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Mrs Jenny Melling
Headteacher
Central Street Infant and Nursery School
Central Street
Hebden Bridge
West Yorkshire
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Dear Mrs Melling

Short inspection of Central Street Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 16 November 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 September 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You know your community very well and you are clear about the vital role the school plays in that community. Working with others across the school, you have created, and maintain, a culture of learning and high expectations for all. This culture is underpinned by effective systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils. You use this careful assessment of the quality of teaching to improve your staff's skills and confidence. You regularly visit classrooms and encourage staff to share their expertise across the school. You have been particularly successful, for example, in encouraging the sharing of the skills of the staff working in the provision for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) provision. As a result, the school's classrooms are places where children want to learn, where they feel safe, cared for and challenged to do their best.

The school's previous inspection in September 2012 identified the need to raise the level of challenge in lessons, particularly where pupils were making choices about what to do next in their learning. You have addressed this aspect of your work very effectively. Staff are skilled at setting pupils stimulating tasks that test their resilience and encourage autonomy. For example, in a shared reading session I observed, staff asked pupils challenging questions about the book they were reading that required pupils to make predictions about what was going to happen next. Staff were persistent in their questioning and the pupils made good progress. Classroom routines and high expectations across the school encourage pupils to use their initiative and apply their skills in new learning.

The governing body, federated with Stubbings Infant School, also knows the school and its local community very well. Governors make detailed checks on the school's work through regular visits and follow-up discussion. Governors evaluate the impact of your actions and provide challenge that helps to ensure that the school keeps on track. You provide the governing body with detailed and carefully evaluated information. Governors use this information and their own direct knowledge of the school to check on progress and analyse the impact of your actions. Governors also draw on a range of effective external expertise from officers of Calderdale local authority.

Your assessment of what needs to be done to improve the school further is accurate. For example, you are clear that the quality and range of writing need to improve further and that more has to be done to extend the opportunities that all pupils have to write at greater length. You are also aware that the most able pupils need to be stretched further so that they extend and deepen their learning and make more rapid progress. You work effectively with other schools in the area to assure the accuracy of the school's judgements and to develop staff expertise.

You have worked effectively and relentlessly to improve attendance at the school. Historically, poor attendance has been an issue. As a result of your actions and those of your staff, supported effectively by governors and officers of the local authority, attendance is now consistently close to the national average. You have supported parents in understanding the importance of regular attendance on pupils' progress and well-being through regular newsletters, individual conversations and events at the school. You and your staff are tenacious in engaging with the parents of the very small group of pupils whose attendance is still not yet good enough. You work effectively to remove barriers to good attendance and help pupils attend regularly.

Parents are very supportive of the school and of you. They are particularly pleased with the way that staff make themselves available. One parent told me that it was 'such a relief' that she had managed to get her child into the school because she wanted a school that would help her child 'enjoy and flourish'. All of the parents whom I spoke with, and who responded to the online questionnaires, were satisfied with the service the school offers. They were particularly complimentary about you and your staff. One parent told me that 'nothing was too much trouble' for staff at the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

You ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are meticulously kept and are of high quality.

You have established a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. You, your staff and the governing body take your safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. You ensure that regular and effective training is provided for all staff and governors. As a result, they are up to date in their knowledge and understanding. You, as designated safeguarding leader, have strong links with outside agencies. Your

records of your dealings with these agencies are detailed and show your meticulous approach to this vital work. You engage with the local authority promptly and follow up safeguarding issues tenaciously.

Inspection findings

- Children settle well into early years. Staff are very effective in their engagement with parents and do all they can to keep parents informed. Parents really welcome this and the school's open communications. They say that they particularly like the ways staff work with them to make the children's move into school calm and positive. Children who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are very well supported and make good progress from their starting points.
- The school has good links with other local providers and this helps staff promptly identify and engage with the particular needs and strengths of children as they enter the school. Early years staff plan carefully and offer a range of activities that stimulate children's interests and encourage them to collaborate together as they play and learn. Assessments of how well children are doing are regular and help focus next steps in their learning.
- The percentage of children who reach a good level of development by the end of Reception Year has been consistently above the national average over the last three years.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength of the school. The proportion of pupils who achieved the standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has fluctuated over the last three years. This is now in line with national averages. The school-wide focus on reading is having a positive impact on pupils in key stage 1. The most able pupils said that they enjoy reading and they like discussing the ways writers use words to create particular effects. The least able readers in key stage 1 are able to use the phonics skills they have learned to read new words correctly. Pupils report that they enjoy reading regularly both at school and at home.
- Outcomes for 2017, moderated by the local authority, at the end of Year 2 show a significant improvement. Provisional results for these tests at the end of key stage 1 show significant improvements in reading, writing and mathematics. These are now at, or above, the likely national averages. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that the efforts you have put into improving teaching through focused monitoring and prompt intervention have had a positive impact.
- Your special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is very effective. She works with staff and governors to monitor the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Additional funding is well spent. Staff's expectations for these pupils are high. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their starting points. Communications with parents are good.
- Similarly, you, your staff and governors carefully monitor the progress of disadvantaged pupils. The numbers of these pupils and their differing needs change from year to year. You and your staff are consistent in your careful planning and attention to the needs and strengths of these pupils. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make generally good progress, similar to that of their peers

in the school. You spend the additional funding for these pupils effectively.

- All staff show good subject knowledge. They know their pupils well and plan work that stimulates and engages them. Classrooms are friendly, orderly places where pupils feel confident and relaxed. They make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well. Teaching assistants are well deployed and contribute very fully to the life and success of the school.
- Pupils like coming to school. They enjoy it and are very appreciative and aware of the effort and care that you and your staff put into keeping them safe. Pupils told me that they feel safe and know how to stay safe. They told me that there are regular activities and events at the school that help them understand how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including when online. They said that bullying is very rare. They also said that they were alert to the range of forms that bullying can take and what to do if it happened to them or to a friend. They were very confident that adults at the school would deal with it promptly and well.
- Pupils show high levels of understanding and care for themselves and for others. They were able to tell me many of the ingredients that constitute a healthy lifestyle. They were appreciative of their lunch. They were also very aware of the duty that they had to care for, and look out for, each other, both in class and around the school. They are very well behaved.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to focus on improving the attendance of the very few pupils whose attendance is not good enough
- the most able pupils are provided with even greater challenge so that they make stronger progress across all subjects, especially in subjects other than mathematics and English.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Evans
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you to discuss the school's effectiveness and what you have done to ensure that the school continues to improve. I also discussed the service that the school offers to children who have SEN and/or disabilities. I spoke on the telephone

with an officer of the local authority and with another colleague who supports the school about their view of the school's progress and capacity to improve. I met with the teacher who leads the ASD provision with her local authority contact. I also met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body, and with groups of parents at the beginning and end of the inspection day.

I attended an assembly on forgiveness and visited the after-school 'Fun Club'.

I read a range of documents, including your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I also scrutinised the school's safeguarding systems, records and associated documents. I checked information about pupils' achievement along with evaluations of aspects of the school's work and minutes of meetings of the governing body.

Accompanied by you, I visited all classes to observe teaching, learning and assessment. I checked pupils' progress in their books. I talked formally with a group of pupils from Year 2. I listened to four of these pupils reading and discussed their reading with them. I also talked informally with pupils in lessons and around the school at lunch and playtimes.

I considered the 17 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 14 free-text comments from parents. I also took into account two very positive emails that were sent to the school by parents for my consideration.