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Ms Judy Shaw
Headteacher
Tuel Lane Infant School
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Dear Ms Shaw

Short inspection of Tuel Lane Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 18 January 2018, 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 2013.

The school continues to be good.

You and your dedicated, resourceful and effective senior leadership team share a clear vision for improvement. As a result, the standards reached by children at the end of Year 2 are continuing to improve after a dip in 2016 in comparison to national standards.

You know the community that the school serves exceptionally well and are focused on making sure the school remains at the heart of it. This is clearly reflected in the exceptionally positive feedback from the 30 parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Children often arrive in the school's Nursery class with skills and knowledge below those of their peers nationally. The majority start Year 1 having reached the standard expected for their age. This demonstrates good progress overall.

One of the areas for improvement identified in your previous inspection report asked you and the governing body to support the development of middle leaders. You have successfully achieved this objective and have developed the close and cohesive team which is your current senior leadership team, from your original middle leaders. Your work away from school has given them opportunities to develop their leadership skills.

Through careful monitoring and encouragement for those new to post, the quality

of teaching and learning has continued to improve since the previous inspection. Your careful focus on developing the whole child enables you to ensure that children learn well but also, as you clearly believe, enjoy their childhood.

Both you and your leadership team carry out regular observations in classrooms and analyse work in children's books. This, combined with data from teachers' observations, enables you to keep a close eye on standards across the school and to take action should anyone start to slip behind.

Pupils are confident and self-assured despite their young age. They separate from parents happily at the start of the school day and are keen to come to school. This is reflected in their consistently good attendance. Your very close working partnership with the local junior school ensures that pupils make a smooth transfer to Year 3.

Behaviour both inside and outside classrooms is good and contributes well to the good progress made by pupils and children across the school.

A wide variety of different visitors and visits within the local areas enable pupils to develop a secure understanding of the world. For example, visits from a joiner and a veterinary surgeon help children to broaden their horizons for future careers and contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

Safeguarding is effective.

Staff all receive regular safeguarding training. Senior leaders ensure that local updates are also passed on to staff. This enables them to be clear about what to do should a child share a concern with them. Staff are also very clear that safeguarding pupils is the responsibility of everyone in school. Most families live close to the school and so staff get to know families well. There is a high level of trust and respect for staff from members of the community and this enables effective but sensitive action to be taken when necessary to support pupils' needs.

School records show that staff and leaders work closely with other agencies to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils and their families. Four members of staff, including you, have undertaken designated safeguarding leader training. This ensures that there is always someone available to support staff and pupils should the need arise.

Inspection findings

- The first of my lines of enquiry for the inspection was the progress made by children in the early years. A dip in 2015/16, particularly for girls, suggested that progress may not be as strong as it should be. However, school data showed a much stronger picture in 2016/17, with more children than nationally reaching a good level of development at the end of their Reception Year.
- Data also shows that children arrive in Nursery and sometimes Reception classes with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age. Staff assess their

skills and knowledge and use this information to provide opportunities for children to play and learn which closely match their needs. Currently, children in Nursery and Reception classes are on course to make similar good progress to that made by children last year.

- A further focus for the inspection was the progress of the most able pupils. Last year this group attained less well than their peers nationally. You and your leadership team have worked hard to ensure that this dip in progress does not happen again. Most-able pupils are now identified at an earlier stage and work is more often set which stretches and challenges them to succeed to the best of their ability, particularly in mathematics and reading.
- You recognise that more needs to be done to increase the number of pupils attaining greater depth, particularly in writing.
- The third of my key lines of enquiry was around the progress currently made by disadvantaged pupils. Work in pupils' books across the school supported the school data showing that this group is now making stronger progress.
- Both you and the governing body recognise that this improvement is largely attributable to an increase in carefully targeted support for individual pupils. This very bespoke approach has ensured that individual pupils make fast progress if they start to fall behind. Their current strong progress demonstrates clearly the school's effective use of pupil premium funding.
- A further line of enquiry for the inspection was the development of middle leadership within the school, especially in early years and key stage 1. This was an area for improvement in the previous inspection report. As both the early years leader and the key stage 1 leader are now part of your leadership team, it is clearly evident you have addressed this successfully.
- Currently, all three members of the leadership team carry out a variety of different roles within the school, including the leadership of each area of the curriculum. You clearly recognise that further work is needed to develop additional leaders to take responsibility for leading curriculum subjects in order to increase the capacity of the leadership team.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- staff and leaders closely monitor the progress of the most able pupils, ensure that work set for them challenges them sufficiently and enables them to make the progress of which they are capable, particularly in writing
- the capacity of the school leadership team is increased further by developing middle leadership roles to take responsibility for provision and outcomes in each subject of the curriculum.

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

Marian Thomas
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, accompanied by senior leaders, I observed learning in classrooms across the school. I scrutinised a range of documents including those relating to the school curriculum, pupils' progress and safeguarding children. I held discussions with school staff, the leadership team and groups of children. I took into account the responses from the four members of staff who responded to Ofsted's staff survey, and the 30 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.