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Mrs Chloe Lawson
Headteacher
Wombwell Park Street Primary School
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Dear Mrs Lawson

Short inspection of Wombwell Park Street Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 June 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in November 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Wombwell Park Street Primary School is a school where pupils are safe and feel safe. This is because behaviour is good and bullying is rare. When issues arise, they are dealt with effectively. Parents and pupils believe that you and the other adults in school care very deeply for the children and their families, and that you listen to any concerns they raise. Parents also feel that you share useful and important information with them, which helps them understand how well their children are doing in school and how to help them at home. Teaching effectively engages pupils, who are keen to learn and to do well. They have positive attitudes to learning, which support them in making good progress. Pupils report that learning is fun. This is partly due to the varied trips and events that link to their classroom activities, which help them understand their learning more. You work well with your team, which includes governors, the trust and its executive headteacher, who understand and support the school well.

At the last inspection, the inspectors identified one main area for improvement and recommended that teaching is further developed so that more is outstanding. This was further refined by inspectors by asking teachers to provide more challenging activities for pupils. Work in pupils' books shows that, largely, pupils are well challenged in their learning. Activities are well planned, based on pupils' prior learning, and this helps different groups of pupils to make more rapid progress. However, there is some inconsistency in this and occasionally some teachers allow pupils to remain at a certain level of challenge for too long, even when pupils have proved their understanding is secure in a task. At times, teachers need to intervene more quickly to check pupils'

understanding and ensure that they have more challenging work to do. However, overall, work is challenging and pupils make good progress across different areas of the curriculum.

In addition, inspectors at the last inspection recommended that disadvantaged pupils' progress was also carefully considered and that more was done to improve this further. These pupils do well in school and often do better than their peers. This is due to the close checks you make on these pupils' progress and the support provided where underachievement is identified. It is also due to the varied opportunities you provide these pupils to ensure they fully participate in school life. This includes your support of them participating in after-school activities, as well as various trips which enhance their understanding of the wider world. These are important factors in engaging disadvantaged pupils, who also show positive attitudes to learning and enjoyment of school life, like their peers.

You and your team understand the school well. You know your strengths and are honest about what you have to do to further improve the school. You have shown strong capacity for making improvements where necessary. For example, before the inspection, I was keen to understand what you do to ensure the strong attendance of different groups of pupils. There has been some fluctuation in pupils' attendance since the last inspection and at times a very high proportion of pupils have been persistently absent. However, you have worked effectively to improve these areas and pupils' attendance is higher than average. In addition, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is well below average and this has further reduced this year. These important improvements have come about through your work to engage families and ensure that they understand the importance of pupils' regular attendance. You have also made tough decisions to discourage parents taking their children out of school during term time for holidays, which has also been effective.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that pupils are safe. Staff receive regular training and this is updated when necessary. This means that all staff understand their responsibilities around pupils' safety and they know what to do when an issue around safeguarding arises. You keep detailed records of the checks you make on staff, including checks on their identity and qualifications. These meet statutory requirements. These checks are also made on governors and any volunteers who come into school. The school keeps records of any incidents that relate to pupils' safety and safeguarding. This ensures that the relevant staff understand the context of a child and of any safeguarding issues which relate to them. Such information, alongside the training provided, helps the school work effectively with external agencies.

There are very few serious behaviour incidents and bullying is also rare, both of which demonstrate that pupils are safe in school.

Inspection findings

- One focus I had during the inspection was how well phonics is taught. Since the last inspection, phonics outcomes for pupils in Year 1 have been lower than the national average. In Year 2, outcomes have been very low compared to the national average. You have been aware of this issue and have prioritised training in this area, which has had some success in improving the speed at which pupils secure their phonics knowledge. This means that outcomes have improved. This is the case in key stage 1 and in the early years.
- However, there is some inconsistency in the quality of the delivery of phonics. Some adults are more skilled than others and have responded more positively to training. At times, some adults do not respond well enough to the most able pupils in their groups, who are ready to apply their phonics knowledge more quickly.
- The inconsistency around phonics teaching has also meant that some of the pupils who are now in key stage 2 have had issues in their spelling. Again, you are aware of this and have a comprehensive system in place to revisit gaps in pupils' knowledge in this area, as they move up the school. This means that spelling is now improving, which is having a positive impact on pupils' reading and writing as well. However, there remains some inconsistency in this work and the focus on spelling needs to continue.
- I was also interested to understand how successful the early years provision is in developing the youngest children in the school. Children make good progress during their time in Nursery and Reception. An increasing proportion reach a good level of development and even exceed this level. They arrive with levels of development below what is typically expected for their age and make good progress from these starting points, meaning they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Another area of focus for the inspection was the assessment systems in place. I wanted to understand if these were fit for purpose. You have adjusted the system this year, following some disappointment in pupils' progress in reading at the end of key stage 2 last year. Assessment is now accurate and identifies where pupils are doing well and when they need further support. This helps teachers to understand pupils' needs more closely and, therefore, pupils' progress over time.
- During the inspection, I wanted to look at how well the broader curriculum supports pupils' learning and development. The curriculum is a strength of the school. It is broad and balanced and the different subject areas are taught well. There are also strong links between different subjects, and reading, writing and mathematics are well reinforced across the curriculum.
- Furthermore, as well as supporting strong progress, the curriculum also provides pupils with wide ranging experiences to support their understanding of the wider world. In this way, the experiences pupils have at school enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils go on outdoor pursuit trips, where they learn to work as a team and push themselves to try new activities. They also learn about different faiths and cultures and have a good understanding of how people live and worship around the world. Such learning supports pupils' understanding of British values and the importance of respect and tolerance for things which are beyond their everyday experiences.

- The strength of the curriculum means that pupils are well engaged in their learning and this leads to positive conduct of pupils at all times of the school day. Adults and pupils enjoy very positive relationships and adults take every opportunity to praise pupils' strong behaviour and attitudes. Teachers set high standards in the classroom, leading to pupils producing high-quality, well-presented work, supporting their progress over time.
- Governors make a positive contribution to school life. They understand the school well and are ambitious for its future. They are pleased with the improvements made in the school since it academised in 2015 and recognise that leaders are doing a good job. Nevertheless, they also challenge and question leaders robustly, to ensure that decisions about the school are in the best interests of the pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- further training is undertaken so that all adults delivering the phonics programme can do so to a high standard, so that all groups of pupils' phonics knowledge is secured rapidly
- all teachers provide pupils with challenging activities, which help them to make more rapid progress across the curriculum, especially in reading and spelling.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Barnsley. 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 stages 1 and 2 and spoke informally to pupils during breaktime. I also heard eight pupils read from Years 2 and 6. I considered the 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.