

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Lynnsey Batey
Headteacher
Shankhill C of E Primary School
Hethersgill
Carlisle
Cumbria
CA6 6JA

Dear Mrs Batey

Short inspection of Shankhill C of E Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 18 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 February 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 have led the school well through numerous changes in staffing in recent years. Your committed leadership ensures that all staff create a welcoming and inclusive community. Governors have ensured that the school's strong Christian values are promoted well. Pupils, parents and carers are positive about the support that families receive from staff to help them overcome any difficulties that they may experience. Your compassionate leadership is reflected in the way in which children and pupils care for each other. Their behaviour in lessons and around school is impeccable. A typical comment from a parent who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, was that staff 'strive to ensure that pupils are happy, while making education fun and enjoyable'.

The results at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 demonstrate the difference that staff's actions make. Pupils' progress has improved, particularly in writing and mathematics, where it was well above that of other schools nationally. Teachers ensure that learning is memorable and that the curriculum captures pupils' interest. For example, pupils designed and built their own life-size Viking longboat with support from a local construction company. Pupils gain a sense of achievement from their lessons, which are supplemented by trips to museums, the theatre and residential visits. They display excellent attitudes towards their learning. Governors question and support you effectively in your drive to improve the school further.

You have addressed the recommendations made at the previous inspection effectively. Pupils have more opportunities to write at length across a range of

genres and in different subjects. These improvements are demonstrated in pupils' books and in the progress that they make in writing. Teachers have also improved their questioning skills so that pupils are prompted to explain their thinking more clearly.

Safeguarding is effective.

You are knowledgeable about your role as the designated leader for safeguarding. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There are clear systems in place, which are known by all staff. Staff and governors receive comprehensive training and regular updates. They understand the local risks to pupils well. There is a culture of vigilance within the school.

All of the pupils who responded to the pupil survey agree that they feel safe. This is because of the level of care that is provided by all adults. Relationships within the school are excellent and pupils are confident that they can approach any member of staff with their concerns. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including when online.

Inspection findings

- This inspection looked at a number of key lines of enquiry. The first was to see how well leaders promote consistency in the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics. The mathematics leader is knowledgeable and understands the strengths and weaknesses of teaching in this subject well. He has improved the quality of teaching in all year groups to raise the standard of pupils' arithmetic skills and knowledge of number facts. The curriculum is sequenced well. Pupils' work shows that they make strong progress. Effective support is provided for pupils who need to catch up, particularly the significant number of new arrivals to the school. This includes support for pupils who speak English as an additional language. However, the work provided for the most able pupils in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2 does not offer enough challenge, especially in reasoning and problem-solving.
- Another area that we looked at on this inspection was how effectively leaders use professional development to improve teaching and learning. This was an area for improvement at the previous inspection. Governors prioritise staff training. They question you and other leaders effectively to ensure that the school meets the development needs of staff. You have led the way in developing collaborative approaches to school improvement by working with other headteachers to review each other's schools. Your discussions with leaders in other schools have informed your accurate understanding of the school.
- Staff value the opportunities that they have to develop their teaching skills. They share good practice and learn from others by working alongside staff from other schools. Training to improve teachers' questioning has strengthened pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are now starting to think more critically about their learning. Teachers meet to set consistent expectations in subjects across the curriculum. The introduction of a new approach to reading has helped staff to ensure that children in the early years are better prepared to move

on to the next stage in their education.

- Finally, we looked at how effectively governors check on the use of the school's physical education (PE) and sport funding. The PE leader ensures that this funding is put to good use. Although the school is small, pupils have developed strong sporting prowess and have won local competitions. They have competed in three county finals in the past 12 months, and came a very close second place in the girls' cricket competition, having previously won the Carlisle finals. This is a level of success that has not previously been seen at the school. Pupils take part in after-school sports clubs for dance, gymnastics, football, swimming and cross-country. The PE leader tracks the development of pupils' skills, and he can demonstrate how pupils have progressed.
- The overview of pupils' physical development allows staff to identify pupils who have a flair for particular sports. Pupils are aware that they each have individual talents that are nurtured by staff. They understand the need for perseverance to improve their sporting performance. The plan for the PE and sport funding links well with other priorities, such as the focus of you and other leaders' on meeting pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. Pupils gain self-belief and confidence through the PE curriculum. You report well to governors about the impact of the funding. However, although governors ask questions in their meetings on a range of different topics, they do not question leaders' use of the PE and sport funding in enough detail. They are not fully aware of which actions have been the most effective. They do not discuss how to improve the use of funding even further. As a result, plans largely repeat the previous year's targets, with minimal review.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- work in mathematics enables the most able pupils in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2 to solve problems using their mathematical reasoning skills
- governors question in greater detail the use of the PE and sport funding to sustain and build on the school's considerable sporting success.

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

Yours sincerely

Steve Bentham
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with staff and governors to discuss safeguarding and aspects of the school's leadership and management. We visited classes together and looked at samples of pupils' work during lessons. I spoke with Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils formally about different aspects of their education. I spoke with teaching staff about their development and leadership roles. I reviewed safeguarding documentation, including the record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff. I analysed documentation for mathematics, PE and sport funding, the school's own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and the school development plan. I took into account seven responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, eight responses to the staff survey and 16 responses to the pupil survey.