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Mrs Jan Kartawick
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Kartawick

Short inspection of Norfolk Park School

Following my visit to the school on 24 October 2017 with Suzette Garland-Grimes, Ofsted Inspector, 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 July 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your deputy headteacher are a strong and cohesive team. You lead the school with passion and commitment. Importantly, you have secured the strong support of other leaders and staff who share your deep commitment to every child at Norfolk Park. As a result of the school's effective leadership and your colleagues' successful work, pupils develop the positive attitudes, confidence and skills they need to learn well and make progress. This was evident throughout the inspection.

Inspectors identified two areas for improvement at the school's last inspection: first, to further improve the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make; second, to continue to develop the school's leadership and management. You have tackled these well. You have improved the way teachers plan learning activities so that pupils know what they will be learning and sustain their concentration and interest in lessons. You have also developed the knowledge and skills of members of the leadership team. As a result, leaders have developed more robust assessment and tracking systems which are helping teachers to plan learning activities which are more closely matched to pupils' widely different needs. This is giving you a clearer view of the progress pupils are making. However, you know that leaders need to analyse and use this information more systematically to secure further improvement in the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. Similarly, we agreed that you are not analysing and using the information you have about pupils' attendance to reduce levels of absence and, in turn, improve pupils' progress.

Your summary self-evaluation gives a clear and accurate picture of the school's effectiveness. For example, you understand the need to develop systems which will improve the learning and progress of the most able pupils. Clearly identified actions in the school's development plan are beginning to make a difference to phonics teaching and the development of pupils' phonics knowledge and skills. We agreed that accelerating the progress of the most able pupils, especially in reading, is an important next step for the school.

Governors make a strong contribution to the school's leadership and management. This is because they work closely and effectively with you and the senior leadership team. As a result of comprehensive termly reports, well-organised governing body meetings and through regular school visits, you make sure that governors are knowledgeable about all areas of the school's work. You actively involve them in discussions and decision-making and you value the way they challenge you and hold you to account. Governors have used regular visits to increase their understanding of pupils' needs. They talked knowledgeably to inspectors about the progress pupils are making, for example in their social and emotional development and in the development of their communication and interaction skills. We agreed that governors could challenge leaders more effectively about how they use assessment information to improve teaching and the outcomes pupils achieve.

Parents were unequivocally positive about the school's work. The parents who spoke to inspectors highlighted the hard work and dedication of the whole staff team and the significant support you give to pupils and their families.

The actions taken by you, senior and middle leaders and governors have placed the school in a strong position to secure further improvement.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

You have an excellent understanding of pupils' health and medical needs and you work in close partnership with a range of health practitioners to make sure that pupils' needs are met. You and your staff are knowledgeable about the things that make children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities vulnerable. This is because you provide regular, high-quality training and updates for staff and you make sure that concerns about pupils are identified and reported in a timely way. Similarly, you are vigilant in checking that pupils who are fully dependent on adults for their daily care needs are safe and protected.

You work closely and effectively with other professionals and services to make sure that pupils who may be vulnerable are identified quickly and their families receive the timely and effective help and support they need.

Inspection findings

- I was keen to find out more about how you are assessing and tracking the progress pupils are making and whether this gives you an accurate picture of how well they are doing. Assessment information shows that pupils' progress in English and mathematics has improved steadily since the school's last inspection. You now use a variety of assessment methods to ensure that pupils' learning and progress are assessed precisely and accurately. You have developed a new approach to teaching phonics and assessing pupils' acquisition and development of phonics knowledge and skills. An important next step is to make sure that teachers use this information to pinpoint pupils' next steps in learning and to check whether the most able pupils are developing their reading skills and deepening their knowledge and understanding.
- I was also interested in the way you have responded to the areas for improvement identified at the school's last inspection, especially those linked to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. It is clear that staff have a deep understanding of pupils' needs and there are strong, trusting relationships between staff and pupils. Staff use their knowledge of pupils well to plan learning experiences which are interesting, engaging and productive. Pupils know what they will be learning and most are set challenging work. This was less consistently evident for the most able pupils.
- Lastly, I wanted to consider the effectiveness of leadership and management. In our meeting at the start of the inspection, we spoke about levels of attendance, which are low in comparison with other primary schools nationally. We agreed that there are some circumstances when absence from school is unavoidable. However, we also agreed that leaders and governors do not analyse attendance information systematically enough and the actions you have taken to improve attendance have not had enough impact. Improving attendance and reducing persistent absence are important next steps for the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- information about attendance is systematically analysed and robust action is taken to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence
- assessment information is understood and used by leaders and teachers to improve further the quality of teaching and to accelerate the progress pupils make, especially the most able pupils
- senior leaders are challenged by governors about how they use assessment information to improve teaching and the outcomes pupils achieve.

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

Yours sincerely

Catherine Garton
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

We met with you and your senior and middle leaders, three representatives from the governing body, parents and pupils. We visited lessons with and without senior leaders, looked at the work in pupils' books and folders and talked to them about their learning. We considered the results from Ofsted's online surveys. There were 12 responses to the online staff survey and no responses to the online pupil survey. There were two written responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. We examined a range of documents, including information about attendance, safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan and information about pupils' progress.