

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



1 June 2018

Mr Lee Bell
Headteacher
Scawsby Saltersgate Infant School
Windsor Walk
Scawsby
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN5 8NQ

Dear Mr Bell

Short inspection of Scawsby Saltersgate Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 10 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 October 2014.

This school continues to be good.

With your leadership team, you have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Scawsby Saltersgate Infant School is a school where pupils feel safe, and where parents and carers believe that their children are safe and happy. You arrived in the school in September 2017, and parents have recognised the positive changes you have made to ensure that the school continues to be good. This has also been recognised by governors. Pupils and parents report that very positive behaviour is a strength of the school, and bullying is rare. This means that pupils feel safe and well settled at school. They also report that you are visible around school and very approachable. This means that if they raise a concern with you, or have a question, you are quick to respond and take effective action. Teachers and other adults are also approachable and pupils appreciate the care and kindness shown by all adults. This means that they feel confident to share any worries or concerns they may have.

Teaching is good and this leads to strong progress and attainment for pupils. Teachers largely have high expectations of pupils and, in return, pupils work hard, helping them to achieve well. At times, expectations of pupils' handwriting are not high enough and this can lead to weak handwriting. Pupils generally take pride in their learning, but they need more support from an early age to write neatly. Similarly, teachers' checks on pupils' spelling are not always robust enough and therefore spelling errors can persist. However, overall, teachers plan engaging and interesting lessons that meet different groups of pupils' needs well. For example, in science, pupils learn about the world around them. They have regular opportunities

to take their learning outside and to research facts. As well as enjoying their learning, pupils use their reading, writing and mathematical skills in science in an imaginative way, which supports the high standards they reach in these areas.

At the last inspection, inspectors identified two main areas for improvement, the first of which was to improve the teaching of phonics and reading, to ensure that outcomes improved in these areas. These areas were also areas I wanted to look at throughout the inspection. Progress in these areas looked less strong in 2017 than in mathematics and writing. I am pleased to report that teaching in these areas has improved this year and pupils are doing better, ensuring that they acquire phonics knowledge quickly and securely. This, in turn, has supported pupils' overall reading skills and outcomes. The second area for improvement, identified at the last inspection, was to improve governors' effectiveness. This was specifically to provide them with the skills to challenge and question school leaders appropriately and, therefore, to contribute positively to the school. Governors have taken this recommendation very seriously. For example, they have audited their skills, as well as their ability to support the school. Where there have been gaps, they have worked hard to make improvements. For example, they have appointed new governors with useful skills, and undertaken training to ensure that they understand all the information you and other leaders provide. As a result, they understand how well pupils at this school do when compared with pupils nationally. This has led to more purposeful work from the governors, who are supportive of leaders and who also challenge leaders where necessary.

Since you arrived, you have been very mindful of the need to develop your leadership team so that all of its members are able to contribute positively to school life. You have implemented rigorous monitoring of teaching and are already supporting middle leaders to do this in a robust and accurate way. Consequently, they understand the strengths and areas for development in their areas of provision. As you acknowledge, more training is needed, but already leadership capacity has grown since the start of the year. Furthermore, you have worked effectively to improve the site of the school, so that it is safer for pupils and it is fit for purpose. You have also acquired extra funding to make further improvements in this regard. Parents acknowledge this and appreciate that the learning environment, as well as the safety of the site, are now better.

Since the last inspection, attendance has declined, although it remains above average. The level of persistent absenteeism for different groups of pupils has risen since the last inspection. You have worked successfully to tackle these issues. You have worked with the local junior and secondary school to identify a common policy that is much clearer for parents. You implement this in a consistent way so that parents are fully aware of potential issues with their children's attendance. This has supported significant improvements in pupils' attendance and the reduction of persistent absenteeism. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is still too low. This is due to a small, but not insignificant, proportion of these pupils who are persistently absent. While you are working hard to make improvements in this area, more needs to be done to ensure that these pupils' attendance improves which, in turn, will support their overall achievement in school.

The curriculum is a strength of the school. You have been innovative in your work to improve pupils' engagement, knowing that this will support their progress. This has not only worked to improve the standards pupils reach in reading, writing and mathematics, but it has also served to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as their understanding of British values. For example, pupils are able to go on trips that link to their classroom learning as well as providing them with opportunities to learn about life beyond their everyday lives. This has allowed them to learn about different faiths and cultures, among other things. In addition, you have created a system that rewards pupils' positive behaviour, focusing on kindness and compassion, as well as showing resilience and doing their best in the classroom.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that pupils are safe. Staff are trained regularly to ensure that they understand the latest regulations around keeping children safe in education. It also means that they know whom to speak to and what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's safety. Pupils and parents are also aware of what they should do if they have these concerns. Information for pupils, parents and staff is well advertised around school to help them if they have any concerns. Policies are in place and up to date as well. They are easily accessible to staff and parents. Policies are checked regularly by governors to ensure that they are fit for purpose and that statutory requirements are met. You have worked hard with governors, and detailed records of any issues concerning pupils' safety are kept securely by the school. Designated members of staff, and the governing body, check that all relevant information is verified and, where appropriate, external agencies are involved to support pupils. Such records help staff to have a full understanding of any issues where a pupil's safety has been a concern in the past. All staff's information is checked, including the information about their qualifications and suitability to work with children.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, I was interested to see how well disadvantaged pupils do. There have been some areas of strength for these pupils since the last inspection. However, this has not always been the case. At times, these pupils' outcomes have been less strong than those of their peers. Your work this year has done a lot to make improvements for these pupils.
- Improvements can be seen in disadvantaged pupils' attainment and progress. There is still more to be done, as you acknowledge, so that these pupils' outcomes match those of their peers more closely. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils also needs to improve.
- I was also interested to see how well the youngest children do in the school and the impact of the early years setting. This is a particular strength of the school and children are thriving in their learning. The Nursery and Reception classrooms are well organised and offer children the chance to develop their skills. This

includes reinforcing their reading, writing and mathematical skills.

- Phonics teaching is also strong in early years. With regular assessment of children's progress in this area, adults are helped to support children in their next steps in their learning of phonics. This in turn prepares them well for Year 1.
- Another focus for the inspection was to see how well the assessment system supports teachers in their planning of activities so that pupils' needs are closely met. I also wanted to see how well your assessment system helps leaders identify underachievement. Overall, assessment is rigorous and supports planning well. However, since you started, you have used various systems to see which works best for teachers and for pupils. Because there are a few systems, a small number of teachers do not use the different systems effectively. As you acknowledge, assessment systems need to be made simpler to ensure that they focus on identifying gaps in pupils' learning and that they also take into account pupils' starting points, so that progress is always measured accurately.
- In addition, you are conscious that middle leaders need to be developed further. You recognise that they need the capacity to monitor teaching regularly and accurately, and to work with teachers so they can all use assessment information to plan lessons that closely meet pupils' needs.
- Another area I looked at was pupils' behaviour. There have been very few exclusions in school since the last inspection and this shows there are very few serious behavioural incidents. This helps pupils to feel safe. Conduct around school and in lessons is very positive and pupils interact very well with one another. Pupils' attitudes to learning are also largely positive. They are well engaged in their learning and want to do well, which helps them to make good progress. However, teachers do not always promote high enough expectations around pupils' handwriting and spelling, and this means these areas are not good enough.
- Staff from the local authority have worked closely with the school since the last inspection. They were instrumental in supporting the governors in your appointment after the previous headteacher left. This has helped the school to remain good.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all teachers use the assessment information they gather on pupils' progress and attainment to identify gaps in learning and to plan activities that fill these gaps
- they develop middle leaders in their capacity to support teachers in using the assessment system in a way that leads towards continual improvements in pupils' progress
- they continue their work to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils
- they promote high expectations of pupils in terms of their handwriting and spelling.

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

Yours sincerely

Fiona McNally
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I visited a number of classes to observe teaching and its impact on learning. I also looked at a wide range of pupils' books from several year groups, across a variety of subjects. I met with you and your governors and with other senior and middle leaders. I also held a discussion with a representative from the local authority. I looked at the school's information about the safeguarding of pupils and examined behaviour, attendance and bullying records. I also checked a range of other documentation, such as your self-evaluation, your school development plan and your assessment information. I held formal discussions with pupils from key stage 1 and spoke informally to pupils during breaktime. I also heard four pupils read from Year 2. I considered parents' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I spoke to a number of parents in the playground as they dropped their children off at school.