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Mrs Joy Wood
Wellington Primary School
Dudley Hill Road
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Dear Mrs Wood

Short inspection of Wellington Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 21 November 2018 with Matthew Knox, 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. You and your deputy have shown yourselves to be reflective practitioners and eager to consider the effectiveness of the school's leadership. You have actively sought the advice of education consultants to help you review the work of the school and have established an effective working relationship with schools in your local partnership. This has helped you to observe some good practice which has influenced your decision to implement some effective changes, for example in the teaching of mathematics; this has had a positive impact in key stage 1.

You have created a school with a caring ethos and you know your families well. You have recently sought their views through a survey where parents and carers were very positive about the school. Although there was a low response to Ofsted's questionnaire Parent View, the large majority were positive. Furthermore, those parents that inspectors spoke to were also positive about the school. They commented on the school's inclusive ethos, reflecting its diverse local community and the value that the school puts on providing a rounded education for their children.

During our learning walk together, we observed well-motivated pupils, attentive in lessons and focused on their work. There are good relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils are confident that the school's behaviour policy is used fairly. They have a thorough understanding of consequences. They talk informatively about the school's welfare room, which is used to help pupils resolve any conflicts.

Following the previous inspection, the school was tasked with improving the attainment of boys in reading and writing by the end of key stage 1 as it lagged some way behind that of the girls. You have effectively addressed this gap in writing. Recent improvements to the teaching of phonics, including the use of additional programmes of support, are also helping to close the gap in reading. However, you acknowledge that there is still more to do to close it fully.

At the time of the previous inspection, you were also asked to make sure that learning activities met the needs of the most able pupils more effectively. The most able pupils are now achieving well in reading and writing. However, they do not achieve as well in mathematics. Last year, you introduced a new approach to the teaching of mathematics in key stage 1. This has already paid dividends. However, you have only very recently implemented these changes at key stage 2 and the impact is yet to be realised in pupils' outcomes. Too few pupils reach the higher standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school provides a safe environment for its pupils and pupils say that they feel safe. Pupils understand how to stay safe and healthy. They talk informatively about what they learn in their personal, social and health (PSHE) lessons. Pupils say that there is little or no bullying in school. Even so, they have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying and the procedures for dealing with it.

Leaders have created a safe culture to take care of its pupils and ensure that procedures are implemented to protect them. Staff and governors understand their obligations for safeguarding and take appropriate action when necessary. They liaise with outside agencies and this provides pupils and families with the support that they need. You have recently introduced an electronic system for registering concerns.

Following a recent audit, you are now reviewing and strengthening some of the school's safeguarding procedures and policies. Work to ensure that staff and governors are fully clear about the impact and effectiveness of the school's actions the school takes is also under way.

There are systems in place to follow up pupil absences on the first day. You have worked closely with families successfully to improve the attendance of some of those who are persistently absent. Pupils told inspectors that they get rewards for good attendance. However, attendance and persistent absence are not improving rapidly enough. Governors and leaders do not have a strategic overview of trends in attendance or the effectiveness of actions the school has taken. Leaders say that holidays taken during term time account for much of the persistent absence. However, neither leaders or governors are able to quantify this effectively. The school does not use any sanctions when this is the case. We agreed that improving attendance, including reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent, is an important next step.

Inspection findings

- You effectively use the school's assessment information to identify priorities for improvement so that pupils achieve well. You respond quickly to address weaknesses and have accurately pinpointed what needs to be done this year.
- You have identified that the achievement of boys starts to lag behind that of the girls by the end of the early years, especially in reading. This, in turn, hampers boys' achievement by the end of key stage 1. A sharper focus on the teaching of phonics is helping to raise standards in reading. In 2018, for example, an above-average proportion of pupils reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Paired reading sessions between older and younger pupils help to keep reading a high priority and are enjoyed by pupils of all ages. By the end of Year 2, however, the gaps between the attainment of boys and girls are still wider than that seen nationally and, therefore, continuing to address this remains an important next step.
- In key stage 2, pupils are making good progress in reading. Pupils shared their enjoyment of reading with inspectors, confidently expressing their choice of books and opinions about authors. Older pupils are able to discuss how they use authors' styles and techniques to influence their writing.
- Pupils' progress in writing has improved across the school. In Year 1, pupils' progress has accelerated notably. In Year 2, pupils are now writing extended sentences and beginning to develop a cursive style of handwriting. Improvements to the teaching of phonics are evident in pupils' spelling skills. Year 2 pupils, for example, make good attempts at spelling adventurous vocabulary. In key stage 2, pupils' workbooks show that they acquire and hone their basic writing skills effectively across other curriculum subjects such as in history and geography. In English, pupils effectively draft and edit their writing. They produce some high-quality work which is well presented. Provisional outcomes in Year 6 in 2018 indicate that standards of attainment in writing improved considerably on those in 2017 and were above average. An above-average proportion of pupils also reached the higher standard.
- In mathematics, provisional outcomes in Year 2 in 2018 indicate an improvement in pupils' achievement, raising standards of attainment so that they are close to the national average. You attribute this to the introduction of a new mathematics scheme and new approaches to teaching. However, provisional outcomes in Year 6 in 2018 indicate that standards of attainment have declined and were below average. Pupils did not make good progress from their previous starting points. In particular, too few pupils reached the expected or higher standard.
- You have acted swiftly to reverse this decline. You have extended the mathematics scheme and successful approaches to teaching evident in key stage 1 into key stage 2. This is already starting to have a positive impact. In key stage 2, less-able pupils are being well supported, for example by using visual methods which help them to understand concepts such as fractions. Similarly, most-able pupils told inspectors that they are now finding their work more challenging. Even so, further work is needed to ensure that teachers' assessment of what pupils already know and can do is used effectively to plan activities to

consistently challenge the most able pupils in this subject.

- Leaders of English and mathematics have a good grasp of their subject. They use assessment information well to identify areas of strength and any weaknesses, particularly where particular groups are underperforming. They ensure that programmes of support are put in place swiftly to help pupils who are at risk of slipping back or to address any misconceptions. However, leaders' actions to monitor the school's work are not always clearly focused on evaluating what difference any changes are making to pupils' outcomes, for example reviewing the impact of recent recommendations to utilise classroom reading areas on pupils' enjoyment and achievement in reading.
- Governors are keen and actively involved in school life. A recent audit of their skills shows that they have a broad base of expertise. Their visits are well focused on checking that the school is implementing agreed changes. However, they too are not always clear on the impact this is having, such as on pupils' rates of progress or levels of attendance.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they effectively evaluate the impact of their actions, especially on improving pupils' outcomes and attendance
- the quality of teaching is improved so that pupils make consistently good progress by:
 - using assessment to plan activities which challenge the most able pupils in mathematics
 - closing the gap between girls' and boys' achievement in reading in the early years and key stage 1
- pupils' attendance is improved and the number of persistent absences is reduced.

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

Karen Heath
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors met with you and your subject leaders for mathematics and writing. You shared your own evaluation of the effectiveness of the school and your improvement plans. Together, we observed several lessons. With subject leaders, we looked at pupils' mathematics and writing books. We reviewed a range of documents, including those relating to the safety and

welfare of pupils. We spoke to pupils about behaviour, safety and their enjoyment of school. There were no responses to the online pupil or staff surveys. We listened to some pupils in key stages 1 and 2 read and discussed their enjoyment, and experience, of reading. We spoke to parents at the start of the school day and considered written comments from parents, as well as the 25 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, to evaluate their views.

I met with the chair of the governing body and other governors as well as speaking to a representative from the local authority.