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Ms Rachel Ward
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Ward

Short inspection of Parkside Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 24 October 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 December 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since your appointment in September 2016, you have shown determination to move the school forward. Your thorough self-evaluation means that you have an accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses across the school. As a result, you have been able to identify appropriate priorities for development and the school has detailed action plans to address them.

Senior leaders have ensured that middle leaders have an important role to play in developing teaching, learning and assessment across the school. They have been given the right training, support and challenge to carry out their roles effectively. They are given the time to regularly visit classrooms and review pupils' books and teachers' planning so that they can check on standards and progress and give appropriate advice and support.

You make it clear that anything less than effective teaching is not acceptable. However, this is done in a supportive way. Teachers say that they value the opportunities for professional development that the school gives them, including opportunities to coach and be coached by each other.

In most classes, the level of challenge for pupils at all ability levels is high. Pupils say that teachers help them to do their best by asking questions and giving helpful

advice. Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and use assessment well to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and show high levels of resilience. They are regularly expected to correct and make improvements to their work, which they do effectively. Teachers and other adults diligently check this work, in line with the school's policy.

The topic-based curriculum is characterised by questions that excite and engage most pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy learning at school. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to write at length across the curriculum. Teachers assess the skills pupils already have by analysing a writing task which has been completed independently. Lessons can then be planned carefully to match pupils' needs. The extent of pupils' learning is then checked through another independent task. In mathematics, pupils are given tasks which allow them to develop fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills. They have opportunities to apply these skills in a range of contexts linked to the topics they are studying, which gives a real purpose to learning. However, this topic-based approach needs to be carefully monitored to ensure that all pupils continue to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to make at least good progress in subjects other than English and mathematics.

You have systems in place to carefully track the progress that pupils make in English and mathematics. However, you acknowledge that changes need to be made to the way that the progress of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is monitored. Pupils' attainment and progress are strong in key stage 2 but you are fully aware that improvements need to be made lower down the school, especially in phonics and at key stage 1. Recent improvements in the progress that children make during their time in the early years across the early learning goals need to be sustained.

Pupils are well behaved in lessons and on the playground. On the rare occasions when this is not the case, adults take appropriate action. Pupils are polite and well mannered and show respect for adults and each other. One pupil stated that there is no bullying in school because of 'CARE'. He went on to explain that this stands for the school's values, which are courage, aspirations, resilience and excellence. Pupils can talk about tolerance, respect and democracy. They enjoy the opportunities they get to take on additional responsibilities, such as being a monitor for assembly or a playground leader.

Parents and carers value the work that the school does. Many spoke at length about how teachers provide them with support and how the school responds to any concerns that they have. One stated that 'Parkside is an inclusive school with high expectations for pupils.'

Governors know the school well. You provide them with valuable information about pupils' progress and attainment in your reports. Minutes of governing body meetings show evidence of challenge to, and support for, school leaders. A governor could explain how the school is challenged about the impact of pupil premium funding to make sure that all pupils' needs are met. Statutory duties are

all fulfilled.

Safeguarding is effective.

The culture of safeguarding across the school is strong. All staff are well trained and fully understand that everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding. All concerns, no matter how small, are logged and actions are taken in a timely manner. This results in pupils and their families receiving appropriate support.

Pupils speak positively about the work they do in school about keeping safe. They could talk at length about work to help them stay safe when crossing roads or using the internet. Year 6 pupils spoke enthusiastically about attending Crucial Crew, where they were taught practical skills in a range of topics, including first aid and how to keep safe on a bus. They are confident that adults in school listen to any concerns that they may have and give them appropriate support.

Parents say that they know that pupils are safe and well cared for in school and they praise the work the school does to support families. They have no concerns about poor behaviour or bullying. One parent wrote, 'I love knowing my children are within a safe, caring environment.'

Inspection findings

- Leaders have acted to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Middle leaders are now able to have a positive impact on teaching and learning across the school. Most pupils find their work appropriately challenging and know how to improve it. Pupils have a wealth of opportunity to write at length across different subjects and to apply their mathematical skills in a range of contexts.
- Leaders effectively identify and support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. These pupils' needs are recognised at an early stage and appropriate actions are taken to ensure that they make progress socially and academically. The school knows that their current tracking system is not refined enough to always capture this progress and are ready to introduce a new system which will recognise the smaller steps that some of these pupils make.
- Outcomes by the end of key stage 2 are strong. Pupils make rapid progress from their starting points at the end of key stage 1. The proportions of pupils in Year 6 that reached the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been above the national averages for three years. The proportions of pupils attaining at the higher level were also above the national averages in these subjects in 2018. The proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was just above the national average in 2018. However, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 1 is not as strong. The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been below the national average for two years. However, leaders' effective action to help the pupils who were not on track resulted in all of them reaching the expected standard at the end of Year 2 in 2018. The proportions of pupils reaching the expected standards at key stage 1

in reading, writing and mathematics have been below the national averages for two years. However, the proportions reaching the greater-depth standards in these three subjects were at or above the national averages in 2018.

- Leaders are taking appropriate actions to improve attendance across the school. They use a wide range of appropriate strategies but the impact they have on some pupils and families is minimal. Many families are still choosing to take holidays during term time. As a result, overall attendance remains just below the national average.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all pupils continue to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to make at least good progress in subjects other than English and mathematics
- there is an increasingly consistent approach to the teaching of phonics to ensure that a greater proportion of pupils reach the expected standard in Year 1
- improvements across Nursery and Reception are sustained to ensure that as many children as possible reach and exceed a good level of development
- progress through key stage 1 continues to improve so that an increased proportion of pupils reach and exceed the expected standard by the end of Year 2
- leaders continue to work with families to improve attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average
- plans to improve tracking of the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are implemented immediately.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Cook
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I made visits to all classes with you. I looked at work in pupils' books with the key stage 1 and 2 leaders. I met with a governor. I met with the executive headteacher of the trust. I also listened to three pupils read from Years 1, 2, and 6.

I took account of the 12 responses from parents to Ofsted's survey, Parent View. I

also took account of the 11 responses to the Ofsted staff survey. I talked to several parents as they dropped their children off at the start of the school day. I talked informally with pupils in lessons. I met formally with a group of pupils from Years 5 and 6.

I scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation document, governing body minutes, records of the checks on teaching and learning, school assessment information, attendance documentation and safeguarding documentation.