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Mrs Alison Wilks  
Headteacher  
Kings Oak Primary Learning Centre  
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South Yorkshire  
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Dear Mrs Wilks

### **Short inspection of Kings Oak Primary Learning Centre**

Following my visit to the school on 6 March 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 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.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

You and your staff have created an excellent learning culture in which pupils thrive and make good progress, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Your sharp focus and relentless determination have established high expectations of staff and pupils. Senior and middle leaders are proactive and expert in their areas of responsibility. Leaders, at all levels, make a valuable contribution to school improvement. Staff are reflective and demonstrate deep commitment to your shared vision for the school and its community. You are successfully overcoming the challenging circumstances of a school with a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils.

You and your staff have significantly improved pupil outcomes at key stages 1 and 2. Pupils sustain their strong progress across all year groups. Outcomes in the early years rose in 2017. At key stage 1, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been above the national average for the last two years. Standards in phonics are above average in Year 1. Pupils consistently make above-average progress at key stage 2. In 2017, the proportion reaching the expected standard in

mathematics at key stage 2 was well above the national average. A few pupils are starting to attain the higher standards in the early years and at key stages 1 and 2. This is an area for further improvement.

You and your leadership team have developed a distinctive curriculum that successfully meets the needs and interests of pupils. Pupils develop their key skills well and display positive attitudes to learning. Due to high-quality social and emotional support, those pupils you have identified as vulnerable engage in learning well and make good progress. You use assessment strategically to organise teaching groups and plan learning. You accurately target the needs of individuals and groups. Your effective deployment of skilled teaching assistants accelerates learning. Parents and carers of pupils who have SEN praised the support provided for their children.

The involvement of parents is exceptionally strong. A high proportion participates in the weekly family reading sessions in school. This promotes pupils' reading well. Many parents benefit from parenting classes and healthy eating workshops. These enable them to support pupils' learning and development well.

The previous inspection report asked the school to improve achievement in mathematics. Pupils make strong progress in mathematics at both key stages. High quality leadership and professional development in mathematics have resulted in highly effective teaching and learning.

The report also asked the school to improve the use of computer technology. The innovative sensory room provides pupils with an immersive experience of sight, sound and smell. Teachers' questioning stimulates pupils' responses well and enables them to develop their own ideas for writing in English and in topics across the curriculum. Pupils use tablet computers well to research information and to develop musical skills.

You have reduced absence and persistent absence. However, these remain above the national average.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are vigilant. Regular training ensures a high level of awareness about safeguarding issues. Staff identify and record concerns systematically, and safeguarding leaders follow up issues promptly. Leaders regularly check on the safeguarding actions taken by staff. Staff make referrals promptly and appropriately and work closely with other agencies to ensure that support is timely and relevant. Dedicated school staff work closely with parents. Effective communication with parents supports the positive culture for safeguarding. The school places a high priority on pupils' safety on the internet. For example, a recent assembly discussed the use of inappropriate language on social media.

## Inspection findings

- Improved attainment and progress at both key stages are due to sustained high-quality teaching over time. Teachers use assessment accurately to monitor pupils' progress and to allocate extra support for those not making enough progress. Teaching carefully targets the identified needs of groups and individuals. Pupils respond well to the regular challenges provided by teachers. The large number of skilled teaching assistants enables pupils to receive close and effective guidance during lessons.
- In the early years, the well-organised and stimulating learning environment and a wide range of good-quality learning resources enable children to develop well in all areas of learning, including expressive arts, design and making. Children make good progress in literacy and mathematics. The proportion at a good level of development was close to the national average in 2017. Current children, including disadvantaged children, are making good progress. Good links with parents promote their involvement in children's learning.
- The mathematics curriculum is methodical and systematically builds pupils' knowledge and understanding and their fluency in basic arithmetical skills. Mathematics lessons are purposeful and productive. Pupils effectively apply their knowledge and skills to word problems and to real-life contexts. Pupils concentrate well and work independently in mathematical tasks.
- Effective social and emotional support for those pupils who may be vulnerable has developed their resilience, and they engage well in learning. This contributes to the good progress made by disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. The most able pupils receive extra support, and some are beginning to reach the higher standards. This is an area for further development.
- The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' enjoyment of learning. Teachers choose topics carefully to reflect pupils' needs and interests. Visits and visitors give pupils first-hand experiences that motivate their learning. Topics have practical outcomes that pupils actively contribute to and that parents appreciate, for example, a circus show and a Victorian Christmas market. Pupils learn about other cultures well. Staff focus strongly on authors and reading which successfully promotes enjoyment in reading. Monitoring pupils' learning in foundation subjects is an area for development.
- Staff monitor attendance closely and act promptly to tackle emerging issues. Pupils value the rewards for good attendance. Outreach work by the education welfare officer has contributed to a further reduction in absence in the current year. Absence and persistent absence remain higher than the national average, and the school continues to develop its work to improve the attendance by children from hard-to-reach families.
- Governors have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They scrutinise and question the impact of leaders' actions thoroughly. They are fully involved in considering the school's strategic direction. They have an accurate understanding of the priorities for further improvement.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- more pupils attain the higher standards in the early years and at key stages 1 and 2
- attendance increases and persistent absence reduces
- leaders develop the monitoring of teaching and learning in the foundation subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, senior and middle leaders, the chair of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils. I also spoke to parents bringing children to school and at a parenting workshop. I jointly observed teaching with you and your senior leaders in all year groups.

I checked the school website and examined a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, assessment information and safeguarding records. I took account of 40 responses from parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire and four written responses. I also considered nine responses from staff.