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Mrs Leigh
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Leigh

Short inspection of Delph Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 23 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 June 2013.

The school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You demonstrate clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders and staff are keen to keep improving. Along with other local schools, you have recently formed the Dovestone Learning Partnership. This has given you a welcome opportunity to share expertise and resources with other professionals and develop teaching in the school.

You provide a varied, engaging and well-planned curriculum for your pupils. You give them a wealth of opportunities to develop their interests and skills across different subjects. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning. For example, pupils learn to play musical instruments such as brass, violin, cello and drums. They relish playing in the school band and taking part in local music events. Your Year 6 enterprise initiative allows pupils to work alongside local businesses to design and launch a product and raise funds for charity. Through such opportunities, you raise pupils' aspirations and ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Governors are very supportive. They are frequent visitors to school and take part in school events and trips. Consequently, governors know staff and pupils well. Governors attend training days on a regular basis. As a result, their skills are up to date. Governors use their expertise to provide a good balance of challenge and support for you and your staff.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Those who spoke to me during the inspection said

that they value leadership opportunities such as serving on the school council. They feel that they play an important part in making decisions such as on improving the playgrounds. Pupils feel safe and well looked after. Pupils told me that there are some instances of misbehaviour but that staff deal with these appropriately.

The vast majority of parents and carers share pupils' positive view of the school. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities were keen to describe how leaders provide valuable support which has improved pupils' learning. A typical comment on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, described Delph Primary as, 'A friendly nurturing school with a caring family ethos'. A small number of parents expressed concern that leaders do not deal with misbehaviour. However, the majority of parents stated that pupils behave well and pupils feel safe. Evidence seen during the inspection confirmed that behaviour in and out of classrooms is orderly and respectful.

The previous inspection asked you to further improve standards in mathematics and English by sharing the good practice that exists in the school. You have developed a collaborative working environment. Teachers are keen to improve and they share ideas and expertise. Inspectors asked you to match pupils' work to their prior skills and knowledge. By looking at pupils' workbooks and talking to pupils, I can see that, in most lessons, teachers carefully set work at the right level. As a result of your actions, pupils achieve well across the school in English. You have correctly identified that, in key stage 2 mathematics, work is not always challenging enough for pupils, including the most able.

You were also asked by previous inspectors to develop a system to measure pupils' progress. You have done this. Leaders are now able to track how well different groups of pupils are achieving across the school. However, I found that you do not use this data precisely to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and check pupils' progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are thorough and of high quality. You, staff and governors place a very high priority on keeping pupils safe. The school's website provides parents with detailed information about safeguarding. Leaders provide appropriate and frequent training for staff. As a result, adults working in the school have up-to-date knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures. You keep detailed records in relation to safeguarding concerns. You and your staff work closely with other agencies and ensure that pupils receive the right level of care. Leaders make sure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

Leaders undertake statutory checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. Governors have ensured that the appropriate monitoring and filtering systems are in place for the school's internet connection.

Inspection findings

- The inspection focused on a number of key lines of enquiry, the first of which related to the achievement of children in the Reception Year. This was because, in 2017, children achieved less well than in previous years. During the inspection, I saw that, in both the pre-school and the Reception class, children behave well and follow school routines. They play with concentration and imagination and cooperate with others. Teachers quickly identify children's gaps in learning and plan the curriculum carefully to meet children's needs. Last year, children started with skills and development around those typical for children of this age. By the end of the year, their attainment was just above the national average and children had made good progress.
- My second key line of enquiry related to how well leaders allocate the pupil premium funding to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. I found that leaders identify gaps in the learning of disadvantaged pupils with accuracy and put in place appropriate additional resources to address pupils' individual needs. Funding is also used to ensure that disadvantaged pupils are able to access the full range of enrichment activities available. In 2017, the progress of disadvantaged pupils was typically similar to others in the school. However, leaders do not measure the impact of additional support on individual pupils closely enough to check that they are making good progress. As a result, disadvantaged pupils do not always make the progress that they should.
- I also looked at whether leaders were taking appropriate steps to improve the attendance of pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities. I found that you monitor the attendance of all pupils including different groups. You work closely with families to improve the attendance of pupils who are not attending school regularly. You have taken appropriate actions to ensure that attendance remains good across the school, including for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- My final key line of enquiry related to the achievement of key stage 2 pupils in mathematics, including the most able. You have introduced strategies to improve teaching in mathematics and to increase the proportion of pupils reaching greater depth. Pupils' work indicates that they gain confidence in their understanding of number. They develop accuracy in their written calculations, and there is some evidence of increased levels of challenge in the work set for some pupils. However, in some classes, pupils do not have enough opportunity to develop their mathematical skills in different ways. We agreed that pupils need further opportunity to develop their skills through problem solving and challenge.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they analyse pupil progress data with greater accuracy and rigour to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and to inform school improvement planning
- they analyse the impact of the pupil premium funding with greater accuracy and rigour to enable a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils to make good

progress

- in mathematics, teachers more consistently provide pupils with challenging activities that allow them to fully develop their mathematical skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Stevens
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher and five teachers. I also spoke to five governors. I spoke to a representative of the local authority and the virtual-school headteacher and met with the school's improvement partner. I talked to eight pupils from key stage 2 and spoke informally with other pupils during lessons. I also heard pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read. I visited all classes with you, where I observed teaching and learning and looked at pupils' work.

I took account of 93 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, including free-text responses. I also spoke to five parents before school. I looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, school development plan, a peer review, minutes of governing body meetings, curriculum planning documents and staff appraisal records. I evaluated safeguarding procedures including policies to keep pupils safe, staff training records, safeguarding checks and attendance information. I undertook a review of the school's website.