

18 June 2018

Mr Richard Workman
Headteacher
Joseph Turner Primary School
Powis Avenue
Tipton
West Midlands
DY4 0RN

Dear Mr Workman

Short inspection of Joseph Turner Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 23 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 January 2014.

This school continues to be good.

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

Previous areas for improvement have been tackled with success. Pupils' attainment in writing at the end of Year 6 has risen, with the proportion writing at the expected standard for their age being in line with the national average for the past two years. There is a consistency of approach to the teaching of writing, so that pupils build their knowledge and skills over time. Writing is given a high profile in the school. For example, displays highlighting pupils' progress in writing from one year to the next are prominent in the school.

This whole-school focus on writing has also helped to improve pupils' spelling and grammar. In 2017, nearly two thirds of Year 6 pupils achieved the greater depth standard in their grammar, punctuation and spelling test. This is testimony to the school's organised, structured and effective teaching of these important skills.

Your evaluation of the school's current performance is accurate. This is because it is well informed by regular monitoring of teaching, scrutiny of pupils' work and analysis of their progress. You and your leadership team know that improving the attainment of the most able pupils and improving the attendance of those pupils who are absent too often are important next steps for the school.

You have a clear vision for the school, which is communicated effectively. Under your leadership, you have created an effective leadership team that works well. Each leader takes responsibility for specific aspects of the school development plan

and sees these through with tenacity. Leaders have high expectations of staff and pupils. This capable leadership has been an important driver for the school's continued improvement since the last inspection.

The school is a stimulating place in which pupils learn and play. Since the last inspection, you have reviewed your pastoral staffing structure, appointing a pastoral leader, school counsellor and attendance officers. Most pupils respond well to the many opportunities provided for them and thrive as a result. You and other leaders are working hard to reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions in school. The majority of parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, expressed positive views, and 80% of respondents indicated that they would recommend your school to others.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding pupils is at the heart of the school's work with pupils and their families. Leaders ensure that all aspects of safeguarding are fit for purpose. Regular training and updates for staff keep pupils' safety and well-being as the highest priority. Systems for checking on and following up safety matters are appropriate, and record-keeping is thorough. The work of the school's pastoral team, which includes a school counsellor, makes an important contribution to pupils' welfare and general well-being at school. Staff respond promptly to any changes they notice in a pupil's behaviour and are alert to warning signs that a pupil may be unhappy or at risk of harm. Leaders work very well with a wide range of agencies to support pupils and signpost families to organisations that can provide help and guidance.

Pupils feel safe in school. They are knowledgeable about different aspects of safety. For example, they talked confidently about how to stay safe on the internet and know how to access ChildLine, should they need to.

Inspection findings

- The picture of pupils' progress in recent years in reading, writing and mathematics is positive. Progress across key stage 2 has been particularly strong, notably in reading and mathematics. In recognition of this, the school has received letters of congratulation from the Minister of State for Schools, praising the pupils for their achievements. At the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils who attain the standard expected for their age in all three subjects compares favourably with national figures.
- My observation of work in pupils' books and work being completed in class confirms that this progress is continuing for current pupils. Teachers provide pupils with plenty of opportunities to apply what they know and have learned. For example, in a key stage 1 mathematics lesson, pupils were required to explain what happens when two odd numbers are multiplied together and give their reasons. The task required pupils to exercise mental agility, reasoning and an ability to articulate their thinking. Consequently, teachers were able to check carefully what pupils understood and refine their teaching in response. Similarly, work in pupils' books shows that pupils are taught to take care with how work is

presented and reflect on what they have learned. Pupils are encouraged to learn from mistakes and not to be afraid of getting things wrong. Numerous signs and the 'Yeti' soft toys in classrooms represent the school's philosophy of 'We can't do it yet, but we will be able to in the future.' Pupils are reminded that getting something wrong is an opportunity to learn something new.

- The school has a good track record in getting the majority of pupils to the expected standard for their age. Nevertheless, the proportion reaching the greater depth standard at the end of key stage 2 has been less consistent. Leaders are ambitious to drive standards higher for their most able pupils. This has been a focus for whole-staff training. Leaders routinely plan alongside staff to ensure that there is meaningful challenge for pupils across a range of subjects. They also check on work to make sure that it offers enough challenge. You are confident that this recent focus is improving teaching further. We agreed that this work, which is already showing an impact on standards, should be an ongoing focus.
- Just under half of the pupils in the school are classified as disadvantaged. The majority of these pupils do well in school and there are some notable successes. In 2017, for example, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 was above the national average for all pupils. Leaders are not just focused on academic achievement; they are also attentive to pupils' welfare and emotional well-being. The school employs a pastoral team to support pupils in managing behavioural and emotional difficulties, so they gain the most from their time there. This attention to the whole child is central to the ethos of the school and chimes with the school motto of 'Eager to learn, proud to achieve'.
- While most disadvantaged pupils are doing well at this school, a proportion of them continue to be absent from school too often. This absence disrupts their learning and slows their progress.
- The majority of pupils behave well in lessons and in the playground. Pupils are taught to take responsibility. For example, through their roles as playground buddies and pupil governors, pupils help others and make decisions. The pupils respect their well-kept school building and grounds and can explain how their ideas help to shape school life. They are proud of recent developments, including the new outdoor climbing frames. Playtime is usually trouble-free. In lessons, the majority of pupils are attentive and work hard. The school's values, which include integrity, perseverance and respect, are reinforced by prominent displays in the school entrance hall.
- Pupils and staff reported that the school rules are fair and that most pupils adhere to them. However, it can be a bit rowdy in the dining hall at lunchtimes. A minority of pupils present some challenging behaviour in school. In response, the school has experimented with a range of strategies to manage and improve such behaviour. A recent firmer approach, for instance, resulted in a spike in exclusions. You followed these up with personalised programmes of support for children and their families. Nevertheless, you identified that this approach met with mixed results. In response, you continue to adjust and refine the school's approach, depending on pupils' needs. In all instances, you continue to work

effectively with different organisations in order to provide tailored programmes to pupils and families in need of support.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching challenges the most able pupils to do their best
- they continue to work with families to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils who miss too much school.

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

Yours sincerely

Pamela Matty
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher; two assistant headteachers; a range of staff and governors; and a representative of the local authority. I spoke to pupils and parents. I listened to some pupils read. Together with senior leaders, I toured the school and visited lessons, looking at pupils' work and observing their learning. Alongside your deputy head and assistant headteacher, I conducted a scrutiny of pupils' work in a range of subjects. I scrutinised a range of documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and school improvement. I took account of the 28 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 14 extended responses from parents. I took account of the 20 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire and the 36 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.