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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Jayne Proctor-Blain
Headteacher
Tankersley St Peter's CofE (Aided) Primary School
Westwood New Road
Tankersley
Barnsley
South Yorkshire
S75 3DA

Dear Mrs Proctor-Blain

Short inspection of Tankersley St Peter's CofE (Aided) Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 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 March 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 are relentless in your ambition for continuous school improvement and you always put the children and pupils in your school at the heart of what you and your staff do. You and your leadership team have successfully dealt with the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. As a result, outcomes of pupils have been strong, overall, since the last inspection.

Since the last inspection, you have reviewed your leadership and staffing structure to improve the effectiveness of the school. You acted swiftly and appointed an experienced leader for early years and a family support worker. Your two deputy headteachers are leading English and mathematics across the whole school. You reviewed your mathematics curriculum and appointed a member of staff as a specialist leader of this area. Consequently, the leadership and management of the school have improved and there is great capacity for even further improvement.

You have strategically developed systems to allow you and your senior leaders to identify correctly areas of the school that need improvement and to support and improve performance in those areas. Your determination and passion for continuous improvement have ensured that leaders at all levels focus on the progress of all pupils. You have provided support for staff development and, as a result, the quality of teaching and learning across the school is strong.

Governance is a real strength of the school. Governors are knowledgeable and the

recruitment of the latest governors has meant that there is a wide range of skills and expertise in the governing body. The chair of governors is experienced and enthusiastic and leads the governing body very well. All governors are committed and provide robust challenge and support to leaders at all levels. There is strong capacity in the school's leadership to achieve the improvements that you aspire to, in order to become an outstanding school.

At the last inspection, you were asked to improve the provision for learning in mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world in the Reception class to ensure that the most able children make maximum progress. You acted swiftly and you reviewed the whole-school staffing structure, including the leadership of early years, to ensure that the quality of teaching in this area is strong. As a result, rapid improvements took place. There is a broad curriculum in place, the engagement with parents and carers is strong and staff use the improved system of tracking progress much more effectively. The environment is stimulating and includes a range of number-based activities. The teaching of phonics is effective and is linked to the key stage 1 curriculum. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are supported well. As a result, the provision for learning in early years is improving in all areas and for all children, including the most able.

At the last inspection, you were also asked to improve the quality of leadership and management by improving relationships with the small group of harder-to-reach families in order to increase the attendance of their children. The appointment of your family support worker has been instrumental in the success of the work undertaken with these families. You have raised significantly the profile of attendance across the whole school through a range of initiatives, including rewards. Pupils can clearly articulate the importance of regular attendance to school. As a result, the attendance of all pupils is improving. School information for current pupils indicates that the rate of persistent absence has fallen but remains above the national average. Unfortunately, there are still a small number of families who do not prioritise good school attendance for their children. You are determined to continue to work with these families and acknowledge that there is some more work to do here.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your leadership team have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. You lead an extensive safeguarding team that knows the pupils and their families very well. You have made sure that the school site is secure and the staff monitor pupils' welfare thoroughly and record information in detail. You and your safeguarding team are vigilant and meet regularly to discuss all concerns raised about pupils. Consequently, the school tracks and shares information with external agencies effectively and in a timely way.

You have ensured that staff and governors receive appropriate training in child protection, and you and your team carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of

all staff who work with pupils.

Pupils said that bullying does not happen very often but, when it does, teachers and leaders tackle it quickly. Pupils also reported that they feel safe, know who to go to if they have any concerns and are confident that staff will deal effectively with any problems. Pupils value the support they receive from staff. The relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. As a result, behaviour in lessons and conduct around the clean and well-kept school site are very good. Inspection evidence and the views of parents and staff concur with this opinion.

You have succeeded in creating a very warm, inclusive and caring environment where pupils and staff feel valued and part of a team. School information indicates that, according to recent surveys, parents feel that the school is open and friendly, and there is a positive and caring ethos.

Inspection findings

- Since the last inspection, outcomes for pupils overall have remained strong. Attainment at the end of key stage 2 has been consistently above the national average for the last three years. Attainment at the end of key stage 1 has also been consistently above the national average over the last three years. The 2016 outcomes placed the school in the top 3% of schools nationally. In 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined was well above the national average.
- In 2016, progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was all well above average. In 2017, the progress of pupils in writing remained well above average, but the progress in reading and mathematics dropped to average. Outcomes in reading for disadvantaged pupils at the end of key stage 1, although slightly improved from the previous year, remained below national average. Although you were disappointed, you acted quickly and decisively, and you and your leaders correctly identified specific areas that needed improvement. You swiftly implemented action plans for intervention. As a result, school assessment information indicates an improvement for the current Year 6 pupils, including the most able and disadvantaged pupils, in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard and greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics. School information also indicates an improvement in the outcomes for pupils in all other classes, including in mathematics at the end of key stage 1 and in Reception.
- Since the last inspection in 2014, you and your leaders have implemented thorough and robust monitoring systems, which show that the quality of teaching is good and better in all lessons. Our joint visits to classrooms, together with discussions and scrutiny of other evidence, confirm that you are skilled in accurately evaluating the quality of teaching. You and your senior leaders carry out frequent monitoring of teaching and learning based on a carefully planned monitoring schedule. You provide detailed feedback to staff and you check the effect of any professional development on the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils. As a result, all teachers provide more challenge for all pupils, including the disadvantaged and the most able pupils. Teachers use targeted

questioning effectively to probe pupils' deeper understanding and support their progress.

- You have developed a 'subject in the spotlight' curriculum model, ensuring that subject leaders have the opportunity to develop their subject across the whole school. Consequently, all subjects have a strong status in the curriculum.
- The teaching of phonics across the school is strong. During our visits to lessons, we saw effective phonics teaching taking place in small break-out areas. As a result, outcomes in the national phonics screening checks have been very high over the past three years and in the top 3% in 2017.
- Reading has been a strong focus for you and your staff since September 2017. You introduced reading initiatives in which staff teach pupils key comprehension skills such as retrieval, inference and prediction. You promote reading widely across the school, and displays such as 'Book in a box' reinforce the pupils' love for reading. Pupils read frequently, both at home and in school. The staff in early years are leaders across the school for phonics and reading. The strong foundation in the effective teaching of phonics at an early stage has resulted in consistently strong outcomes in phonics at the end of Year 1 and end of key stage 1. The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, read with confidence, fluently and with appropriate understanding. Strong teaching in Year 6 has led to the improvement in outcomes in reading for all the current Year 6 pupils, including boys. However, you acknowledge that this strong practice needs to be replicated in all classes lower down in key stage 2.
- You and your staff are very proud, and rightly so, of your 'global expert' school status. You have received a number of accreditations for your international work, including an award from the British Council. As a global learning hub, you work with a range of schools. Pupils clearly benefit from the links to the wider curriculum around themes such as respect, deeper thinking and anti-bullying. You are also proud of the other awards and accreditations you have received as a school for music, sport, arts and anti-bullying work.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the current strong practice of teaching reading in Year 6 is replicated in Year 5 and in lower key stage 2 classes
- persistent absence continues to decline for all pupils, including the disadvantaged pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Dimitris Spiliotis
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your two deputy headteachers, a range of staff and governors. I also spoke to a range of pupils and parents. I listened to some pupils read. You and I together conducted tours of the school and lessons, looking at pupils' work and observing their learning. Alongside your two deputy headteachers, I conducted a scrutiny of pupils' work in a range of subjects. I held telephone conversations with the director of education for the Diocese of Sheffield and the local authority representative.

I scrutinised and evaluated a range of documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and school improvement. I took account of the 44 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including the 39 extended responses from parents. I also took account of the 40 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire and the 15 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.