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Mr Rick Tavernor
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Tavernor

Short inspection of Brookside Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 31 October 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 April 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 the last inspection, there have been a number of changes to staffing. You became headteacher in September 2015 and a new deputy headteacher was also appointed at this time. New middle leadership roles have been developed and, as a cohesive team, you ensure that pupils at Brookside Primary school continue to receive a good quality of education.

You and your staff have created a welcoming, caring and inclusive school. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and say that learning here is fun. Parents are very supportive of the school and are positive about the progress that their children make. Parents speak highly of the dedication and commitment of staff and leaders, saying: 'This is an extraordinary school community and I am grateful to be part of it.' Staff are proud to be part of the team and enjoy working at the school. They believe that pupils are safe, well behaved and make good progress.

Pupils are proud to be members of the school: they enjoy their learning. Leaders provide many enriching opportunities for pupils which enhance their experiences. Leaders carefully plan activities such as visits to the local National Trust park and city visits to Manchester and Salford to enable pupils to learn about their heritage and appreciate their surroundings. Pupils are taught to be tolerant and have respect for all, regardless of differences. The inclusive nature of the school contributes to pupils' understanding of others. Work on multifaith projects teaches pupils about faiths and

religions other than their own.

Teachers encourage pupils to learn cooperatively and as a result, pupils play and learn well together in a friendly environment. Music is a strength of the school and pupils learn a wide range of instruments, from recorders and brass instruments to ukuleles. There are many opportunities for pupils to showcase their talents. Pupils can play in the school's brass band and take part in concerts. Extra-curricular clubs are varied and pupils enjoy activities such as running club and gymnastics.

Pupils' leadership skills are well developed through opportunities to contribute as student leaders, healthy leaders, play leaders, learning leaders and charity leaders. The school's approach to resolving problems between pupils is led by staff and trained pupils who take on roles as 'restorative stars' or 'restorative monitors'. Pupils can explain and clearly understand the approach of 'respect, responsibility and restore' which runs throughout the school, from Reception to Year 6. As a result of this broad range of experiences, pupils are well prepared for high school and for life in modern Britain.

Leaders and governors have taken effective action to address the areas for improvement since the last inspection. Leaders and teachers plan many opportunities which challenge pupils to learn and think for themselves. Pupils are presented with regular mathematics and literacy challenges and are developing resilience and independence through their daily learning activities. As a result of this focus on challenge and cooperative learning, pupils often learn from each other and all participate in learning as they work closely with their peers.

In response to increasing pupils' understanding of how to improve their work, leaders have implemented a new approach across the school, which pupils understand and can explain to others. Leaders are working hard to ensure that these strategies are implemented consistently throughout the classes so that pupils experience a 'seamless transition' as they progress through the school.

The development of the roles of middle leaders has widened the leadership team and brought new skills and talents. All staff have some leadership role and are taking on more responsibility for pupils' learning and progress. As a consequence, staff feel valued and supported by leaders. Governors are now able both to hold senior and middle leaders firmly to account and also support them in their work.

You and the governors have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and what needs to be improved further. Your improvement plans are accurate and are beginning to show impact in all areas. You rightly prioritise the progress of pupils, particularly in mathematics, and in making sure that pupils are challenged to make rapid progress from their individual starting points.

The local authority has been helpful in evaluating the work of the school and in supporting you in your new role as headteacher. You have found the support helpful in continuing to improve the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a culture of care and support which runs throughout the school. You and your staff are vigilant in safeguarding matters and your thorough knowledge of each and every child and their families helps you to know when pupils are facing difficulties. You work closely with a multitude of agencies, local authorities and charities to ensure that your pupils are safe and supported.

All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Procedures for recruiting staff meet statutory requirements and staff are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, both online and personally. They understand the risks of social media and are taught about a range of issues, including mental health, drugs, dental health and cycling. You and your team are aware of the needs of pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. You provide effective support through activities such as forest school, baking, circle time and the use of trained adults to help pupils through times when they may need additional support. Families and pupils are appreciative of this support and find leaders 'caring and approachable'.

Pupils spoken to during the inspection say that bullying is rare and that if it does occur, it is dealt with effectively by staff. All pupils said that there was an adult in school they felt able to talk to if they had any worries or concerns. Pupils feel safe on site and trust the adults and their peers to look out for them. There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and governors ensure that the core values of Brookside school, 'learn together, achieve together', permeate all aspects of school life. The vision to prepare pupils to be ready for the challenges of the future is achieved through a combination of effective teaching, an engaging and creative curriculum, and dedicated and caring staff who know their pupils well.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the early years is rising year on year and is now above the national average. The leadership of early years is strong and ensures that children experience a wide range of activities daily to enhance their skills, development and knowledge. Parents are involved in their child's learning and are happy with how well their children have settled.
- Achievement in the Year 1 phonics screening check is above the national average. Leaders ensure that targeted interventions and high-quality teaching enable pupils to make good progress in this area.
- In Year 2, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with the national average in 2017. However, only a small proportion go beyond the expected standard to reach the higher level. Leaders are confident that current learners are making good progress in all areas of learning and more are on track to achieve greater depth at the end of key stage 1.
- In 2016 and 2017, Year 6 pupils' attainment and progress were broadly average in reading and writing. Attainment and progress in mathematics, however, were less strong, particularly for girls. Too few pupils achieved greater depth in their learning.

Leaders are aware that progress, particularly in mathematics, needed to increase and immediate action was taken to improve outcomes. As a result, consistent approaches to the teaching of mathematics are being implemented across the school and pupils are developing much stronger reasoning and problem-solving skills. This is evident in pupils' work across year groups and key stages.

- Currently, girls are making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 2. The performance of girls has improved and leaders are confident that pupils will achieve the high expectations set for them this year.
- Leaders work hard to raise the attendance of pupils in the school. As a result, pupils' attendance is improving and is closer to the national average. Groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, are now attending school more frequently. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school has fallen considerably this year. Leaders are determined that poor attendance will not be a barrier for any pupils and are working hard with families to stress the importance of not missing valuable learning through taking holidays in term time.
- Across the school, pupils and staff work well together and show respect for each other. Leadership is effective and promotes a cohesive, happy and nurturing environment where pupils enjoy learning and develop as well-rounded young people.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are challenged so that they make at least good progress from their individual starting points and the proportion of pupils achieving greater depth at both key stages increases
- pupils' progress in mathematics is accelerated across all key stages so that learning moves on rapidly for all.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen O'Neill
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, your senior leaders and the lead teacher for mathematics. In addition, I met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I met formally with a group of pupils from across the school and talked informally with others around the school and in lessons. You accompanied me on visits to classes, where we observed teaching and learning, spoke with pupils and looked at the work in some pupils' books.

I examined a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, attendance and the school's assessment of pupils' progress and attainment. I scrutinised a range of policies and the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation report. I also undertook a review of the school's website.

As part of the inspection, I considered seven responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire, 23 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as comments received via the free-text facility. I also spoke with parents informally in the playground.