

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



28 September 2018

Mr Chris Upton  
Headteacher  
Tarleton Community Primary School  
Hesketh Lane  
Tarleton  
Preston  
Lancashire  
PR4 6AT

Dear Mr Upton

### **Short inspection of Tarleton Community Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 11 September 2018 with Jane Holmes, 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 December 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. During your two years at the school you have faced some considerable challenges. You have met these challenges with sensitivity, enthusiasm and drive. Tarleton Community Primary School is a learning community in which pupils feel safe and learn effectively.

Pupils enjoy coming to the school to learn and rarely miss a day. Pupils are effusive about the many and varied activities provided by the school's wide-ranging and carefully designed curriculum. Visits from a celebrity children's author, trips to France to study history, subject theme days and opportunities to participate in sports are used effectively to engage pupils in learning. Pupils say that if they have any worries and concerns teachers and other adults working in school are approachable and helpful. This view is shared unequivocally by parents and carers and is typified in the many positive comments shared on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Typical comments include: '[My children] are cherished by their teachers and teaching assistants and are challenged and encouraged to make great progress... Enthusiasm bursts out of staff and pupils. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend our school.'

Leaders' actions have been successful in addressing the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Revision of school policies relating to presentation of work, and policies relating to the guidance given to pupils about their work, have been implemented effectively. The quality of teaching has improved. Teachers receive appropriate training to develop their professional skills and knowledge of different

curriculum subjects. Leaders facilitate this through the close links that they forge with other schools and the plentiful opportunities that they give to teachers to learn from observing each other at work. Subject leaders now have opportunities to lead the development of their subjects. They are held closely to account for the impact of their actions by senior leaders and a knowledgeable and committed governing body. The effective use of computer technology has been well developed to support pupils' learning. Teachers carefully consider how they can effectively use digital media and tablet computers to support the development of the linguistic skills of pupils, particularly boys and those pupils who speak English as an additional language. However, these strategies are relatively new, and their full effect on pupils' learning has not yet been realised.

Teachers and governors are well informed about the impact of their actions on pupils' attainment and progress. This is because assessment data is carefully analysed and shared by senior leaders in formats that are easily understood. As a result, governors have a detailed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, which is used to identify appropriate priorities for school improvement. These closely align with the findings of inspectors. For example, you recognise the need to improve further the progress made by pupils in key stage 2 in English and mathematics. This is because in some year groups boys do not make the same progress as girls. In addition, you accept that key priorities are to build pupils' confidence in the use of sophisticated vocabulary and to develop more complex reading skills. School development plans contain sharply focused and measurable expectations and allow you and the governors to check that actions are working and having the desired effect.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The safeguarding and welfare of pupils and staff are strengths of the school. Leaders and governors have ensured that safeguarding procedures are secure, fit for purpose and followed diligently. Records are meticulously kept and information is shared effectively with appropriate authorities to protect pupils.

Well-trained staff are diligent and put pupils' welfare at the forefront of their actions. All staff and governors receive appropriate and frequent training that ensure that they have up-to-date knowledge and information about how to safeguard pupils.

Leaders' actions to support pupils, staff and the wider community following the tragic events of the Manchester Arena terrorist attack have been exemplary. They ensure that pupils and staff feel safe in school and that they have a place of normality in which to grieve and learn. This is very much appreciated by parents and typified by a one of many comments made using Parent View: 'Last year, during a very tragic and difficult time, the school did not just help the children, they reached out to us as parents, helping us help our children. Above and beyond what they needed to do.'

The school's curriculum ensures that pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep safe, including while they are online. Appropriate monitoring and filtering are in place to protect pupils using the school's internet connection.

## Inspection findings

- The quality of the teaching of reading has improved, particularly in key stage 2. Leaders have taken decisive action to improve pupils' outcomes in reading. Changes to the school's timetables ensure that pupils receive frequent reading lessons. Appropriate training ensures that teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding about how to teach reading. Teachers' assessments of reading are detailed and focused. They frequently check the accuracy of their judgements through collaborative work with other local schools.
- Pupils' phonics skills are systematically developed using a detailed scheme of work designed by a knowledgeable subject leader. This carefully matches reading books to pupils' phonic abilities. Leaders have identified appropriate priorities for further development. These include, in key stage 2, developing pupils' knowledge and use of more sophisticated vocabulary, together with more complex reading skills, such as inference and deduction.
- Teachers use questioning well to check pupils' understanding in reading. However, on occasions some pupils, particularly boys, are reluctant to elaborate on the reasons for their answers. Teachers sometimes do not follow this up to ensure that they check and consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils get a good foundation in reading skills. High proportions of pupils reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check over the last three years. The proportion of pupils who attained the expected standard in reading at the end of key stage 1 has been in line with or above the national average for the last three years. In key stage 2, the picture has not always been as strong. However, pupils' progress in reading in key stage 2 has improved considerably in the last two years and is now in line with expectations. As a result, the proportions of pupils who attained the expected standard and the higher standard has increased year on year, and in 2017 was in line with the national averages. However, the progress of some boys was more limited. Unvalidated data from the 2018 key stage 2 national assessments shows that pupils' outcomes have been further improved. Current school information shows that in some year groups the difference in the rates of progress made between boys and girls has been eliminated, but this is not evident across all year groups.
- Regular monitoring of reading records means teachers identify those pupils who do not have frequent opportunities to read at home with an adult. The effective use of members of staff and additional trained volunteers from the community ensures that pupils are frequently heard to read to an adult.
- On occasions, pupils do not confidently recognise or apply some of the more complex skills that are interchangeable between reading and writing. These include the development of inference and deduction skills, and the recognition of different styles of writing found in reading books. Pupils are articulate and use an increasingly more complex vocabulary. However, work in pupils' books shows that they are more limited in the application and use of this sophisticated vocabulary in their independent writing.
- The quality of teaching of mathematics has improved greatly. Strong subject leadership has prioritised effective changes to the mathematics curriculum and developed teachers' knowledge and skills in the teaching of mathematics. The subject

leader is knowledgeable. Teachers benefit from the provision of additional training, a mathematics hub and other local schools. The revision of the school's policy to teach calculation has contributed significantly to the systematic teaching of mathematics skills. The consistent implementation of this policy in all year groups ensures that pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the required mathematical skills well.

- Work in pupils' mathematics books shows that they consolidate their skills and apply them to more complex problems and investigations. For example, in Year 5 pupils investigated the effect of removing a shape's corners on its area and perimeter. Parents are better informed about how the school teaches mathematics because of information events held in school. Progress in mathematics across key stage 2 has improved considerably. The 2018 unvalidated end-of-key-stage-2 assessments show that the considerable rate of improvement in this subject has been sustained.
- Leaders have designed an appropriate curriculum to promote the breadth of pupils' reading, particularly in key stage 2. Leaders' analysis of reading showed that when a pupil was identified as a 'free reader' they then often tended subsequently to choose books which neither challenged them nor provided them with a wide range of reading material. Leaders have taken effective action, including revisions to the key stage 2 reading book scheme, to address this and promote pupils' wider experiences of literature and love of books.
- The relocation of the school library to be close to classrooms has improved the accessibility of books for pupils. The frequent purchase of new books means that pupils have access to a wide range of texts and other publications, such as newspapers, that reflect their interests and the themes that they study in the school's curriculum.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders build upon their actions and enhance pupils' progress in English in key stage 2 by:
  - developing pupils' use of more complex reading skills and sophisticated vocabulary in their writing
  - strengthening boys' confidence to explain their knowledge and understanding in greater depth.

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

Yours sincerely

John Nixon  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors met with you, the deputy headteacher, some subject leaders in the school and a considerable number of governors, including the chair of the governing body. Inspectors spoke with pupils during lessons and around the school and heard a group of key stage 2 pupils read. We spoke with parents at the start of the school day and took account of the information contained within the responses to the online questionnaires for parents, Parent View, staff and pupils.

Inspectors visited classrooms to observe pupils' learning and looked at their work in books. We reviewed information about pupils' progress, attainment and attendance, and scrutinised the school's self-evaluation documentation, and action plan. Inspectors scrutinised the school's policies and records relating to pupils' welfare and safeguarding and evaluated their impact on keeping children safe, including while they are online.