

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



20 February 2019

Mr William Jaworski
Headteacher
Redhills Community Primary School
Landhayes Road
Redhills
Exeter
Devon
EX4 2BY

Dear Mr Jaworski

Short inspection of Redhills Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 22 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in December 2012.

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 senior leaders form a strong, determined team. As a result of a dip in pupils' performance across the school in 2017, trustees took the decision to replace the local governing body with an interim board from the trust. The previous headteacher and several members of teaching staff left the school. This resulted in significant turbulence in staffing at all levels. Trustees took the decision to restructure leadership at the school. As a result, you were appointed at the start of September 2018, ably supported by an experienced executive headteacher from within the trust.

It is clear from my visit that the school is firmly back on track and providing a good quality of education. Furthermore, leaders and governors have unwavering commitment and strong capacity to continue to improve the school. You and your leadership team monitor the performance of teachers closely and you have ensured that those who are at the beginning of their career are well supported so that they quickly gain the skills needed. There is a clear strategic understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need improving further.

Parents' views are mixed. Although a minority of parents have some concerns about the recent high staff turnover, you have managed the changes in staffing well. You and your staff act in the best interests of pupils at all times, but some parents feel that their concerns are not being addressed. Parents who spoke with me, and a proportion of parents who responded to Ofsted's free-text service, say that

behaviour is not always good. However, pupils who spoke with me said that behaviour is usually good, and that any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with effectively by staff. Records checked show that, historically, the number of recorded behavioural incidents has been high. Current information clearly indicates a significant reduction in these, as well as in fixed-term exclusions. You and your governors are aware of parental concerns and are keen to work in partnership with parents and carers to improve communication.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding has the highest priority in the school and maintaining the safety of pupils is paramount. Arrangements are fit for purpose and integral to everyday life in school. For example, the weekly safeguarding briefing ensures that all staff are kept informed of any safeguarding updates. All staff have been well trained and know what to do if they have a worry or concern about a child. An example of this is when I randomly sampled a selection of staff from across the school and looked at their understanding of child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, female genital mutilation and knowledge of updates to 'Keeping children safe in education'. All staff who spoke with me were articulate in being able to describe the potential risks to pupils and were confident in following the appropriate procedure for reporting any concerns. Leaders ensure that all safeguarding policies are in place and fully up to date. The pastoral team closely monitors attendance of vulnerable groups. Over time, attendance has improved to be above the national average for all groups of pupils.

Pupils report that their school is a safe place and know they can go to an adult for help and advice. The vast majority of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire, Parent View, also agreed that their children felt safe at school.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, I discussed with you my key lines of enquiry. First, I wanted to find out what the school had done to raise attainment for disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1. This was because disadvantaged pupils in 2018 did not do as well as other pupils nationally.
- Following an analysis of pupils' skills, you and your leaders implemented a plan to revitalise reading across the school and raise pupils' achievement. Inspection evidence found that this work has led to a rise in pupils' ability to read more fluently and promoted a love of reading. Pupils' reading records show that they are reading widely and often at home and across the school. During the inspection, pupils of different abilities read their books to me with confidence and demonstrated skills in line with what would be expected for their ages and starting points. Furthermore, scrutiny of pupils' workbooks also demonstrated how their reading comprehension skills are improving. Leaders recognise that the new approach to the teaching of reading is not yet fully embedded in the school and needs further work to ensure that standards continue to rise.
- The school's plan for raising achievement in writing is enabling pupils to excel in writing, with well-chosen topics designed to captivate pupils' interests. Pupils

reported that they enjoy writing because the work is related directly to the new approach to reading of whole-class texts.

- Mathematics is taught well. Evidence in pupils' workbooks shows pupils becoming increasingly confident in providing explanations and reasons for how they reach their answers. Work is well matched to pupils' different abilities and this enables disadvantaged pupils to make strong progress.
- We also looked at the standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar across key stage 2. In the 2018 national assessments at the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils who attained the expected standard in this area was below the national average. Current standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar are inconsistent across the school. Scrutiny of writing in pupils' books shows that pupils do not apply their knowledge of spelling and punctuation sufficiently to their work. Consequently, pupils' progress to reach the expected and higher standards is hampered.
- I also wanted to find out whether pupils are making strong enough progress in writing across key stage 2. This is because in the 2018 key stage 2 national tests, standards for pupils from low and average starting points declined. You and your governors admit that the turbulence in staffing last year had a detrimental effect on the progress of pupils in Year 6.
- Crucially, teachers have raised their expectations. Together, we visited English lessons, examined a selection of pupils' books from across year groups and looked at the quality of writing displayed throughout the school. Teachers make sure pupils enjoy writing. Stimulating approaches to writing capture pupils' interests. Pupils in Year 6 were eager to share with me their writing about the Roman era and how they applied their knowledge to a newspaper report on how Romans ruled in Exeter. Work in pupils' books and school information show that the changes you have made are proving effective.
- Throughout each of the key lines of enquiry, I also looked closely at how you were using any additional funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In 2018, pupils with SEND made strong progress across key stage 2. This is a direct result of effective actions taken by leaders regarding assessment, provision and teaching. Leaders have created a culture where 'barriers are not acceptable', so pupils can achieve their very best. This is evident in the way in which leaders take a whole-child approach to learning. They are careful to ensure that pupils' social, emotional and academic progress is not viewed in isolation and provide effective support through the school's 'Tree House' nurture provision. This tailored support enables pupils with SEND to make strong progress from their starting points.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils further improve the technical aspects of their writing by applying spelling and punctuation skills efficiently, so that more pupils achieve the expected and higher standards in their writing

- recent work to improve the quality of teaching in reading continues so that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable
- communication with parents is improved so that parents feel their views are listened to and their concerns addressed.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of ACE multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Devon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matt Middlemore
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other leaders and two governors, including the chair of the interim governing body and the chief executive officer. I considered the 15 responses to Parent View, including 11 free-text comments. I spoke with pupils formally and informally during the day. I also considered the 21 responses to the staff survey. We observed learning jointly. I looked at a range of pupils' work in their exercise books, work displayed around the school and in their classrooms. I scrutinised a range of school documentation, including the single central record, your school self-evaluation and improvement plan, and attendance and current performance information.