

10 January 2019

Mrs Gill Pett
Headteacher
Flookburgh CofE Primary School
Winder Lane
Flookburgh
Grange-over-Sands
Cumbria
LA11 7LE

Dear Mrs Pett

Short inspection of Flookburgh CofE 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 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.

You became the substantive headteacher in 2016, after the previous inspection. Since then you have improved the experience that your pupils have at school. You have evaluated the performance of the school honestly and accurately as a basis for well-focused action plans to improve further the quality of education. These contain relevant actions, suitable time frames and measurable success criteria. However, in a number of places your evaluation of planned actions describes what has been done without measuring the impact on pupils' outcomes.

You provide a warm and welcoming environment that is well maintained. Most noticeable is the Christian character of the school. From the moment of entering the building, displays remind pupils and adults alike of the key values that underpin the school's work. You also make clear the links between these and fundamental British values, such as respect.

You have addressed effectively the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. You have strengthened the quality of teaching in several ways. You have challenged teachers' underperformance when necessary and taken effective action to settle previous instability in staffing and leadership. You have put in place much firmer processes for checking on the progress of pupils and providing support to fill gaps in pupils' learning. Because of your actions, the majority of pupils attain well,

especially in reading, writing and mathematics. Recent national assessment information shows that progress was less strong in writing by the end of Year 6. You recognised this and have taken effective action to address it. I shall report on this in more detail later in this letter.

Subject leaders now have a more effective role in checking on the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. They carry out regular checks by, for instance, analysing pupils' work. They provide feedback to staff on strengths and areas for development. Subject leaders have a secure understanding of the school's priorities for development. Their work contributes effectively to the strong progress that most pupils make across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.

During your time as headteacher, you have enhanced provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is a wide range of additional activities that expand pupils' experience of the wider world, such as visits to the zoo or Hadrian's Wall. Residential trips build pupils' confidence and give them opportunities to take risks in a controlled environment. You have also developed a wide range of clubs, including netball and craft. Pupils have opportunities to take part in competitive sport, such as football matches and tournaments.

The group of pupils from key stage 2 who spoke with me were confident and articulate. They said that they enjoy school and like the variety of activities that are on offer, such as after-school clubs. They also appreciate the opportunities you provide for them to develop as responsible young people who can make a valuable contribution to society. For example, they talked knowledgeably about their work as 'young leaders'. This enables them to support younger children in the school at breaktime. They also spoke about the work that they do to raise money for various charities.

You promote pupils' understanding of fundamental British values effectively, with events such as visits to the local law courts. Pupils find out about other faiths through lessons in religious education. They are also aware of the need to respect people's differences, including those who have protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

The majority of parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of education that the school provides. Parents' comments that captured the consensus of opinion noted that the school is a 'safe and stimulating environment' and that their children make good progress in their learning.

Staff, in discussion with me, showed a very positive attitude to their work in school. They said that they appreciate the training they receive and feel 'part of the team'. They have a firm understanding of the school's areas for development and contribute well to these through their work in subject leadership.

The local authority and the diocese have an accurate view of the school's standards and priorities. They have helped you to establish yourself as headteacher. They have also been effective in supporting the school through relatively recent changes to the composition of the governing body. Their contribution has been helpful in securing the greater stability in leadership and staffing that is now evident in the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Your system for recording concerns about pupils is thorough and detailed. In your role as designated safeguarding lead, you liaise effectively with external agencies, such as children's services, as required. You also show unflagging vigour in pursuing issues with these agencies to ensure the correct support for pupils who are the subject of, for example, child protection concerns.

The school's record of necessary checks on members of staff complies with the government's current guidance.

The culture of safeguarding in the school is strong. You provide regular training in safeguarding for your staff. They have a secure knowledge of the signs of abuse and how to report any concerns they may have. Pupils feel safe in school and know that adults will help them if they have any worries. Pupils know how to stay safe when they are using the internet, for instance, because staff give them the information they need. They also teach pupils about being aware of strangers and how to act safely around them.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the day, I shared with you some key lines of enquiry, which I followed during the inspection. I have already reported on how effectively you have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. I have also written about the effectiveness of safeguarding.
- Another focus was the progress that current pupils make in writing in key stage 2. You have taken action following the most recent published national assessment results for Year 6. These showed that progress in writing was not as strong as in reading and mathematics, although attainment was similar. Teachers now have a clearer picture of the expectations of pupils in writing. They have benefited from sharing good practice with each other and from sharper, better-sequenced planning of the necessary skills. Evidence from books shows that current pupils are making strong progress in writing. Pupils use engaging styles and vocabulary. For example, in lower key stage 2, pupils use similes, such as describing snow as 'like a blanket'. They also write complex sentences, correctly using connecting words like 'despite'. In upper key stage 2, pupils develop increasingly sophisticated sentence structures to interest the reader.
- My next key line of enquiry concerned the attainment in reading, writing and mathematics of the most-able pupils in key stage 2. The most recent national assessment results for Year 6 showed that a smaller proportion than the national

average attained the higher standard. You have taken action to address this. Books show that most current pupils in this group now make strong progress. Teachers typically provide them with work that challenges them and makes them think more deeply about the subject. Reading activities include more difficult texts, with opportunities to infer meaning and show understanding of the reasons behind characters' actions, for example. Teachers expect the most able to demonstrate more complex structures and more adventurous vocabulary in writing. In mathematics, teachers typically provide the most able pupils with activities that deepen their learning. However, in Year 6 only a small proportion of the year group has the chance to grapple with more challenging work.

- Finally, leaders and governors have a strong understanding of their duties and responsibilities. The newer members of the governing body have quickly acclimatised to their role and have a clear understanding of the standard of education that the school provides. They hold leaders to account thoroughly. Minutes of meetings show that they ask pertinent and searching questions about a range of matters. These include issues connected with finance and resources and with pupils' progress. Their work contributes effectively to maintaining the good quality of education in the school.
- Leaders have recently begun to update the school's website. A consequence of this is the absence of some of the required information about: pupil premium funding; funding for physical education and sports; governors' attendance and the remits of committees; and special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have undertaken to rectify this situation as soon as possible.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers continue to provide challenging work for the most able, especially in mathematics in Year 6, so that more pupils reach the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2
- they continue to strengthen pupils' progress in writing by the end of key stage 2
- they measure the impact of their actions more accurately in order to sharpen their evaluation of the school's effectiveness
- the school's website contains all the required information and remains compliant with the government's guidance.

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

Mark Quinn
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

With you, I carried out short visits to the early years and lessons in all year groups in key stage 1 and key stage 2. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation summary, action plans for school improvement, minutes of meetings of the governing body and records connected with the safeguarding of pupils. I held discussions with you, other members of staff, the chair of the governing body and pupils. I had a discussion with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese. I analysed pupils' work and the school's own assessment information. I evaluated 18 responses received through Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.