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Mrs Nicky Kilvington
Executive Headteacher
Stocks Lane Primary School
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Dear Mrs Kilvington

Short inspection of Stocks Lane 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 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. You have ensured that the pupils are safe. This is because you hold special events and speak to pupils about important safety issues that could affect them. They know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. They know who to speak to if they have a concern or a worry, in general, or about their safety and welfare. They also know to report any bullying incidents and feel confident that you will deal with these immediately and effectively. A small minority of parents and carers are concerned that bullying is not dealt with appropriately. However, inspection evidence indicated that this is not the case. The large majority of parents believe that bullying is dealt with well and is rare. Pupils' conduct at all times of the day is good. Pupils are sensible as they play and walk around school.

You have worked effectively to reduce absence over the past 12 months. However, it remains high. You have improved your monitoring of pupils' attendance, but your response to concerns around attendance is not always urgent enough, and parents are not always told of concerns in a timely way. In addition, governors' evaluations of the effect of leaders' work to improve attendance are not rigorous enough.

You understand the school well. You work very well with the head of school, who has a strong relationship with pupils, parents and staff and who has a clear vision for the school. You both know the school's strengths and are ambitious for it to improve further and, as such, are always working to make the school even better.

For example, your work with other leaders to develop the early years provision has led to very strong outcomes for the youngest children in school. The quality of teaching in the early years is strong, with all adults well trained in working with children. In this, children approach their learning increasingly independently, while adults guide and support them skilfully, which means that children's development across the curriculum is strong. The assessment of children is thorough and regular, allowing leaders to plan activities which match children's needs and interests well. As a result, children make strong progress, develop very positive learning attitudes and settle well and quickly into the early years. Parents are also very pleased with this area of the school and believe that their children are well served.

Another example of your strong leadership is seen in the outcomes of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). I was interested to see what you do to ensure that these pupils make very strong progress from their starting points. Leaders understand the needs of pupils with SEND well. They work with a range of external agencies and use different strategies to work with these pupils' individual and specific needs. Leaders train all staff so that they know these pupils' needs and can support them in the classroom. As a result, pupils with SEND have positive attitudes to learning, are regularly engaged in the mainstream class activities, and do well.

At the last inspection, the inspector recommended that you develop teaching so that more is outstanding. You have been focused on ensuring that teaching remains a strength. Since the last inspection, the national testing of pupils has become more rigorous and the standards pupils need to reach have been heightened. Despite this, the proportion of pupils who meet and exceed the national standards is high, thanks to the strength in teaching. The inspector also recommended that teaching in mathematics was further developed and that there was an increased focus on pupils' mental skills in mathematics. Mathematics is now a strength of the school. This is thanks to your focus on mental arithmetic skills, as well as allowing pupils the regular opportunity to apply and use their basic skills in learning. As such, progress is strong in mathematics, as it is in reading and writing.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are regularly trained to ensure that they know how to keep pupils safe in school, and what to do if they are concerned a pupil is not safe. This training is updated, as necessary, so that staff are aware of any amendments to statutory regulations. The school makes checks on staff's suitability to work with children, as well as on their qualifications. These checks meet the legal requirements and the school keeps records of them. The governors are also trained on keeping children safe in education to ensure that they understand their responsibilities around safeguarding. Pupils, parents and staff are made aware of what to do if they have a worry about someone's safety. There is information on how to report a concern around the school and on the school website. The school works with a range of external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe, and they seek advice from these agencies, as appropriate, when a concern is raised.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, I wanted to understand if the school was working effectively to improve the outcomes of middle-ability pupils, as well as of boys, given some apparent weaker outcomes in 2017. There were some statistical anomalies in the outcomes for these groups of pupils at that time but, nevertheless, you made sure that these pupils' needs are now more closely considered. These groups of pupils now have access to appropriately challenging activities, which move their learning on more quickly, while ensuring that their understanding is more secure. This has helped their achievement improve, as it has done in reading, writing and mathematics. This means that these pupils' outcomes now closely match those of other groups of pupils, who also do well.
- I was also keen to see how well you support disadvantaged pupils. These pupils have not always done as well as their peers since the last inspection. However, you have carefully planned the use of the extra funding that these pupils attract. You have analysed where strategies and intervention actions have worked, and where improvements have been necessary. Governors have a clear understanding of your work and the effect of this work.
- Thanks to your rigorous and reflective approach, the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils have improved considerably in recent months and the gap between these pupils and their peers has diminished significantly; at times, disadvantaged pupils outperform their peers in school and nationally.
- During the inspection, I wanted to look at pupils' attendance and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. Over the past two years, pupils' absence and persistent absence have increased substantially.
- I was interested to see how well the school's curriculum serves the needs of pupils. The curriculum is broad and balanced and much of it is taught well. This is seen from the strong outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 and across the school, as well as pupils' positive attitudes to learning and strong conduct.
- The curriculum also enhances pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and their understanding of British values. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. They also know the importance of values such as respecting others, tolerance and the rule of law, all of which are manifested in their behaviour and positive relationships around school.
- While the curriculum is a strength, there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of the different lifestyle choices that people can make and of different types of relationships and families.
- Furthermore, science is not as well taught as other areas of the curriculum. Largely, this means that the work is not challenging enough and there are not enough opportunities to develop pupils' scientific and investigative skills.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- there is a timely response to concerns around pupils whose absence is low, or at risk of becoming persistent, and that parents are made aware of the issue in a timely way
- governors rigorously evaluate the effect of leaders' work to improve pupils' attendance
- science teaching consistently matches the quality of teaching seen elsewhere in the curriculum, and that pupils are provided with challenging activities which develop their science skills well
- there are regular opportunities for pupils to learn about the different lifestyle choices that people can make.

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

Yours sincerely

Fiona McNally
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I visited a number of classes to observe teaching and its effect on learning. I also looked at a wide range of pupils' workbooks from several year groups, across a variety of subjects. I met with you and the head of school, as well as with other senior and middle leaders. I held a telephone discussion with your school improvement partner. I also held a meeting with governors. I looked at the school's information about the safeguarding of pupils and examined behaviour, attendance, and records of incidents of bullying. I also checked a range of other documentation, including your self-evaluation, your school development plan and your assessment information. I held formal discussions with some pupils from Years 1 to 6, and spoke informally to several pupils during breaktime. I also heard pupils read in lesson time. I considered the parents' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and to parents' responses to the free-text questionnaire. I also spoke to a number of parents as they brought their children to school.