

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



10 December 2018

Mrs Claire Hurst
Acting Headteacher
Wilson Primary School
Wilson Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG30 2RW

Dear Mrs Hurst

Short inspection of Wilson Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 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 October 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection will be a section 5 inspection.

Wilson Primary School is a high-achieving school, where pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make substantial and sustained progress in their learning. Leaders have an unswerving mission to enable pupils not only to be highly successful learners, but also happy, confident individuals, who take responsibility and play an active part in their school. You rightly say that the school is a place where 'success across the curriculum goes hand-in-hand with personal development'. Parents particularly appreciate this aspect of the school's work. One parent of an older pupil commented that her child had 'grown academically as well as personally' during their time at the school. Others echoed this view.

Strong, good-natured, respectful relationships throughout the school underpin its success. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are entirely positive. They listen carefully to staff and their classmates alike, and learning flourishes. Pupils' excellent behaviour in lessons and around the school at free time reflects these positive relationships. In lessons, pupils work well together, cooperating, encouraging and supporting each other as the opportunity arises. Similarly, at playtime pupils are kind, friendly and warm, even when playing energetically. They are welcoming and

inclusive to everyone in this richly diverse community.

Pupils love learning because teachers make lessons interesting and challenging. Teachers plan sequences of lessons based on strong subject knowledge and a very clear, shared understanding of how pupils learn well. They ensure that there is always something to challenge the most able pupils, thus addressing one of the areas identified for improvement at your last inspection. There is a consistent approach to teaching and learning across the school. All staff, including teaching assistants, expect pupils to work hard and try their best whatever they are doing. Consequently, pupils' written work is of a very high standard of accuracy and presentation because pupils know that teachers will only accept their best efforts. This is as true in topic work as it is in writing and mathematics.

Senior leaders have high expectations of staff and reflect this in the feedback and advice that they provide. Senior leaders are also quick to celebrate the positive aspects of learning that they have seen, especially where staff have responded quickly to new initiatives or approaches to learning. They also offer incisive guidance on areas for staff to work on to sharpen their practice.

Senior leaders and governors leave no room for complacency and are constantly on the lookout for ways to improve. They seek advice and expertise from a range of sources, including the local authority, and they work closely with other local schools. This open, accountable approach provides staff with many professional development opportunities. As a result, they are continually improving their skills and extending their knowledge, and teaching and learning across the school are very strong.

Outcomes for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, have been well above those seen nationally in recent years. Right from the time children enter the nursery, they make strong progress. The proportion who reach a good level of development at the end of the early years is typically above the national average over time. Pupils sustain this progress in key stage 1. The overwhelming majority achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Pupils also make substantial progress across key stage 2. Their progress in each of reading, writing and mathematics has been well above that seen nationally in recent years.

At your last inspection, senior leaders were asked to provide pupils with more opportunities for writing in subjects other than mathematics and English. Pupils' topic books across the school are full of well-crafted writing in a wide range of subjects. For example, while studying evolution in science, pupils in Year 6 wrote detailed diaries about their findings. They were able to write in the style of Charles Darwin because they had read and analysed portions of his diaries.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All staff place the well-being of pupils at the heart of this school's work. Pupils trust staff to look after them and know that there is always someone to turn

to with any concerns. Staff have all had regular training and updates, so they recognise when a pupil may be at risk. All staff report and record any concerns promptly and accurately. They also know that, when the need arises, they can contact external agencies, including the police, themselves.

Pupils learn how to stay safe in a range of situations, including on the road, in water and when online. Older pupils have a more sophisticated understanding of e-safety, including recognising whether a website is secure or not. They understand the potential risks of being on an unsecured website. Pupils have a good understanding of bullying in its various forms. They say that it happens very occasionally, but that staff are quick to deal with it when it does arise.

Inspection findings

- Early in the inspection, we agreed to focus on three aspects of the school's work. The first of these was to consider how well teaching in mathematics provides the most able pupils with high levels of challenge and depth of understanding. Teaching provides pupils with a secure foundation of fluency and understanding in mathematics. Pupils demonstrate that they can solve challenging problems, working through incorrect calculations, identifying where mistakes have been made, and explaining their work.
- However, teachers present the most able pupils with too few opportunities to develop more advanced mathematical reasoning skills. When pupils are presented with particularly tough problems, they sometimes struggle to solve them confidently. Pupils understand the need to work systematically, but have not learned to use reasoning to identify underlying patterns and relationships, and thus solve those problems more quickly and efficiently.
- The second area we focused on was the effectiveness of the governors during a time of transition for the school. Governors have overseen the school with a very clear eye and a strong, strategic sense of direction during a period without a substantive headteacher. They reach their view of the school using a range of evidence, and use this information to provide support and rigorous challenge to leaders at all levels. This has ensured that the school has continued to flourish and improve seamlessly through this time of transition.
- Finally, we considered how well the wider curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and enables them to make good progress in a wide range of subjects. The curriculum is a considerable strength of the school. While being enjoyable for pupils, the design and implementation of the curriculum also ensure that pupils build a depth of learning in a range of subjects and make strong progress. Middle leaders have a good knowledge of how well their subjects are taught, and they make sure that they each receive sufficient time and coverage in the curriculum.
- Teachers skilfully interweave opportunities for pupils to apply their learning in writing and mathematics with tasks in other subjects. Similarly, the knowledge acquired, for example in geography, is also used in tasks in other subjects such as English or science. This helps pupils to develop a strong body of knowledge and to understand how learning in one area of the curriculum can be applied in

other subjects.

- The curriculum also contains interesting trips to such places as Windsor Castle and the Oxford University Museum of Natural History. This helps to bring subjects to life for pupils and further fuels their enthusiasm for learning. The many clubs also play a valuable role in enabling pupils to learn outside of school hours.
- Pupils love the 'daily mile challenge'. Physical education and sports receive a wide coverage in the curriculum. Pupils can explain clearly how taking part in physical activities brings wider benefits to their well-being and learning. As one pupil in Year 1 explained, 'The teachers want you to grow up and be healthy and know everything.'

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide pupils, especially the most able pupils, with more opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Bruce Waelend
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

We met regularly throughout the day, along with the deputy headteacher, to discuss a range of topics, including outcomes for pupils, the curriculum and safeguarding. We also met early on in the inspection to discuss the school's self-evaluation.

I had meetings with three middle leaders, and with four members of the governing body. I also met with a representative of the local authority. Together, we visited classes in all year groups to observe teaching and learning. During these visits, we looked at pupils' work. We also looked at some pupils' work in detail to evaluate their progress, and the quality of the school's curriculum. I observed pupils' behaviour around the school, including at playtime, and had a meeting with a group of 12 pupils representing Years 1 to 6. I considered 62 responses to the pupils' survey and 26 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I spoke to several parents in the playground at the end of the day.

I evaluated a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation documents and their development plans. I scrutinised the school's safeguarding policies, procedures and checks, and spoke with several members of staff, including the

assistant headteacher, to test out their understanding of safeguarding arrangements.