

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



8 June 2018

Mr Peter Eyre  
Executive headteacher  
Saltburn Primary School  
Marske Mill Lane  
Saltburn-by-the-Sea  
North Yorkshire  
TS12 1HJ

Dear Mr Eyre

### **Short inspection of Saltburn Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 17 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 November 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Yours is a school that is moving from strength to strength. As one parent told me, 'This is a wonderfully inviting school where pupils are celebrated for their own individuality. My daughter is always really happy going to school and bounces out happily at pick-up time.' I was able to see first-hand the positive impact of the changes that you have made. Pupils are welcoming, caring, articulate and very proud of their school.

Your vision for everyone in the school community, that you are 'all learners, always learning', is alive and well. Your own leadership is characterised by a determination to get the very best for the pupils in your care. Your head of school is compassionate, able and highly effective. All of the members of your leadership team are professional, and want to be the best they can be for the benefit of the school. Your self-evaluation processes are strikingly effective. The systems that are in place to track the progress that pupils are making and the standards that they are reaching, although new, are accurate. You use this information, together with your monitoring of the quality of teaching, to develop improvement plans which are sensible and achievable. There has been much change, but your members of staff told me that their workload is now more manageable. They see and appreciate the benefit of these new systems.

The quality of teaching at your school is high, especially in mathematics. In a similarly precise way to your self-evaluation processes, teachers use 'gap analysis' to identify specific knowledge or concepts that individual pupils are struggling with. Teachers present information to the class, and then pupils engage with activities linked to this new learning. Afterwards, teachers assess pupils and identify where there are any misunderstandings or 'gaps'. Teachers and teaching assistants can then work with pupils to remedy these. This system is robust and adhered to consistently. Pupils are fully committed to their learning and show a high level of interest in lessons. Teachers plan lessons well to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and, as a result, they are making gains in their knowledge and skills.

Your pupils understand, and are grateful for, the 'Saltburn Standards'. They talked to me animatedly about the need to treat others with respect, to move around the building sensibly, to be kind to each other, and to ensure that their school is kept clean and tidy. A pupil at your school typically feels secure, included and safe.

Many parents are very positive about your leadership and the direction in which the school is moving. Others have voiced concerns about changes in staffing, and the quality of education on offer. Inspection evidence confirms that the quality of teaching in school is currently strong, and that pupils are making impressive progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum. Some systems and structures are relatively new, but I judge these as being highly effective. You agree, however, that more needs to be done to keep parents in the loop. Governors, too, see this as an important area on which to focus.

You, together with school leaders, have been successful in addressing areas for improvement highlighted in the previous inspection. The teaching of mathematics is now a strength of the school. As far as refining improvement planning is concerned, you have brought a keen eye to this. One of your first actions when appointed as executive headteacher was to improve systems of accountability at school. These are now much more robust. Everybody knows what is expected of them.

You and your team are striving to give the pupils in your care the very best that education can offer. This desire is palpable. Your head of school had already identified the need for more of your middle-attaining students to make quicker progress in reading and writing. This would also increase the proportion of these pupils reaching higher standards in external tests. You have plans to roll out your effective tracking systems to subjects other than English and mathematics, which will support pupils' achievement in the wider curriculum.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a culture of safeguarding at school. You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Current checks on the suitability of adults to work with pupils are thorough. Staff training for issues linked to safeguarding is comprehensive. Your assistant headteacher, who is in charge of safeguarding, is tenacious and efficient.

In addition, you have created an environment at school where pupils feel safe to thrive, develop and mature into rounded young people. Pupils have a wide variety of leadership opportunities open to them. They can develop their teamworking skills by being members of the school council, play leaders or librarians. Those who have a specific interest in the world around them can be members of the 'enviros'. These pupils remind their peers and other adults of the importance of recycling.

Pupils are courteous and welcoming. They focus well in class, and move sensibly around the building. They are encouraged to behave well through a variety of reward schemes. The 'book bucks' that they can earn, for example, can be swapped for age-appropriate and fun rewards. If they earn enough 'bucks', they can choose to sit next to a friend, or even to sit in the teacher's chair for a day, among other perks.

Your head of school thinks strategically about pupils' pastoral needs. Key stage 1 pupils who need that extra boost, either socially or academically, access 'bright stars'. This is a small, nurturing environment on offer to pupils for part of the day, which helps them to make progress and to thrive. She adopted a '20-20-20' system to support pupils who are sometimes too lively at lunchtime. Here, pupils have their lunch, participate in a club, and are observed playing outside, each for 20 minutes during the hour break.

Your attendance officer works well with parents and greets pupils when they arrive at school, and can therefore follow up on any attendance issues quickly. There is a focus on healthy lifestyles at school and your pupils have been involved in the daily mile initiative and the national fruit scheme. You have replaced detentions with 'reflections', where pupils are kept back specifically to think about their behaviour. All of these aspects of school life knit together to ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding at school.

## **Inspection findings**

- Your teacher in charge of mathematics has transformed this subject. The training that he has offered, together with his curriculum planning and helpful resources, has led to a leap in progress on the part of the pupils. 'Mineral maths', where pupils choose activities of increasing difficulty from bronze, through silver, gold and platinum, to diamond, is used consistently across the school. Pupils are developing their basic calculation skills, in addition to being pushed to solve problems and explain mathematical concepts. The standards that pupils are reaching in this subject are high.
- Similarly, your teacher in charge of English is ensuring that the progress that pupils make in writing is improving apace. You are aware that the progress that disadvantaged pupils make in writing is too slow. Your teachers are using a similar 'gap analysis' to that used in mathematics, to identify spellings or areas of grammar that pupils are finding difficult. Together with teaching assistants, they are then able to help pupils to improve, having pinpointed exactly what support is needed.

- Your head of school, together with other leaders, thinks deeply about how to improve provision. For example, your leader in charge of early years noticed that children's understanding of the world around them was less strong than other areas of the curriculum. She therefore arranged to 'adopt' a meadow, so that learning experiences could be tailored accordingly. In order to increase aspirations for disadvantaged pupils, you ensure that they have opportunities to visit universities and consider different career options while in Year 5. In Year 1, as another example, pupils have 'rainbow challenges' which consist of a list of activities that pupils need to complete over the course of a week. These are helping boys, in particular, to develop their concentration skills. These initiatives exemplify how leaders strive to meet the needs of your pupils.
- The most able pupils at school have, in the past, made strong progress and reached high standards. Inspection evidence confirms that this is still the case. Effective questioning in class, combined with the benefits of a highly structured approach in lessons, supports these pupils to make progress. Nothing is left to chance at school and this comprehensive approach is having a positive impact. These pupils also benefit from the wide range of leadership opportunities available.
- Although not an area of focus for this inspection, I note that your governing body is well led, and increasingly effective. Members of the governing body, too, want to be as strong as possible, and commissioned an external review to identify how they can be even better. This proactive approach is ensuring that they support you and other school leaders, but that they also challenge you to improve the school further.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- a greater proportion of middle-attaining pupils make accelerated progress, and, as a result, reach higher standards in reading and writing
- processes for tracking the progress that pupils are making, and the standards that they are reaching in subjects other than English and mathematics, are refined and fully embedded
- they strengthen relationships with all parents to enable the best possible interaction between home and school for the pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Wardle  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this one-day inspection, I met with you, the head of school and other members of the leadership team. You presented information detailing pupils' progress and attainment, the school's self-evaluation document and the school development plan. I spoke with colleagues responsible for safeguarding and attendance, and met with leaders of English and mathematics. I spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair. You and your head of school joined me as I observed teaching and learning across the school. I met with a group of pupils at lunchtime and spoke to others at breaktime. I reviewed pupils' work from different year groups and from a variety of subjects, and listened to pupils from different year groups read. I discussed the school's effectiveness with a representative of the local authority. I reviewed a wide variety of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and policies on the school's website.

I considered the 103 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), the 96 responses to the pupil questionnaire and the 22 responses to the staff questionnaire.

This inspection particularly focused on a number of key questions:

- How good is the teaching of mathematics at school? What are school leaders doing to ensure that pupils' rates of progress in this subject remain strong?
- Are disadvantaged pupils making strong progress in writing? What standards are they reaching in spelling, punctuation and grammar?
- How well are the needs of the most able pupils being met? Are they continuing to make strides in their learning across the curriculum and how do school leaders know?
- To what extent are vulnerable pupils being supported and to what extent are they kept safe? Is there a culture of safeguarding at school?