

13 December 2018

Mrs DK Lonnergan
Headteacher
Westmoor Primary School
Church Lane
Dewsbury Moor
Dewsbury
West Yorkshire
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Dear Mrs Lonnergan

Short inspection of Westmoor Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 December 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 January 2015.

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 governing body have strengthened the amalgamation between the junior and infant schools by moving to one site. Your drive and high expectations have improved the quality of education and raised standards in the early years and key stage 1. The school is popular with parents.

The last inspection report asked you to improve the teaching of reading. You put the teaching of phonics at the centre of your mission to raise standards in reading and writing. Effective leadership and well-targeted training and development in phonics teaching have resulted in a year-on-year improvement in phonics outcomes. Leaders manage pupils' progress through the phonics programme carefully. Staff adjust the teaching to pupils' stage of development and promptly give extra support for pupils who need it. Your regular checks on the quality of phonics teaching ensure that pupils' learning is systematic and consistent.

Pupils apply their phonic knowledge well, for example by writing words and sentences. In the early years, leaders are tackling the weaker attainment by boys in phonics by giving more opportunities for children to read and listen to stories that repeat the phonic sounds and letters they are learning.

Pupils are making rapid progress in the early years and at key stage 1. As a result, in 2018, the proportion of pupils that reached the expected standard at the end of key stage 1 was at, or close to, the national averages in reading, writing and

mathematics.

Attainment in reading at the end of key stage 2 has increased year on year since the last inspection. However, the progress made by Year 6 pupils in reading has not been as strong as in writing and mathematics.

Your comprehensive and well-organised reading strategy has increased opportunities for reading. All pupils have reading records and read regularly at home, school and in guided-reading sessions. You target accurately those that read less often. You check pupils' reading age frequently and you provide a well-considered balance of phonic and non-phonetic books as pupils develop their reading skills. You are providing more reading material to interest boys to help them catch up with the girls.

Teachers promote the enjoyment of reading well by regularly reading stories to their class. The 'must read' list of books for each year group is encouraging all pupils to read a range of recommended books. Some older pupils take part enthusiastically in an annual reading competition with other schools. All pupils take part in the reading buddy scheme where older pupils act as reading buddies for younger ones. The well-trained reading buddies ask good comprehension questions. They record younger pupils' answers accurately and provide a good model for younger pupils.

Year 6 pupils enjoy their leadership responsibility for managing the well-organised reading shed in the playground and for recording books borrowed. You are taking effective steps to develop parental engagement to support pupils' reading.

You are reviewing the use of guided reading to enable pupils to engage more deeply in exploring the meaning of texts to reach the higher standards of attainment in reading, particularly at key stage 2.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Safeguarding policies and staff training are up to date, including about the risks of extremism. Several leaders have a responsibility for safeguarding which results in a prompt response to any emerging concerns. Leaders document cases scrupulously. Accurate records are accessible to key staff. Leaders take great care to support the individual needs of vulnerable pupils. They are tenacious in their advocacy of the needs of pupils. Staff work effectively with other agencies to support children and their families. Leaders take proper action if a child is missing from education.

Pupils have good opportunities to voice any concerns to trusted adults. The curriculum gives well-planned opportunities for pupils to learn about staying safe on a mobile phone, knife crime, and railway and water safety. Staff communicate well with each other and with parents. The positive school culture, well-organised systems and caring ethos promote the safety of pupils effectively.

Inspection findings

- Your methodical approach to teaching sentence structure, handwriting, spelling and grammar develops secure basic skills in writing. Pupils' progress in writing at key stage 2 is consistently well above national averages. The proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected standard in writing has been consistently in line with national averages. However, fewer than average reach the higher standard in writing. You have correctly identified the need for pupils to develop their mastery of language and composition by acquiring a larger range of literary vocabulary from wider reading and more challenging texts.
- In 2018, attainment in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 dipped due to Year 6 pupils' weaker answers to problem-solving and reasoning questions. You have taken effective steps to adapt the curriculum to develop pupils' understanding and practice in answering mathematical questions expressed in words.
- The previous inspection report asked the school to improve the quality of teaching and learning further. Well-targeted professional development has enabled teachers to bring about specific improvements in their teaching. You use the expertise of staff in school well to develop others. This term, assistant headteachers have taken on greater responsibility for ensuring high-quality teaching and learning in each phase.
- School guidance on learning behaviour (the '5 Rs') promotes positive attitudes to learning. Pupils work with good concentration in lessons. Pupils respond well to the feedback from teachers. Pupils are often reflective when carrying out self-assessment. Pupils who are learning leaders have clear responsibilities and are well trained in giving other pupils brief help with a specific task. The well-planned approach to homework encourages learning at home.
- Accurate assessment leads to effective extra support for pupils with low attainment and with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils with low attainment make strong progress in reading and writing.
- The governing body has a strategic approach to bringing about further improvement. Governors have a good knowledge and understanding of the school. They have contributed well to the development of leadership roles and responsibilities. They keep a close eye on safeguarding matters. They hold leaders to account effectively.
- Absence and persistent absence are too high. One reason for high persistent absence is parents taking pupils on visits abroad. The local authority has fined parents for this, but with limited effect. The school has provided more incentives for good attendance, also with limited impact so far. Leaders do not analyse information about attendance and punctuality sharply enough. A few pupils do not arrive at school on time and staff correctly record them as absent for the morning. Engagement with parents of children with low attendance has not been successful enough in getting them to send their children to school more regularly and punctually.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- more pupils achieve the higher standards in reading and writing by:
 - increasing pupils' enjoyment of reading, especially boys
 - widening the range of pupils' reading and extending their vocabulary
 - deepening their comprehension skills
- pupils' absence and persistent absence reduce by:
 - analysing patterns of absence more sharply to inform actions
 - engaging more effectively with parents of children with low attendance and poor punctuality.

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

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, senior and middle leaders, two members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils who brought their reading books. I also spoke to parents attending a school assembly and visiting a class. I jointly observed teaching with you and I discussed pupils' work with subject leaders.

I checked the school website and examined a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, school plans, safeguarding records and attendance information. I took account of 15 responses from parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire.