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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mr Sam Pater
Headteacher
Clinton Primary School
Caesar Road
Kenilworth
Warwickshire
CV8 1DL

Dear Mr Pater

Short inspection of Clinton 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 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.

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.

During the time that you have been the headteacher of Clinton Primary, you have ensured that the school has gone from strength to strength. You have a very clear and accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and this enables you to decide what would be best to focus on next. You have focused very well on the right priorities, particularly ensuring that the quality of teaching is highly effective and that safeguarding is a strength. As a result, the school continues to improve at an impressive rate.

You lead the school with ambition and direction. You expect the best from your staff and support them well to meet that challenge. Your checks on the quality of teaching are rigorous and you provide detailed guidance and feedback to help teachers get the best from pupils in terms of learning and outcomes. Pupils told me that teachers 'give us lots of tips and advice and are very encouraging. This helps us to get better all the time.'

Your determination that all pupils will be successful and your very high aspirations for every pupil in your school have had a clear impact on improving pupils' outcomes. The deputy headteacher and middle leaders share your vision and you work well together. Pupils benefit as a result. Assessment information and the work in pupils' books, including in English and mathematics, show that current pupils make substantial and sustained progress. This is also the case for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The proportions attaining expected standards by the end of each key stage are above national average figures. Pupils in Year 1 achieve highly in the national phonics check.

Over the past year, English has been a focus for the school. Outcomes in reading and writing have improved even further. In 2017, at the end of key stage 2, the proportions of pupils reaching the expected and higher standards were well above the national average. It was such a pleasure to talk to the pupils about their writing and to see the standards they attain from a young age. However, the high level of pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling skills seen in their books is not reflected as strongly in their end of key stage 2 grammar, punctuation and spelling test scores.

Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They are happy, engaged and keen to talk about their work. Pupils spoke about the opportunities within the wider curriculum, which is a real strength of the school. They were very keen to tell me about recent topics, for example, studying the polar regions and fund-raising to support polar bears, and about how settlers from foreign shores have helped Britain over the years. Pupils are very much aware that learning has a purpose and their studies enable them to acquire a range of skills such as organising information, problem solving and communicating. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed extremely well across a range of subjects.

The school's caring ethos is valued by pupils and their families. Your work with parents and carers is particularly strong, including workshops to support their children's learning. Parents spoke highly of your strong leadership of teaching and dedication to this school. Comments included, 'It is clear as a parent that the staff sincerely care about the welfare and educational needs of the children, ensuring they are well-rounded individuals in today's very different society', and 'My children receive excellent teaching. Homework is well thought through to support the work carried out in class.'

Governors are equally committed to the values and ethos of the school. They demonstrate an acute understanding of the strengths and barriers to learning that some pupils may face. Governors are committed to ensuring that pupils receive the help and support they need to excel. The governing body is astute and brings knowledge from a range of sectors. This allows governors to ask challenging questions of leaders. This has contributed positively to the trajectory of ongoing improvement since the previous inspection.

You have successfully addressed the area that inspectors identified at the last

inspection. Teachers consistently ensure that less-able pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities can complete the work themselves. Consequently, this group of pupils is more independent and makes better progress in learning.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders ensure that checks on staff are completed thoroughly before they start employment. All staff receive comprehensive training and make good use of this knowledge to keep pupils safe. Staff are vigilant and report any concerns when necessary. Leaders respond swiftly to these concerns and work closely with parents and other agencies.

Parents and staff are confident that pupils are safe at school. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. They know that they should not talk online to people they do not know. Pupils said that they like the friendly and welcoming atmosphere in the school. They feel confident that staff would help them if they had any worries.

Governors fully understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. They ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust and carefully evaluate information gathered from their regular checks.

Inspection findings

- We looked at the quality of teaching in mathematics because the end of key stage 2 data in 2017 showed that girls did not perform as well as boys. Furthermore, the proportions of pupils achieving the higher standard were just below the national average.
- Recently, the teaching of mathematics has been re-evaluated. Mathematics is a priority for the school this year. Professional development has taken place for the entire staff, and higher expectations are set for staff and pupils. The teaching of mathematics is strong, and staff have secure subject knowledge. There has been a much greater focus on the application of skills and problem solving. Problem-solving tasks involving real-life contexts have also been a major focus across the whole school. This has included the planning of the new 'innovation hub', which the school has secured funding for. Mathematics is well led, with guidance for staff and rigorous monitoring.
- In addition to analysing the performance of pupils at regular pupil progress meetings with teachers, leaders also keep a careful eye on pupils' progress throughout the term. Pupils who are not on track to meet their targets and expectations are identified. The support they have is precisely designed to meet their specific individual needs. This extra support is of enormous benefit, and the assessment information for current pupils in school reflects rapid progress for all groups of pupils in mathematics, as well as in other subjects. The work in girls' books when compared to boys' indicates that girls and boys are making the same swift progress.

- The work in pupils' books and the data show that far more pupils across the year groups are exceeding age-related expectations. However, there is more work to do to ensure that the most able pupils receive the challenge and opportunity to record more of their reasoning.
- We looked at the attendance figures for pupils who qualify for pupil premium funding. There is a substantial amount of support for these pupils. The member of staff who is the pupil premium champion supports the families of these pupils very effectively. Consequently, their attendance has greatly improved and is no longer an issue. The attendance of pupils overall at the school and for groups of pupils is above national averages.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils receive the challenge and opportunity to record more of their reasoning
- the strong grammar, punctuation and spelling skills seen in pupils' books are reflected in their end of key stage 2 test scores.

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

Yours sincerely

Lynda Townsend
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other leaders in the school and three governors. I spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I met with a group of pupils and spoke with other pupils during the day. I took into account the 104 responses to Parent View, including 23 free-text comments. I also took note of the 63 responses to the pupils' survey and the 24 responses to the staff survey. I observed teaching and learning, with you, in all classes. I looked at pupils' work in their classrooms and considered carefully the progress evident in a selection of pupils' exercise books. I examined a range of documents, including the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation, governors' minutes, and attendance and safeguarding information. I considered pupils' standards of attainment and rates of progress.