

24 May 2018

Mr Ross Peacock
Headteacher
Moresby Primary School
School Brow
Moresby Parks
Whitehaven
Cumbria
CA28 8UX

Dear Mr Peacock

Short inspection of Moresby Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 May 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 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 have created a culture of high expectations in a calm and focused learning environment. Parents and carers have recognised this. As a result, the number of pupils attending Moresby has more than doubled since the previous inspection. Governors share your aspiration to ensure that pupils and staff embrace the school motto, 'Together everyone achieves more'.

You and your leadership team have an accurate and reflective view of the school's strengths and priorities. Together, you are determined to improve the school further. You have high expectations of what you and your staff can achieve, while being mindful of pupil and staff well-being.

At the previous inspection in 2014, inspectors asked the leadership team, including governors, to raise achievement in subjects beyond English and mathematics. You have addressed this by restructuring the leadership team, so that all teachers have responsibility for driving improvements in a range of subjects. As a result, there have been more opportunities to share good practice across a range of subjects, both within the school and by learning from the expertise of colleagues in other schools. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in all subjects and standards continue to improve. This collaborative way of working has also resulted in greater accuracy of the assessment of pupils' work. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that pupils are always given clear guidance about what they need to do to improve their work through in-class conversations. Pupils enjoy

building their confidence and ability to check their own work as they move through the school.

Inspectors also asked you to improve the accuracy of pupils' spellings. Teachers make sure that pupils reinforce their spelling skills through targeted, regular homework. Your senior leader of English has moved spelling into the daily class timetable. The leader also has plans to launch a spelling scheme which is directly linked to the whole-school approach to the teaching of phonics. The accuracy of pupils' spellings is improving.

You and your staff continue to ensure that children get off to a good start in the early years. Since the previous inspection, you have introduced Nursery class provision. This is proving very popular with parents, who told me how happily their children have settled into school life. Staff ensure that there are thorough transition arrangements into the school, which help pupils to settle quickly into their learning. This includes the high proportion who have joined the school during key stage 2. You and your staff have a strong track record of ensuring that pupils who have not settled well in other schools succeed at Moresby.

You and your senior leadership team have led significant improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment since the previous inspection. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of each key stage was in line with that seen nationally in 2017. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education, because they develop a strong work ethic during their time at Moresby.

Pupils were keen to talk to me. They told me that they feel safe in school and in the playground. Pupils share any worries or concerns they have with their teachers. They have a clear awareness of the different forms of bullying and the distress that it can cause. Pupils said that bullying is very rare, but they are confident that staff would resolve any issues if they were to arise. Pupils also have a secure awareness of how to keep themselves safe when online.

Pupils develop a real love of learning at Moresby. It was delightful to hear a disappointed sigh from a key stage 2 class when an English lesson had to draw to a close. The pupils genuinely wanted to continue with writing poetry. The recent trip to a museum, combined with the teacher's enthusiasm, had clearly ignited their passion for learning. All staff encourage pupils to take responsibilities for different aspects of school life. For example, the school council has been proactive in developing the school garden area. Pupils clearly enjoy school life.

Safeguarding is effective.

As the designated safeguarding leader, you make sure that staff fully understand their duty and follow systems and procedures for logging concerns. You ensure that all necessary checks are made on the suitability of staff to work with children and you check on visitors to the school. You make sure that the promotion of safeguarding throughout the school has a high profile. You provide staff with

regular training that is up to date, so that they and members of the governing body understand the current guidance. Every week, you provide staff and governors with a brief safeguarding quiz so that safeguarding is always at the forefront of the school's efforts in keeping pupils safe. In newsletters for parents, there is always a reminder of the need to be vigilant and report any safeguarding concerns.

Together, you and your deputy safeguarding leaders diligently follow up all concerns and make sure that pupils are kept safe. You work well with a range of external agencies to secure expertise to support pupils' welfare, as and when necessary. You and your staff provide excellent care and support for pupils and their families. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- As part of this inspection, I looked at how effectively you and your staff are developing a love of reading in early years and key stage 1 and how you encourage parents to read with their children. You have embedded a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics, beginning as soon as children start in the Nursery class. This continues through Reception class, key stage 1 and, when necessary, for older pupils and particularly for the many pupils who join the school during key stage 2. The senior leader who has responsibility for reading throughout the school ensures that teachers and teaching assistants have the knowledge, skills and resources they need to teach phonics and reading effectively. Investment has been made to provide pupils with reading books that match their learning in phonics sessions. Teachers work with parents so that they know how to help children with their reading at home. This is supplemented with parents having access to a reading app. As a result, pupils' outcomes in the early learning goals in reading were much higher than the national average in 2017. From only one-third of pupils reaching the expected standards in the phonics screening check in Year 1 in 2015, there has been considerable improvement, with pupils reaching standards in line with the national average for the last two years. You are planning further investment in non-fiction books for early years and key stage 1 pupils in order to broaden their reading.
- Next, I explored how teachers are encouraging boys to read, particularly those in key stage 2 who have not had the benefit of the now much stronger teaching of reading when they were younger. Teachers use assessment information efficiently to identify pupils who are falling behind. Highly trained support staff provide the help that pupils need to catch up quickly. The school's own assessment information indicates that the vast majority of pupils are making accelerated progress from their starting points. Each half term, the work in English and across topics is based on a class book which is carefully selected to inspire boys and girls alike. When talking to pupils, the boys were animated when they discussed the variety of books that they read. The anthology of poetry and 'Tutankhamun' have proved to be particularly popular books with the boys. Teachers are now focusing on building the confidence of boys to retell stories through role play in order to improve their comprehension skills.
- I also explored the breadth of the curriculum and to what extent it raises pupils'

aspirations and provides them with essential opportunities to develop skills. Since the previous inspection, leaders have developed a new curriculum that is broad and balanced, and inspires pupils to learn. Teachers ensure that history, geography and other subjects are embedded in topic work and this provides a curriculum that adds interest to learning. In my meeting with pupils, boys and girls alike talked animatedly about their topic on Victorians and how the trip to an open-air museum brought learning to life. Teachers encourage them to find out information for themselves using books and technology and this is developing their reading skills. You closely monitor pupils' engagement with the raft of after-school activities such as tag rugby, cookery, dance and gardening. All Year 3 and 4 pupils learn to play the toot and Year 5 and 6 pupils each have Indonesian pen pals. Staff prioritise broadening pupils' horizons and, as a result, pupils are inquisitive about life beyond their own community. However, while pupils show a great deal of respect for those who may have different beliefs and cultures from their own, their knowledge of some religions lacks depth.

- Finally, I explored what leaders are doing to address the persistent absence of pupils. I was concerned about the number of pupils who had been persistently absent last year compared to the previous year. You know your families very well, particularly the most vulnerable. You work with a number of agencies to ensure that parents have the support that they need to help their children. You have introduced a range of imaginative incentives to highlight the importance of attending school regularly, including trophies, certificates and end-of-year treats. You have a strong track record of engaging pupils who were previously reluctant attenders and learners in other schools. Parents commented on the well-attended breakfast club, which allows them to bring their children to school each day and then go to work knowing that they are well looked after. Attendance overall is in line with the national average, which has a positive impact on improving the progress that pupils make.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to widen the range of books for early years and key stage 1 pupils in order to broaden their reading
- teachers continue to provide opportunities for boys in key stage 2 to retell stories in their own words in order to develop their comprehension skills
- teachers develop further pupils' knowledge and understanding of religions which may be different from their own so that they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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

Yours sincerely

Naomi Taylor
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I observed teaching and learning jointly with you. I held meetings with subject leaders, senior leaders, members of the governing body and with the designated safeguarding leader. I analysed 63 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and I spoke informally with parents at the school gates to seek their views. I also took account of 13 free-text responses from parents. I analysed the 15 staff responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and I spoke to several staff informally during the day. I held a meeting with pupils and spoke informally with pupils during breaks and in lessons. During the inspection, I reviewed a range of school documents. These included the school's development plans and self-evaluation documents; minutes of the governing body meetings; safeguarding documentation; records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance; the school website; school policies; pupils' work and their reading logs.