pupils spoken to during the inspection said that they know how to keep themselves safe, especially when using the internet. They said that they could talk to any member of staff if they had a worry and knew that the adults in school were there to help them and keep them safe. Pupils are confident that things will be dealt with swiftly.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection I focused on the strength of phonics teaching. I also wanted to consider the reasons behind the dip in the proportion of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics at the end of Year 1 in 2016. You and your leaders have accurately identified the specific reasons for the dip. You have provided high-quality training which includes sharing the best practice across the school and making sure that all staff are consistent in their phonics teaching.
- Further support for phonics has been given to building pupils' confidence, supporting pupils' oral language and developing positive behaviours. Consequently, pupils make good progress in phonics from their starting points when they first join the school. Phonics teaching is effective because pupils can apply their phonics skills in their own writing. The majority of familiar words are spelt correctly. The vast majority of pupils who had attended the Nursery and

Reception classes passed the phonics screening check when they were in Year 1 in 2017.

- My second focus during the inspection was to look at how reading and mathematics are taught in the school. The proportion of pupils who attained the expected standards in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6 was below the national average in 2016. In mathematics, too little emphasis was placed on the teaching of reasoning and problem solving. Throughout last year, the mathematics teaching programme was refocused on these skills. Consequently, pupils' progress has improved considerably. Provisional results in 2017 show that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in mathematics has improved from 2016.
- In reading, you have recognised that pupils need to be able to read for meaning and use their understanding of texts. The leader for literacy has put in place a programme that is helping pupils to develop reading skills across a range of different texts. Pupils say they love reading and are encouraged to apply their skills across all subjects. Consequently, provisional results in 2017 show improvement from 2016 at both key stages, because the pupils are linking their understanding of good reading and writing.
- Both the mathematics and literacy leaders have looked at the way in which teachers meet the needs of pupils through exciting and varied activities which help pupils to improve. Careful monitoring of teaching means they are able to quickly put in place any support that staff need in developing skills and knowledge. You acknowledge that the middle leaders of English and mathematics now need to embed this practice further.
- We agreed that we wanted to focus on the attendance of pupils. You have been relentless in your work to improve attendance in the school. You have appointed a family support worker who works closely with the leader for attendance and with pupils and families. Your leaders monitor attendance carefully and you have set up an effective system so you can quickly step in to make sure all pupils attend school. You have introduced a number of creative incentives which have had a positive effect on improving attendance. Pupils spoken to during the inspection said they appreciated the certificates and rewards for good attendance. However, some pupils have considerable absences which are holding back their learning. Leaders are revising the attendance policy so that parents are clear as to why attendance is important in term time.
- During the inspection, I focused on how you are improving outcomes for the most able pupils. During our short visits to lessons, we saw some carefully planned activities and some good questioning by teachers. Pupils were engaged in working out problems for themselves and then sharing their findings with others. However, we both agreed that pupils in all lessons would benefit from work that enables them to reach the higher standards they are capable of.
- As there has been a significant number of new staff in the school since the last inspection, we agreed that I would look at how the sharing of good practice is improving pupils' outcomes. You have put in place a strong and effective system of team teaching, which means that staff are both supported and challenged by their peers. A teacher said: 'I'd not be half as good a teacher if I hadn't been

given the opportunities in this school.' Training is well structured and staff see this as further developing their skills. Your deputy headteacher, who leads on the quality of teaching and learning, can support and put in place any further training because she has a strong understanding of good teaching and learning. As a result, teaching in your school is effective.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- middle leaders fully embed the way they review and evaluate the quality of teaching, so they can continue improvements in their subject areas
- all pupils are given work that enables them to reach the higher standards they are capable of.

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

Yours sincerely

Jen Cave
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

We agreed the timetable and inspection activities for the day. The inspection team worked extensively with you and your leadership team throughout the inspection. We met with the leadership team, middle leaders for English and mathematics, teaching staff, and the early years leader. We scrutinised safeguarding records, including staff recruitment and vetting procedures, and recent audits, and reviewed evidence for reporting children missing in education. Together, we visited lessons in the Nursery, the early years and in key stages 1 and 2. We conducted a scrutiny of pupils' work with the middle leaders for English and mathematics.

We also spoke to groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2 in line with our agreed key lines of enquiry. I also met with representatives of the governing body and reviewed school documents, including the school's self-evaluation summary and samples of local authority visit notes. I also spoke with the local authority adviser for the school. Furthermore, I took full account of the parent, staff and pupil questionnaires provided by the school and the 56 responses to Parent View and the additional comments made by parents who asked to meet with me.