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4 February 2019

Mrs Jacqui Wennington
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Wennington

Short inspection of Springwood Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 22 January 2019 with Ailsa Moore, Ofsted Inspector, and Claire Cropper, Ofsted Inspector, 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 June 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 and your team have established a warm and welcoming learning environment. The building and grounds are well maintained. There are colourful and vibrant displays around the school. These celebrate pupils' own work, which is of good quality and shows a wide range of curriculum subjects and other activities. Displays also support pupils' understanding about diversity and British values.

There are strong relationships between pupils and staff. The school's values are key to the work of the school. Leaders display these throughout both buildings in a way that children and staff can understand. The school's motto, 'BEST – Believe Enjoy Succeed Together', sums up the school's sense of ambition. Staff model respect for pupils and promote it as a key value in school. Pupils respond positively and typically show respect in return.

You have addressed the areas for improvement successfully that inspectors identified in the previous inspection. You have developed the curriculum well so that pupils now have many opportunities to learn literacy and mathematical skills appropriate to their needs. For example, pupils in key stage 2 use their understanding of instructional texts to follow directions in learning dance moves.

You have improved your use of assessment to evaluate pupils' progress since the last inspection. Staff at all levels now make a greater contribution to the process. For instance, you have introduced termly meetings with teachers to discuss pupils' progress. Teachers now take a more leading role in this system, analysing pupils' gaps in learning and devising activities to support them. This contributes effectively to the good progress that most current pupils make.

You have also developed training for staff effectively and secured mostly strong teaching across subjects and year groups. Staff have benefited from working with other schools where highly effective practice is evident. You are now beginning to share the school's own good practice with mainstream primary schools. This demonstrates a growing strength and confidence in the teaching that the school provides.

A group of pupils met with a member of the inspection team. These pupils made it clear that they are happy at school and feel that staff look after them well. They enjoy the range of clubs the school provides, such as Cubs or Beavers, gardening and singing. All pupils expressed their positive opinion of school by showing a collective 'thumbs-up'.

There have been no examples of bullying, racism or homophobic incidents. Leaders have a system that is suitable to record and report such incidents if they arise. Adults manage pupils' behaviour effectively. There have been no exclusions, either permanent or fixed term.

The vast majority of staff who spoke with me or responded to the online survey were highly positive. They enjoy working at the school and share leaders' ambition for pupils to achieve their best. They appreciate the training that leaders provide and feel that it strengthens their skills.

The large majority of parents and carers who spoke with the inspection team or responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, were very positive about the quality of education and care that the school provides. They typically felt that staff keep them well informed about their children's progress. They also acknowledged the effective strategies that teachers provide to help their children to manage their emotions or develop suitable ways of communicating.

There is an effective working relationship between the school and the local authority. The school is regarded as a key provider in the area and makes strong contributions to pupils' review processes. The local authority has an accurate view of the quality of provision in the school and is confident in your leadership.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose; records are detailed and of high quality. The designated lead for safeguarding is prompt in responding to concerns and makes referrals to other agencies as appropriate. He shows considerable persistence in pursuing matters

with external agencies when necessary. The school's required record of checks on members of staff is thorough and complies with the government's guidance.

The culture of safeguarding in the school is strong. Staff receive annual training in safeguarding and regular updates throughout the year. They have a secure understanding of the various signs of abuse. They log any concerns they have about pupils' welfare on the school's electronic recording system.

Staff support pupils well as they get off the minibuses that bring them to school in the morning. They are calming and reassuring with the pupils and engage them in friendly chatter. Leaders thus ensure that there is an orderly and safe start to the day. Arrangements at the end of the day are equally efficient.

Pupils feel safe and happy at school and have adults they can talk to if they are upset or worried. Staff's awareness of how to keep pupils safe from harm has a very high profile. Personal, social and health education is regarded as a core subject in the school's curriculum. Staff use lessons in this subject to convey key messages to pupils about how to stay safe. For instance, they use a combination of language at an appropriate level and picture clues to teach pupils how to avoid danger when using the internet. Pupils with the appropriate level of understanding know that it is safe to talk to visitors, because leaders provided colour-coded lanyards to identify them.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the day, we agreed some key lines of enquiry that formed the basis of the inspection. I have already reported on how successfully you have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. I have also written about the effectiveness of safeguarding.
- My next key line of enquiry concerned the effectiveness of the curriculum in ensuring that pupils achieve as highly as possible. I also considered how well prepared pupils are for the next stage of their education. You have given considerable thought to further refinement of the curriculum since you became headteacher. In collaboration with teaching staff and based on a deep analysis of pupils' needs, you have now established three learning pathways, namely 'pre-formal', 'semi-formal' and 'formal'. For most pupils, the curriculum is carefully thought out. It captures their interests, matches their abilities and meets their needs effectively. For example, the 'pre-formal' pathway is based on learning that is not specific to individual subjects and develops features such as pupils' sensory capacity. The curriculum contributes considerably to the good progress that most pupils make. The vast majority are well prepared for the next stage of their education as a result. However, on occasion, some adults do not engage pupils in a way that challenges them to apply their knowledge as fully as possible.
- To help you to analyse the effectiveness of the curriculum, you have refined your assessment procedures to check closely on the progress of pupils. As a result, you have a clear picture of how well most pupils acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need. However, you do not currently have as

precise a picture of the progress of some of the most able pupils, who follow the formal curriculum, as you do for other pupils.

- Another focus for the inspection related to the effectiveness of the early years provision and the progress that children make. The early years provision has recently moved to a separate building, some eight miles away. Nevertheless, it became clear during the inspection that the two sites operate as one school and a sense of cohesion is very evident. Senior leaders and the governing body ensure that they have a secure oversight and presence across both sites. Safeguarding in the early years is effective. There are clear procedures and thorough staff training is delivered, in common with the main school. Children learn how to keep themselves safe at a level appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children typically make good progress from their starting points. The transition from early years to Year 1 is mostly well managed. Leaders make sure that children are ready for their next stage of learning. This is because teachers are reflective and plan activities carefully to meet most children's needs effectively. This is particularly true of vital communication skills. Teachers clearly challenge most children to achieve the best they can. Expectations are mainly high, including of children in the Nursery class. For example, some children progress well from responding to their name when they hear it to being able to spell it over the course of a term. However, on some occasions, staff do not ensure that children are fully engaged in their learning so that they may make as much progress as they can.
- Although there is careful assessment of pupils when they enter the early years, leaders have recently begun to improve the precision of this information. This is to ensure that it covers a wider range of aspects of children's development, such as motor skills and personal skills. It helps to provide a fuller picture of the progress of children across early years. It also contributes more effectively to the process of transition to Year 1. However, leaders have not fully embedded this process.
- The final key line of enquiry was about leaders' understanding of their statutory duties. I focused in particular on governors. It is clear that governors are well trained in a range of areas, including safeguarding. There is a dedicated safeguarding governor, who has close links with the headteacher and the designated lead. This enables the governing body to check effectively on the strength of the school's procedures and approach. Governors also have an accurate view of the quality of education that the school provides. They challenge effectively, asking searching questions about a range of relevant topics, including pupils' progress and financial matters. They are committed to and ambitious for the school. They make an effective contribution to the good quality of education that the school continues to provide.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- further develop their assessment procedures, so that they have a more precise understanding of the progress of most-able pupils who follow the school's 'formal' curriculum

- ensure that staff, including those in the early years, more consistently engage pupils in their learning, so that as many as possible make strong progress
- further refine their baseline assessments in the early years, to give a more comprehensive picture of children's progress and to strengthen the transition process into Year 1.

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

Mark Quinn
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The team inspectors and I carried out short visits to the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2, which were joint activities with you and your deputy headteachers. We analysed pupils' work in a variety of subjects. We 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. We held discussions with senior leaders, members of staff, governors, pupils, parents and representatives of the local authority. We also held discussions on the telephone with local headteachers. I evaluated 40 responses received through Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. I also analysed 36 responses to the staff survey and three responses to the pupil survey.