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Mr J L Pridden
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Dear Mr Pridden

Short inspection of Grosvenor Road Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 17 January 2019, 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 lead the school with purpose and determination. You and your effective leadership team share a powerful common vision. This emphasis on continual school improvement is summarised in the mission statement: 'Be the best you can be.'

Your calm, considered and collaborative leadership ensures all staff are valued. They respect you and your leadership. You, your senior leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the quality of education that you provide. Leaders closely analyse information about all aspects of the school's work and take insightful action to make further improvements.

Curriculum leaders are skilled in mapping out and setting high expectations for the knowledge and skills required for pupils in every year group. They have been well supported and are now effective leaders of their subject areas. Whole-school systems allow subject leaders to audit the quality of provision and devise appropriate action plans. Current improvement actions and initiatives to develop the quality of teaching and learning are bearing fruit. However, they have yet to ensure that teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve in reading and writing, especially the most able pupils.

Pupils' work shows that a wide-ranging curriculum is taught and there are opportunities to apply English and mathematical skills to a range of subjects. The curriculum is enriched through out-of-school trips, visitors to school and opportunities to pursue a variety of sporting and social activities. Challenging activities for pupils include opportunities to

participate in national mathematics competitions and a range of competitive sporting events.

Early years staff ensure that children have a high-quality learning environment. They know their children well and focus their work on developing children's vocabulary and providing a rich experience for children on entry to school. This is built on effectively throughout key stage 1. While all pupils experience a broad and rich curriculum, the focus on reading and writing throughout key stage 1 is a strength. As a result, pupils achieve well in their phonics in key stage 1.

Governors have a range of skills and experience that they use to offer leaders appropriate support and challenge. They have reorganised their meeting structures to ensure they are even more effective. They access useful training and have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors' regular visits to the school are well organised. They provide useful information which is shared with the rest of the governing body. Governors take account of a wide range of information about the school, including work scrutiny, learning walks, discussions with parents and pupils, nationally published data, local authority reviews and information from a range of leaders. Meetings between governors and staff keep governors informed about all aspects of the school's work and maintain a focus on school improvement. As a result of this, governors have ensured that resources such as additional funding, including the pupil premium and PE and sport premium, is used effectively.

At the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve the quality of teaching further. Since then, there have been changes in teaching and support staff. You have restructured leadership roles and appointed a new deputy headteacher. This has strengthened the school's capacity to secure and sustain improvements to the quality of teaching and learning. There is a culture of professional learning and teamwork across the school. This has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning overall.

Leaders were also asked to further improve pupils' progress and ensure that the most able pupils were more consistently challenged to reach the highest standards of which they were capable. Over the last three years, outcomes at the end of key stage 2 have been improving, and in the last set of published test results pupils attained at around the same level as their peers nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress though, in particular most-able pupils and those for whom pupil premium funding provides support, has not historically been strong enough. However, as a result of better teaching and decisive action taken by leaders, all groups of pupils are now making improved progress across the curriculum. Work in books, listening to pupils read and the school's own data show improvement. You have identified the outcomes for more-able pupils as a continuing priority for improvement in the current academic year.

Teachers now plan and provide a rich diet of activities to engage pupils during playtimes. This is enhanced by a wide range of activities outside of the school day.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are caring, thoughtful and confident, and respond positively to high expectations. While the vast majority of pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly, there is still a small proportion of pupils who are persistently absent.

You and your team are working hard to address this. Your learning mentor is relentless in her determination to ensure all pupils attend school regularly. She uses a range of approaches to encourage, support and challenge those who are not regular attendees. In the current academic year persistent absence has been reduced, but you continue to focus on this as a key priority.

Many parents attend events at the school. The majority of parents who responded to Parent View would recommend the school to others. Parents are generally positive about all aspects of the school's work. Those I spoke with are of the view that their children are happy, safe and making good progress. Parents also say that their children are taught well. One parent summed up the views of many, saying that, 'I am so pleased that my daughter attends this school and am sad that it's her last year. All staff are approachable and friendly. My daughter has progressed well through the years and has found her lessons interesting. I would highly recommend this school.'

Safeguarding is effective.

All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Policies and procedures linked to safeguarding are up to date. The school business manager has a thorough and effective system to ensure appropriate checks are undertaken for all adults in school. Staff and governors are aware of their responsibilities in ensuring that pupils are kept safe. They are aware of the procedures that they must follow if they have any concern, no matter how small. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Regular safeguarding training takes place for all staff. Newly appointed staff have an effective induction process for all safeguarding processes and speak of the highly vigilant culture of safeguarding that you have created.

Leaders and staff work very effectively with parents, carers and outside agencies to keep pupils safe and secure. Staff have strong bonds with pupils. This helps pupils to have confidence in talking to any member of staff if they have any concerns. Older pupils have an especially good understanding of how to stay safe when using electronic means of communication or social media and accessing the internet.

Pupils feel safe in school and understand how to keep themselves safe. They know about bullying and are certain that, should it occur, members of staff would help them to deal with it. Most parents support the school and are positive about the nurturing ethos and care that staff provide.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection I followed some key lines of enquiry. I looked at how teaching was ensuring all pupils achieved the highest standards of which they were capable, to prepare them for their next stage of education. Attainment of pupils at key stage 2 has improved significantly over the last three years in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2 has remained lower than that of other pupils nationally. In 2018, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 made less progress and achieved less well than others in the school. While progress and attainment are now rising for disadvantaged pupils, leaders need to continue to focus on ensuring all pupils

make good or better progress.

- Leaders have placed a strong emphasis on improving the teaching of reading and writing across the school. You have provided focused support and training in reading and writing. As a result, staff have a greater knowledge and understanding of English grammar, punctuation and spelling. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows an improvement over time. The quality of writing is of a consistently high standard across the curriculum. Current school data and inspection evidence show that, across the various year groups in key stages 1 and 2, most pupils are currently making good progress from their starting points. From examining work in pupils' books, teaching over time is good. Any pupil at risk of falling behind their target is identified quickly and receives prompt support. Leaders review pupils' progress closely and modify provision to plan for individual pupils' needs effectively. Even so, some most-able pupils are not being sufficiently challenged in their learning and therefore do not reach the higher standards that they are capable of.
- Pupils who read to me said that they enjoy reading and appreciate having access to a range of challenging texts. They spoke about the authors they enjoy and the range of books they read in and outside of lessons. They said the school works hard to encourage them to read at home. This was echoed by parents, who felt school was doing all it could to support and develop the quality of reading across the school. Pupils are developing effective strategies to help them to sound out unfamiliar words and work out the meaning. Consequently, pupils are developing a wide range of vocabulary, which they can use with confidence.
- Your middle leaders are a strong and effective team. They have a clear understanding of progress across the school. Middle leaders share your vision for the school and are highly ambitious for all pupils. They are well supported in ensuring that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and are proud of the progress that has been made since the last inspection. However, they are not complacent and are acutely aware of the need to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- My final line of enquiry related to pupils' attendance. This was because of the high level of persistent absence in 2018 and variation in the levels of attendance over time. You recognise the negative impact that poor attendance has on pupil progress. This is particularly true of a small proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. You and your learning mentor are diligent in tackling this issue. You provide support to parents who are struggling to bring their children into school and challenge parents when it is necessary. You have put in place a range of initiatives, all of which help to improve attendance. The celebration of good attendance at the end of each term helps to place attendance firmly on the agenda for all members of the school community. As a result of your hard work, pupils' attendance has improved this year.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they develop an even greater range of opportunities for applying high-level

reading, writing and mathematical skills across a range of curriculum subjects to ensure all pupils reach the very highest standards of which they are capable.

- they build on the improvements in teaching, learning and assessment to raise achievement still further by making sure that differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally continue to diminish in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Tonge
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, your senior leadership team, your business manager, middle leaders, newly appointed staff and a group of governors. I met with a representative of the local authority. I observed pupils around the school and in their classes. Together, we visited classes, observed teaching and learning, looked at books and spoke to pupils about their work. I also met with six pupils to seek their views of the school. I listened to six pupils read. I met parents at the start of the school day. I took account of the 36 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, including free text responses, and 21 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupils' survey.