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Mrs K Carter
Principal
Cheetham C of E Community Academy
Halliwell Lane
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Dear Mrs Carter

Short inspection of Cheetham CofE Community Academy

Following my visit to the school on 12 June 2018 with Doreen Davenport, Ofsted Inspector, 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. Your commitment to developing a love of learning permeates the school. You have established a culture of high aspirations which is shared by staff, governors and pupils within a school that is at the heart of the culturally diverse community it serves.

Parents spoken to during the inspection, and those who accessed Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View, were very positive about the school. Parents feel valued and part of the school community. They appreciate the opportunities you provide for them and their children, particularly with sessions to improve their own spoken English language skills. One comment reflected the many positive ones: 'It's like a family, I wouldn't send my children anywhere else.'

Pupils are extremely well mannered and polite. Older pupils take their responsibilities very seriously as play leaders, peer mediators and role models for the younger children. Pupils appreciate the many clubs they are able to attend either at lunchtime or after school, for example science club, 'debate mate', football and drama. They talk enthusiastically about visitors to school and outdoor trips. A pupil said, 'You have the opportunity to face your fears and persevere.' They are looking forward to performing at the Bridgewater Hall some of the songs they have written about the plight of refugees from Syria, and they are proud of the fundraising events they have organised to help them. Pupils are proud of their school and their community.

You and your staff have effectively tackled the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. You have developed a skilled team of staff. Together you have developed a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of your pupils effectively. Pupils are given opportunities to use and apply their mathematical and written skills in other curriculum areas. However, teachers do not always ensure that pupils consistently know what they need to do to improve their work further in other curriculum subjects.

The changes you have made to the organisation in key stage 1 have had a very positive impact on outcomes for pupils. This has been particularly successful for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, and for pupils who need to catch up.

Together with middle leaders, you have established a culture of professional dialogue. Staff receive training to update their skills and knowledge. Staff work with other colleagues to share their ideas and expertise, including with colleagues in other schools. This is particularly helpful for staff new to teaching. Consequently, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers use assessment effectively. As a result, learning activities are well matched to the needs and interests of pupils. Teachers identify gaps in pupils' understanding and provide the help that pupils need to catch up quickly. Although this has had positive impact, particularly for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), you do not monitor the progress of EAL pupils in the same focused way as you do for other significant groups of pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders, including governors, ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff and governors receive regular training and are kept up to date on relevant safeguarding issues. Safeguarding arrangements are understood by staff and as a result, they identify vulnerable pupils quickly. Leaders work with other agencies very effectively to ensure that pupils and families receive appropriate guidance.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school and know that there is an adult in school they can talk to, should they have concerns or worries. They learn about how to keep themselves safe through a variety of different activities, including assemblies and talks from visitors from national charities. They also understand how to stay safe online. They understand the different forms that bullying can take. They speak confidently about how teachers deal quickly and effectively with any rare incidents of bullying.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection we looked at several key lines of enquiry. First we looked at attendance. You know your families well. Staff quickly follow up on any absences and work closely with a number of outside agencies and charities to ensure that families receive the guidance and support that they need. Staff work

to build trust and develop positive relationships with families new to the area, particularly with parents who speak English as an additional language. There is a range of rewards and incentives, including certificates and prizes each term. As a result, attendance is beginning to improve and the number of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing. However, there is a high proportion of pupils who join and leave the school during the academic year. The persistent absence of a small proportion of pupils does have a negative impact on the overall attendance which has remained just below national expectations for the past three years.

- We discussed the changes to the organisation in key stage 1 following the last inspection and its effectiveness. Leaders accurately identified the diverse range of abilities within the cohort and the need to meet their needs effectively. Training for staff ensures that they have good subject knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn. As a result, pupils' positive attitudes towards learning are fostered well and contribute to the good progress pupils make. Teachers in key stage 1 use assessment information effectively and activities match the needs of pupils appropriately. Teachers provide appropriate challenges, particularly for pupils working at greater depth. Pupils are given the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge in other curriculum subjects. Skilled support staff are deployed well to enhance pupils' learning opportunities, particularly oral language acquisition skills. Consequently, increasing proportions of Year 2 pupils are working at the nationally expected standard and also at greater depth. Pupils know what they need to do to improve their learning in English and mathematics. They do not always know how to improve their work in other curriculum subjects.
- We also looked at the way you teach phonics. Staff have received the training that they need to teach phonics accurately. Teachers' strong subject knowledge contributes to the progress that pupils make. Activities are resourced well and leaders ensure that phonics is taught consistently. Staff appreciate the opportunity to share ideas and expertise. Staff identify quickly those pupils who are struggling. Pupils are given the help that they need to catch up. You work closely with parents to ensure that they have the skills they need to help their children. The creative English speaking sessions for parents are very well attended. Carefully chosen reading resources are accurately matched to pupils' phonic skills. Pupils use their phonic skills confidently when they are reading and apply this knowledge in their independent writing.
- Next we discussed the actions you have taken in order to improve outcomes for children in Reception. Staff understand how young children learn. When they start school, the vast majority of children do not have the skills and knowledge typical for their age. Some pupils join Reception without having attended the school nursery or any other pre-school provision. Through a range of well-thought-out activities in the summer term, staff quickly establish positive relationships with parents. Workshops and home visits allow leaders the opportunity to share ideas and information about how parents can help prepare their children for starting school. As a result, children settle quickly into the well-established routines in the early years setting.
- The early years teachers use assessment information to identify barriers to children's learning. Carefully crafted learning opportunities ignite children's imaginations with a key focus on developing children's oral language and

communication skills. Teachers provide children with opportunities to apply, practise and refine their skills. Staff use questions effectively to encourage children to think about what they want to say. They model accurate pronunciation and correct any misconceptions sensitively. For example, a group of children echoed staff's sentences and questions outside in the ice-cream shop ordering the flavour of ice-cream they would like or serving customers, handling money and giving change.

- Teachers accurately identify the next steps in children's learning. Children thrive in the exciting learning environment you have created. The outdoor area is used effectively to enhance the learning experiences for children. Children work together cooperatively, taking turns and helping each other. The positive relationships fostered in the early years contribute to the good progress that children make. Staff identify children who are struggling and provide additional opportunities for them to catch up with their peers. A high proportion of children have SEN and/or disabilities, including children who are supported by an education, health and care plan. These children are supported well by skilled staff and are making good progress from their individual starting points. Leaders work with colleagues in other schools to share expertise and ensure that their judgements of children's attainment are correct.
- Finally we discussed how you support the high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. A high proportion of pupils join the school during the academic year from a number of other countries. Training for staff ensures that they provide activities which quickly develop pupils' understanding and use of English. In writing, pupils are encouraged to verbalise what they want to write. Resources are used effectively to support the vocabulary they need when writing independently, including in other curriculum subjects. The progress of these pupils is discussed during half-termly progress meetings. However, you do not monitor progress for these pupils in the same way as you monitor the progress for other significant groups of pupils. Consequently, it is difficult to measure the impact of the actions taken on outcomes for EAL pupils, and to identify which strategies are the most effective.
- You provide opportunities for parents to develop their own spoken English language skills and they encourage parents to work together to support each other. For example, parents' breakfast club is very popular and provides a network of support for parents new to the country.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to build on the actions taken to improve attendance, particularly for pupils who are persistently absent
- they develop further the way that they monitor progress for pupils who speak English as an additional language, in order to measure and evaluate the impact of the support and guidance they receive
- pupils know what they need to do to further improve their work, including in

other curriculum subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Amanda Stringer
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, we met with you, other members of the leadership team and staff. I also spoke by telephone to a member of the governing body and with your school improvement partner. We visited classrooms with you and members of your leadership team where we had the opportunity to speak with pupils and look at their work. I met with a group of pupils formally during the day and we spoke with a number of parents at the start of the school day. I took into account 12 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 32 responses to the pupil questionnaire. I also considered three free-text comments and the 18 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. We scrutinised pupils' assessment information, the school's self-evaluation document and the school improvement plan. I checked on the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding procedures and practices.