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Mrs Carly Plaskitt
Headteacher
Grange Primary School
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Dear Mrs Plaskitt

Short inspection of Grange Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 September 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 May 2014.

This school continues to be good.

Since the previous inspection, you have worked diligently to build capacity among the leadership team and thus secure good improvement in the school's performance. The astute recruitment of staff and your high aspirations to do the best for pupils and the school community have enabled you to effect changes that benefit pupils' personal and academic development effectively. With excellent support from the governors and high commitment from all staff, pupils make good progress. You and your leadership team, including governors, have the skills and expertise to improve the school further. Teaching is consistently good, with examples of outstanding practice emerging in many aspects of the school's work. Pupils enjoy the calm, supportive environment that staff engender. Teachers plan activities that make learning interesting, relevant and fun. With a high focus on ensuring that basic skills of literacy and numeracy are embedded well, the vast majority of pupils achieve well. An increasing proportion of pupils are attaining at the higher standard throughout the school. Year 6 pupils are prepared well for secondary school.

All leaders understand what is expected of them and are enthusiastic in their roles. They know the school's strengths and improvement priorities because your improvement plans are clear, precise and well measured. Much has been done towards addressing key issues identified in the previous inspection report. Leaders have taken effective actions to improve teaching and learning and assessment practice throughout the school and more pupils are achieving well as a result. Senior leaders are considering further strategies to develop the role and deployment of teaching assistants to maximise the impact they have on the progress of those pupils who sometimes need extra support to achieve the best they can. Since 2014, outcomes for pupils have improved, year on year, and standards are rising strongly, especially at the end of key stage 2. Current school data shows that this improving trend in reading, writing and mathematics is being sustained. You agree

that a few inconsistencies still remain, for example among pupils' outcomes at the end of Year 2. You are addressing these step by step. Provisional results of the school's performance in the national tests and assessments in 2018 indicate that outcomes are much better than in 2017 and 2016. Provision in the early years has also improved and children make good progress. The decision to enrol children just before the age of three is having a strong impact on their progress. Children are prepared well for Year 1.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment throughout the school is consistently good and continues to strengthen. You make your expectations of all staff very clear and provide effective support to ensure that staff achieve the targets set for them. Where staff need to improve their practice, you provide the training and guidance they need. Teachers, in turn, encourage pupils to work hard and enjoy their learning. Pupils talked with delight about writing poems, exploring the natural world and learning about the Egyptians. Pupils especially love practical activities such as 'maths and science investigations' that deepen their reasoning skills and enhance their understanding of the world. Opportunities for pupils to select from 'pick and mix activities' encourage them to explore and extend their knowledge and skills at home and to involve parents where possible. Although teachers often give pupils challenging tasks to complete, opportunities to encourage pupils to challenge themselves in the tasks they chose independently are sometimes overlooked.

Parents are very positive about the school and recent improvements. They say their children are happy at school and that all staff are very approachable. The school is a tranquil haven where pupils' work is displayed to value and celebrate their achievements. Pupils behave well and work hard because they know this is the right thing to do. They know that attending regularly is crucial if they are to achieve well, and most do. Pupils want to attend school. The school continues to promote good attendance. However, the poor attendance of a few hampers their progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

Taking care of pupils is high priority in the school. Pre-employment vetting is robust to ensure that all staff are checked and cleared to work with pupils. Leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff and governors have the training they need to understand their duty of care responsibilities to act promptly if they have any concerns and to follow all agreed procedures systematically. You and other key leaders check that procedures to keep children safe are reviewed and revised regularly. Staff understand the school's procedures for first-aid training, risk assessments, site security and supervision of pupils in all circumstances. Leaders ensure that pupils know how to stay safe outside school and remind them of dangers posed by, for example, social media sites and the internet. Pupils explain confidently the different risks and hazards that might occur and how to mitigate against these. A few pupils explained that, 'You should not put personal details and photos on the internet because bad people might use these to hurt you or your family'. Pupils learn about road safety, what to do in a fire and how to keep safe generally.

Pupils unequivocally say that they feel safe at school. They know what constitutes bullying and know to report any worries and concerns to teachers, other staff or to parents. They say that bullying does not happen at school and that if it did, teachers would deal with it straightaway, because, as some explained, 'Bullying is unkind and hurts people. No one should put up with it.' Pupils know to treat others with kindness and respect. You know

that some pupils have specific issues in their lives and do everything possible to support their social and emotional needs with sensitivity, referring to other agencies if necessary.

Inspection findings

- Since the school's previous inspection, pupils' attainment and progress have improved overall, and significantly so at the end of Year 6. Provisional results of pupils' outcomes at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2018 indicate that pupils have made good progress from their previous starting points. Even so, I wanted to check how well pupils in other year groups in the school are doing, including in the early years.
- Current school data and inspection evidence show that across the various year groups in key stages 1 and 2 the vast majority of pupils are making good progress. The school's targets for pupils' outcomes in 2019, while ambitious, are entirely realistic. Staff review pupils' progress closely and modify provision to plan for individual pupils' needs effectively. Even so, leaders have, rightly, identified that some pupils could be challenged further when selecting the tasks they opt for independently.
- In 2017, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development at the end of the early years declined. With this in mind, I wanted to look at the accuracy of teachers' assessments in early years, including of children's starting points and at the end of the Reception Year. Inspection evidence confirms that teachers' assessments are rigorous and reliable. Staff have the necessary skills to assess accurately, moderating their findings by working with other schools to ensure that practice is consistent.
- When starting school, most children have skills, knowledge and understanding that are below, and often well below, those typical for their age. The early admission of children just before their third birthday helps children make a flying start to their personal and academic development, helping them to catch up. Effective early years leadership ensures that any children in need of additional support are supported particularly well. Provisional results in 2018 indicate that that proportion of children reaching a good level of development has increased and is close to the 2017 national average. This clearly reflects good progress from their lower starting points. The large majority of children are prepared well for Year 1.
- Throughout the school, leaders and teachers meet regularly to review pupils' progress and they do so effectively to swiftly identify any pupils that are at risk of falling behind their targets. When this happens, leaders initiate extra support promptly to help pupils catch up to where they should be. The provision of high-quality care and support for pupils who are particularly vulnerable is given high priority. Leaders ensure that parents are involved if there are any concerns. From examining the school's assessment information and pupils' workbooks and talking with pupils, evidence convincingly shows that procedures to measure pupils' progress are entirely reliable. Teachers use the school's assessment information, along with their good knowledge of their pupils, to effectively plan learning and support to meet pupils' varying needs. Occasionally, teachers do not ensure that teaching assistants are deployed to good effect throughout lessons or over the full school day. This is an important next step to strengthen provision even further.
- As attendance has been below the national average in recent years and as provisional data in 2018 does not show signs of significant improvement, I examined the actions the school is taking to improve attendance. A small minority of pupils, particularly in the

early years and key stage 1, are absent too often. A few miss school to visit families abroad. Others take holidays in term time. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils are often among those who have frequent absences and this impacts on their progress. Despite the school's efforts, improving attendance remains an important next step for the school to address. Leaders are now revising the school's attendance policy and prevailing upon parents more urgently to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers encourage pupils to challenge themselves when selecting tasks independently
- teaching assistants are deployed effectively throughout lessons and the school day
- attendance improves so that it is at least average and the number of pupils who are regularly absent reduces.

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

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and all your staff, the chair of the governing body and two other governors. I met with your phase leaders and key subject leaders, and other staff with specific responsibilities. We discussed your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and examined the evidence therein. I reviewed documentation relating to pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, safeguarding checks and policies and procedures. I observed pupils around the school, including in the playground and in classes. Together with your deputy headteacher, we visited most classes and discussed these observations together. I looked at pupils' books, spoke to pupils about their work and listened to them read. Pupils did not submit any responses to the online questionnaire from Ofsted but I met with pupils to get their views of the school. I spoke with a number of parents at the start of the day to seek their views about the school. I also took into account 50 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, the school's own survey of parents' views from last year, and the five free-text messages submitted by parents to Ofsted. I also considered the 25 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.