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Mrs Sarah Jarman
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Jarman

Short inspection of Monkfield Park Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 November 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 February 2015.

This school continues to be good.

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

Your passion and aspiration for pupils to achieve the best that they can in all aspects of school life are shared by staff. Staff are proud to work at the school and want the very best for the pupils that they teach. Leaders and teachers work very effectively as a team to achieve improvement priorities that have been identified through accurate self-evaluation. Governors know the school well. They use their regular visits to the school and governing body meetings to check that leaders' actions are making a difference to the quality of education provided. As a result, you have acted to address the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

Regular checks on the quality of teaching are used to provide training and development opportunities for teachers, which they welcome and use to ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment remains good. School leaders, governors and teachers have an accurate view of pupils' progress. You recognise that some changes in staffing have caused variation in progress for some pupils in the past. Staffing is now more stable and leaders' checks on pupils' progress are ensuring that these pupils are catching up and making good progress.

Teachers' assessment accurately identifies the next steps in pupils' learning. Pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve their work and deepen their

understanding. Teachers and leaders use assessment information to identify those pupils who are at risk of falling behind and make sure that they get any extra help that they need. As a result, most pupils in the school, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, make good progress.

Pupils are happy and enjoy the school, as shown by their low rates of absence and good behaviour. They have positive attitudes to learning. Good relationships between pupils and with adults contribute to pupils' strong progress. Pupils say that when the behaviour of others does not meet teachers' high expectations it is quickly dealt with.

Your review of the curriculum has ensured that pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding in a broad range of subjects. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and show a very good understanding of others' beliefs and cultures. They know why it is important to respect the views of others and treat everyone equally. Opportunities to elect members of the school council and 'eco-warriors' help pupils to understand the democratic process and provide opportunities for their views to be heard. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education and for life in modern Britain.

Leaders and governors make good use of the support and challenge provided by the local authority (LA). The LA provided support for the able deputy headteacher when she took on the role of acting headteacher in your absence last year. As a result, there was no loss of direction in moving towards the priorities for improvement identified.

Safeguarding is effective.

Keeping children safe from harm is given the highest priority. Leaders carry out all of the checks required to ensure that adults are suitable to work with pupils. The record of these checks is accurately maintained and reviewed regularly by governors and annually by the LA.

You are the designated person responsible for safeguarding and have a wider team that includes the deputy headteacher and four staff, including the manager of the Monkfield Park Care and Learning Centre (the pre-school provision managed by the school). All members of this team are trained to the same standard and are highly knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities. You make sure that records of concerns are accurate and updated as necessary. Serious concerns are referred quickly to external agencies so that pupils and their families get the help that they need in a timely fashion.

Leaders and governors make sure that the policies and procedures for keeping children safe are up to date. They reflect the latest published guidance and are reviewed regularly. You ensure that all staff receive annual training and regular updates on how to keep pupils safe from harm. This training includes how to keep

pupils safe from the risks of radicalisation and extremism. All staff have very recently completed refresher training on the 'Prevent' duty. As a result, adults working at the school know how to recognise the signs that pupils may be at risk from harm and are confident to refer concerns to the safeguarding team.

Governors fulfil their responsibilities for safeguarding. They have a good understanding of the risks that pupils face. They make sure that staff training and the curriculum support the ethos of keeping pupils safe from all types of risk. Governors ensure that statutory requirements for safeguarding children in the early years provision are met.

Pupils learn how to keep safe through their lessons, including personal, social and health education, and through assemblies. They spoke confidently about how they are taught to stay safe when working online and using mobile technology. As a result, pupils can recognise the risks, and know what to do to keep themselves safe and how to report concerns. Pupils understand bullying, in all of its different forms, and how it is harmful. They say that, when it occurs, teachers deal with bullying quickly. Pupils can report any concerns that they have to an adult or by using a note on the 'worry monster'. They are confident that their concerns are dealt with. As a result, pupils feel safe in the school. Almost all parents and carers who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, agreed that pupils are safe, happy and well-cared for.

Inspection findings

- To demonstrate that the school remains good, I focused on several lines of enquiry. The first of these was about whether leaders' actions had improved pupils' achievement in writing across the school. This had been identified as an area for improvement in the previous inspection report.
- You have ensured that improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment of writing is a key priority in your improvement plans. There is now a consistent approach to teaching spelling. As a result, most pupils spell common words correctly. By the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment in the grammar, punctuation and spelling test is above the national average.
- Teachers focus on the accurate use of grammar and punctuation whenever pupils write. They provide opportunities for pupils to use, apply and develop their writing skills across the curriculum. Pupils have many opportunities to write at length and for a variety of purposes. I saw examples of this when observing learning and scrutinising pupils' work, for example when pupils in Year 6 wrote about St Lucia and the First World War in their topic work. This helps most pupils to make good progress in writing.
- The standards pupils attain in writing are high. Pupils' attainment in writing at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 and the proportion of children assessed as being at the expected level in writing at the end the early years have consistently been above the national average. Pupils develop handwriting that is typically neat and well formed.

- A further key line of enquiry was whether teachers' expectations were equally high for all pupils and whether they provide pupils with appropriately challenging activities. This had been an area for improvement identified at the previous inspection. I had also identified that, by the end of key stage 2, the most able pupils had not made better-than-average progress in reading and that in 2018 boys' progress in reading, writing and mathematics was less strong than that made by girls.
- Following the previous inspection, you made sure that all pupils are set challenging targets for their attainment. When observing teaching and learning, you make sure that teachers are providing challenging activities and the right level of support to pupils so that they make good progress.
- My observations of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work show that teachers routinely plan a variety of activities that are well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers' assessment accurately identifies what pupils need to do to improve and they set clear targets for each pupil. Pupils respond to these targets to improve their work or deepen their understanding, so most make good progress as a result.
- Teachers plan interesting sequences of learning that capture pupils' interest. Expectations of different groups of pupils are equally high. Pupils respond well and most make good progress as a result. All pupils have access to high-quality texts that are well matched to their age and ability. This helps pupils to develop a genuine enjoyment of reading, so that typically pupils make good progress in reading, whatever their ability.
- You have rightly identified that, although they typically make good progress from their starting points, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is lower than that of other pupils. These differences in attainment are not diminishing as quickly as you want.
- My final line of enquiry was about how leaders and governors ensure that the early years provision provides a good start to children's education. This was because the management of the Monkfield Park Care and Learning Centre has transferred to the school since it was previously inspected.
- You and the governing body have built effectively upon the links that have always existed between the school and the pre-school provision. You have ensured that expectations regarding the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the pre-school are as high as in the school.
- Your early years leader and the pre-school manager have worked together to ensure that children experience purposeful, carefully considered learning experiences. Planning consistently identifies opportunities for pupils to experience all areas of learning. This includes a common approach to teaching phonics, reading and writing, which is helping children make a smooth transition from the pre-school, to Reception and then Year 1.
- Children join the early years with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. They settle in quickly in the early years and quickly begin to develop positive relationships with one another and with adults. Adults model interactions and

expectations of behaviour well. Most children make good progress, with the proportion achieving a good level of development typically being above the national average.

- The early years leader and pre-school manager have clear plans for improvement and appropriate actions in place to achieve them. They understand how their plans contribute to achieving whole-school priorities. While they can demonstrate the impact of some of their actions on children's outcomes, they are less clear about the impact of others. They rightly recognise, as do you and the governors, that some actions and changes need further time to have an impact on the quality of provision and children's outcomes.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- raise the attainment in reading, writing and mathematics of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to reduce differences with other pupils
- fully embed and evaluate the changes in early years provision, and particularly the pre-school, to ensure that they are making the difference intended.

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

Yours sincerely

Paul Wilson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and your senior leaders, the subject leader for English, the early years leader and the manager of the Monkfield Park Care and Learning Centre. I met with members of the governing body and had a telephone conversation with the link governor for safeguarding. I had a telephone conversation with a counsellor who works in the school and met a representative from the local authority. I met formally with a group of pupils and heard a group of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils read.

I made short visits to observe learning in all key stages, including the early years, with you and two other senior leaders. I scrutinised pupils' work in a range of subjects from Year 2 and Year 6 and reviewed examples of children's learning from the Reception class and the Care and Learning Centre.

I reviewed a range of school documentation and policies, including improvement plans, documentation and records relating to safeguarding, assessment information and documents relating to the work of the governing body.

I also considered 83 responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents Parent View, including 45 free-text comments. I also considered the 20 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.