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Mrs Geraldine Kelley
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Kelley

Short inspection of Aintree Davenhill Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 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 March 2014.

This school continues to be good.

You and the leadership team have maintained the good quality of education since the last inspection. You have established a positive culture and ethos. Staff learn from each other through masterclasses and lesson studies. They are well trained and take part in activities with other schools to learn from other Sefton teachers. Relationships between everyone in the school are polite, productive, professional and warm, which gives the school a welcoming and friendly feel. A parent, whose opinion was typical of many, commented on Parent View, 'The general feel of the school is one that is well organised and led, with an approachable team who are genuinely interested in the children's learning and behaviour.'

After the previous inspection, you were asked to improve pupils' achievement in writing as well as the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Across the school, and by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in writing has increased. The accuracy and quality of pupils' spelling and handwriting have also improved. We agreed that the next stage is to increase the proportion of pupils attaining the expected and higher standards in writing, particularly in key stage 1. We also agreed that pupils' writing in subjects other than English needs to be improved.

The impact of teaching on pupils' learning has improved in the last four years. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception has increased year on year. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 has increased. You have also worked successfully to improve teaching and learning in science and

pupils' work reflects, in their experiments and reports, a good standard of scientific knowledge and skill. Standards are also good in art, a subject which the pupils said that they really enjoy. Pupils' achievement in mathematics is excellent.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Pupils said that they feel safe. Leaders have improved the security of the site and have established a culture alert to safety. Staff are thoroughly vetted to make sure they are eligible to work with pupils. They have a good induction to safeguarding and are updated and trained frequently to make sure they have the knowledge they need to identify when a pupil may be at risk from harm. The staff work well with other agencies such as the police, social care, parenting groups and counsellors to share information when appropriate to help protect each pupil.

A line of enquiry at the start of the inspection was to identify why the child protection policy on the school's website did not refer to the national changes that came into effect at the start of September. By the end of the inspection you had made sure that the draft new policy was uploaded to the website and ready for governors' approval. Training for leaders has been booked with the local authority this week and then for all staff next week to make them aware of the national changes.

Inspection findings

- My lines of enquiry at the start of the inspection were to look at:
 - the progress pupils make in writing and reading in key stage 1
 - the quality and impact of subjects other than English and mathematics, in particular design and technology, geography, and computing
 - how leaders use external funds, update policies and make sure the school meets its statutory duties; for example, with regard to the information they put on the website.
- Pupils are keen and accurate readers, skilfully segmenting words into the different sounds and putting sounds together to spell words. You changed the way you teach reading to the younger pupils. You now spend more time than previously teaching the pupils how to read and spell by breaking down words into the different sounds (phonics). Consequently, a higher proportion of pupils attain the expected standard in phonics by the end of Year 1 and Year 2. The data suggests, however, that this high attainment does not transfer into higher standards in the reading and writing assessments by the end of Year 2. In part, this is because staff are cautious about stating that a pupil definitely has attained the standard. It is also because the Year 2 assessments are more focused on comprehension skills than being able simply to read the words on the page. You have already increased the teaching of comprehension skills during the week and we agreed that you could go even further by asking comprehension questions during phonics lessons.

- Pupils make good progress in their writing in Years 1 and 2. Their sentence structures are well-formed. They use correct tenses and punctuation and they spell at a similar standard to other pupils of this age. As with reading, one of the reasons why pupils' attainment appears to be lower at the end of Year 2 is that staff are cautious about saying a pupil definitely meets the standard. Also, the pupils do not have many chances to write at length in subjects other than English. In design and technology, geography, and history, for example, there are many worksheets with little space in which to write. Similarly, some worksheets only require a pupil to add a word, label or a phrase, whereas in English they write well-formed sentences and paragraphs. There is therefore a mismatch between the standard of writing in English and the standard of writing in other subjects.
- There is a clear rationale behind the construction of the curriculum. You have followed through your vision to make learning fun and you strive for excellence by building trips, visits, experiences and visitors into the different subjects. In history in Year 6, for example, pupils visited the Stockport air-raid shelters to gain experience of what it was like to live during the Second World War. During my visit, pupils gave very good answers about the validity of different photographic evidence about evacuees. Pupils had some basic geographical knowledge about locations around Britain and about physical geography such as earthquakes and volcanoes. Pupils' geography and history work contained errors linked to how the topics were taught and we discussed how these could be addressed.
- Teachers use a scheme of work, which gets more difficult as pupils progress through the school, to develop their computing and coding skills. Pupils told me enthusiastically about their work writing codes and algorithms to make things move on screen, for example through a maze. Some of the links between computing and other subjects are not as well-developed as they could be. There are few links, for example, between computing and control technology in design and technology to digital mapping in geography; or between computing and making digital music. In design and technology, pupils make objects that are linked to their topic. In Year 2, for example, they make fire engines in a topic about the Fire of London. The scheme of work for design and technology does not build pupils' ability to create a product or design criteria and then evaluate prototypes or final designs against their design briefs.
- My third line of enquiry was triggered because at the start of the inspection many of the policies on the website were out of date or did not meet requirements. Similarly, some of the information that all schools must publish was missing. It was very unclear how leaders spent external funds for sport and physical education (PE), for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Leaders spend the sport and PE premium well. The teacher in charge of PE identified that staff were less confident and able to teach dance and gymnastics than other sports. He arranged for specialist coaches to model how to teach these aspects of PE so that teachers could gain the skills they needed to teach it themselves. Teachers use the fund wisely and, as a consequence, there has been an increase in clubs and in competitive sport on offer to pupils. By the end of the inspection, staff had put

most of the necessary details onto the website. However, the governing body does not evaluate the impact of the spending as sharply as it should.

- Leaders make good use of the funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Provision and outcomes for this group of pupils is good. However, the report on the website still does not fully meet requirements.
- Leaders make effective use of the external funds to support pupils who are identified as disadvantaged. Governors frequently discuss groups of pupils and their needs, barriers to learning and their outcomes. The information on the website and the strategy does not meet requirements but the provision in school is effective in enabling this group of pupils to participate fully in school activities and to achieve well.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils, particularly in key stage 1, improve their writing skills and apply them across other subjects such as history and geography
- the curriculum in design and technology, geography and computing extends pupils' subject-specific skills
- the website fully meets national requirements and the governing body evaluates sharply the impact of external funding.

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

Yours sincerely

Allan Torr
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and your leadership team, a group of teachers who lead subjects, the business manager and four representatives of the governing body. I also met with a representative of the local authority. Together, we observed teaching in nine classes. To analyse the impact of teaching, I looked through a sample of pupils' work with a particular focus on pupils in Years 1 and 2.

I looked through a range of documents prior to and during the inspection such as policies, child protection cases, and the school's assessment information.

To gather pupils' views about the school, I met formally with a group and considered the 13 responses to Ofsted's electronic survey. Forty parents responded

to Parent View, Ofsted's parent survey, and I also considered their written comments about the school.