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Mr Stephen Archer
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Archer

Short inspection of Whingate Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 24 April 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 February 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment in 2016, you have led the school with a real sense of purpose and resolution. You have worked diligently and imaginatively to improve the school. You are very clear that you will achieve this if staff are well trained, highly motivated and share a clear vision for the school's journey to further success.

You have moved effectively to improve pupils' skills and experience of reading, both in and out of school, although you are clear that there is more to be done. Leaders and governors have focused systematically on improving reading, using a range of effective strategies. You have developed all of your staff's expertise as teachers of reading. Your middle leaders with responsibility for reading monitor the effectiveness of the teaching of reading and provide targeted support and training for staff. These leaders are well supported by governors. There are now many more opportunities for pupils to read and explore books at the school. They told me that they had noticed and welcome this.

The school's previous inspection report, in February 2014, identified the need to ensure that pupils who are making good progress and understand the work move on quickly to their next tasks. You have addressed this effectively. This is because your staff monitor progress in the classroom carefully and well. They move pupils on promptly when they are ready. Also, because of the good relationships and strong classroom routines, pupils have growing control of their own learning. They know what they need to do next.

Governors know the school well and they are very well led. They are constantly seeking to improve their skills through regular training that is targeted on the priorities of the school. Governors are supported effectively by the local authority and the family of local schools. Governors pay regular and structured visits to the school to gain direct insights into its progress. They undertake learning walks, they speak with pupils and parents, and they are linked with middle leaders. As a result, they have a very good knowledge and understanding of the school. They hold leaders to account with rigour and attention to detail.

Pupils are very keen to succeed. They make the most of their time in school. Their behaviour in class is very good, because they know the routines, respect others and want to learn. They are proud of their school and treat it well. There is no litter on site. Pupils told me that bullying is very rare and that, if it does occur, it is dealt with promptly and well by staff. Pupils told me that they enjoyed the after-school and lunchtime activities. They talked about clubs and mentioned both chess and playing the ukulele.

The parents that I spoke with across the day told me that this is a good school. The online parent surveys I have taken into account support this view. Parents said that they welcome the range of ways that the school uses to keep in touch with them. They mentioned your visibility and enthusiasm as positive aspects of the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are of high quality and are meticulously kept.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. All adults at the school, including governors, take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. You and the designated safeguarding lead ensure that regular and effective training is provided for all staff and governors. Because of this, they are up to date in their knowledge and understanding. You are very well supported in maintaining a safeguarding culture of high reliability by Leeds City Council. Officers from the local authority provide training and undertake regular and rigorous audits of the school's safeguarding arrangements. You have very strong links with outside agencies. The 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.

Pupils told me that they really enjoy coming to school. They appreciate the efforts that staff make to keep them safe, happy and learning. They told me that they know how to keep themselves and each other safe in a range of situations, including when online, because of the work of the school. They cited assemblies, visiting speakers and interesting aspects of their learning to help them stay safe and secure.

Inspection findings

- Children enter the school with language skills and experience that are less developed than those typical for their age. You tackle this by providing children with a language-rich environment where children are encouraged to explore and talk about what they are doing. Because of the good relationships between children and adults and the effective training you have put in place, your early years staff are increasingly skilled in developing children's speech and language. They do this through specially chosen activities, focused questioning and careful monitoring.
- Phonics is well taught throughout the school. Early years staff combine this with a rich diet of talk, appropriate books and experiences for children that help them develop and expand their vocabulary and their control of, and pleasure in, language. Children like to talk and they learn through this, taking pleasure in playing with and manipulating language. Staff record progress carefully and use the information they gather to inform children's next steps. The early years team engages closely with parents and carers to keep them informed about their children's progress, including in reading. The parents I spoke with said that they welcomed this. Your Reception children are now, overall, well placed to get off to a flying start in Year 1.
- As they move up the school, pupils read and enjoy a wide range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Pupils have a growing experience of a range of genres and how writers use language to create mood, tone and emotion. Pupils develop a wide range of comprehension and other skills, such as inference, through their reading. This is having a positive effect on their own writing. Pupils also take delight in reading. The daily school-wide reading sessions, where staff read to pupils, are an effective way of exploring the power of reading to please and engage. Pupils told me that they really enjoyed these sessions.
- You and your deputies are determined that all adults at the school will be skilled teachers of reading. Working with your team, you have ensured that all staff, increasingly, have opportunities to develop their expertise. You have ensured that staff have regular training and planning sessions. The reading team uses careful monitoring to establish what works. This is having a positive effect on raising the standards of reading across the school. Parents are beginning to play an important role in this work. I spoke with a range of pupils and parents about their experience of reading at school and at home. It is clear that there is wide variability in how much support pupils receive at home when it comes to reading. You are clear, however, that there is more to be done to enable parents and families to support their children in the development of their reading.
- The progress of pupils, especially of those at risk of falling behind in their reading, is carefully and regularly monitored. Prompt and measured action is taken to get pupils back on track. Similarly, staff are effective in addressing misconceptions in mathematics. This is because staff know their pupils well and have strong subject knowledge. As a result, they are well placed to know precisely what actions will work for a particular pupil.

- Pupils, including the most able, have many opportunities to write at length in English and other subjects across the curriculum. Writing at length gives pupils opportunities to develop their skills and deepen their understanding. Pupils take care with their presentation and their work is, generally, well presented, extends ideas and deepens thinking.
- Staff are skilled in asking pupils questions about their work. I saw staff, both teachers and teaching assistants, using focused and, often, insistent questioning to really make pupils think. The excellent classroom relationships and routines that exist across the school meant that pupils did not find this unnerving. On the contrary, pupils showed clear signs of thriving and enjoying the challenge.
- The leadership of the support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is strong and diligent. The SEN coordinator works closely with staff and parents in the identification, support and monitoring of the progress and well-being of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. She helps staff to develop and target their teaching so that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. Out-of-class interventions are carefully focused and designed to ensure that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities spend as much time as possible in mainstream lessons. The SEN coordinator works very effectively and tenaciously with outside agencies to help ensure that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and their parents get the service and support that they need.
- You and your deputies have developed the roles of your middle leaders at the school very well. As a result, middle leadership is strong and insightful. Middle leaders have close and effective links with governors who support and challenge them in their roles. Middle leaders are given both the support and the professional space by you and the senior team to develop their ideas for improving the school. They told me that they welcomed this, because it gave them a clear sense of being both supported and held to account for improving provision.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- continue to strengthen the school-wide approaches to the skilled teaching of reading for all staff by further developing the links between speaking, reading and writing
- continue to develop closer links with parents so that they are able to play a more effective role in their children's learning, including the development of their reading, in line with the high expectations of the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Evans
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I visited all classes during this short inspection. I was accompanied by you and one of your deputies in all of these visits. During the visits, I observed learning and, where appropriate, I spoke with pupils about their work. I looked at their books and folders to judge their progress and the quality of their presentation.

During the day, I spoke with you, members of the senior team, the SEN coordinator, the teachers who lead on reading and safeguarding and a group of governors, including the chair and vice-chair of governors. I met with a group of newly qualified teachers to seek their views about the support they had received as they start their careers in teaching. I also met with an officer from Leeds City Council who has been monitoring the work of the school. I observed and spoke informally with pupils at the start and end of the day and during break and lunchtime. I also spoke with parents as they brought their children to school and again when they arrived in the afternoon to take them home. I met more formally with the group of Year 5 pupils to discuss their attitudes to learning and their views of the school. I also listened to four Year 3 pupils read and discussed reading with them.

I took into account 27 text messages from parents and the views of the 29 parents who responded to Ofsted's online facility Parent View. I also took into account 25 responses from staff to an online survey. I read a wide range of documents about the school's safeguarding systems, the quality and effect of staff training, governors' work and the minutes of their actions and the quality and effect of teaching.