

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



7 March 2019

Mr Tim Bowden
Headteacher
Westfield Community Primary School
Westfield Road
Hoddesdon
Hertfordshire
EN11 8RA

Dear Mr Bowden

Short inspection of Westfield Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 26 February 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 June 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since your arrival in September 2017, you have ensured a positive culture by setting high expectations for staff and pupils to succeed. You have established a strong team of staff. You focus well on supporting teachers to develop their skills and have a clear understanding of where further improvement is needed. Teamwork across the school is strong. There is a shared sense of purpose, with priorities identified and tackled quickly. Although the senior leadership is comparatively new, it has quickly established effective systems for checking teaching and learning.

Areas for improvement that were identified in the last inspection have, in the main, been tackled well by you and your predecessor. The current focus on increasing the number of pupils exceeding expected standards by the end of Year 6 is appropriate. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They share your ambitious aims for developing the school further. You and the governors have clear plans for what will change if the proposed expansion and move to a new school site comes to fruition.

Pupils are good ambassadors for the school. They talk happily about their work and are keen to share it with visitors. There is a happy working atmosphere in lessons. At playtimes, pupils play together happily, supporting each other sensitively. As one commented, 'We are like one big family.'

Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its strong focus on meeting pupils' social needs, as well as supporting their academic development. This is a strength of the school. Leaders and other staff work very hard to meet the diverse needs of the local community and to involve them in school life. Parents speak positively about how the school has changed in the last 18 months. They are keen to help their children with their learning. A good number of parents attended a phonics workshop that was held on the day of the inspection.

Staff encourage pupils to take responsibility. The school council gives pupils a good voice in the life of the school. Councillors feel that they are listened to and are able to contribute to school improvement. Other responsibilities such as being green ambassadors or play leaders help pupils to understand how they can support each other and make a difference to the wider community.

Pupils are clear that they enjoy school. This is demonstrated by the many smiling faces seen when they arrive at the school gate each morning. Learning is supplemented well by a wide range of activities outside lessons. These provide pupils with many memorable experiences and help to foster essential skills in areas such as art, music and sport. Pupils are especially positive about the opportunity to learn Italian. Staff model strong values such as tolerance, respect and kindness in their interactions with each other and with pupils. This helps pupils to understand why such values are so important and ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education and for later life.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding is effective. There is a good culture of safety across the school. You and your staff have detailed knowledge of your pupils and the difficulties some of them face. Your staff give safeguarding the highest priority and are diligent in looking for concerns. They are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding, including an awareness of the need to be vigilant about identifying potential radicalisation.

Pupils are clear about what the school does to keep them safe. They talk knowledgeably about e-safety and about how well staff respond if they have a concern. They especially like the way that you listen to them if they are worried about home or school life.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we confirmed the key lines of enquiry for the inspection in order to ascertain whether the school remained good. The first of these looked at pupils' progress in reading because, over time, progress in reading has not been as strong as in writing and mathematics.
- I found that pupils are now making good progress in reading. The teaching of reading is given a high focus and is having a positive effect on pupils' learning. Where pupils are in danger of falling behind staff identify them quickly and give them additional support by, for example, planning daily opportunities for them to

read to an adult. This is proving effective and is a good example of how the school community is determined to do the best for the children.

- I looked at how well teaching meets differing needs, especially for the most able. This was an area for improvement identified in the last inspection. Our observations of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' books showed that although teachers plan diligently to meet the needs of differing ability groups in lessons, this is not always reflected in day-to-day practice. There are occasions when teaching does not move the learning of the most able on speedily enough, especially when they have already grasped a task and are ready for the next part of their work.
- Teaching is more effective at meeting the needs of less-able pupils or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teaching assistants play a significant part in providing high-level support for these pupils throughout the day.
- My third line of enquiry looked at provision for children in the early years, focusing especially on outdoor provision as this was identified as needing improvement in the last report. In the Reception class, children are happy and settled. They make good progress. This is reflected in the rising trend in attainment by the end of the Reception Year, with the proportion reaching a good level of development being broadly average in 2018.
- Weaknesses in outdoor provision have been tackled well over the last four years. The local authority has provided especially helpful support in this area of school improvement. Children are now benefiting from being able to work in a well-resourced outdoor area. Adults plan interesting activities that help children practise and improve skills outside. During the inspection, the outdoor 'dental surgery' was especially well utilised by children. They wrote notes, drew and learned about parts of the body as they waited to see the 'dentist'.
- I also looked at the breadth of the curriculum, focusing on science, history and geography. I wanted to explore these subjects because I had limited information about them before the inspection.
- A scrutiny of pupils' books shows that there are inconsistencies in the quality of work in subjects such as science, history and geography. While some work, for example, in history in Year 6 and in science in Years 1 and 5 is of a high quality, this is not always the case. In some classes, history and geography topics in particular are not covered in sufficient detail to enable pupils to develop a full range of subject-specific skills, knowledge and understanding. I also noted that pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work is sometimes untidy.
- Finally, as part of my focus on safeguarding, I looked at pupils' behaviour and how well the school tackles bullying. A small number of parents had raised concerns about these aspects of the school's work on Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. My observations and discussions with pupils confirmed that behaviour is good most of the time. Pupils are friendly and articulate and are keen to learn. The school has robust systems to respond to any occasional bullying. Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare, but if it happens they know who to talk to. They are confident that it will be tackled quickly. The small

number of pupils who find it hard to behave well all of the time are given good support. Staff tailor interventions well to meet individual needs. The 'Time-To-Talk Club' is a good example of the way that you deploy specialist staff to support pupils who find aspects of school life difficult.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers respond quickly when most-able pupils are ready to have their learning moved on
- pupils' presentation of their work and their handwriting improves
- pupils cover topics in sufficient detail in history and geography to enable them to develop a full range of skills, knowledge and understanding.

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

Yours sincerely

Mike Capper
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I made observations of teaching and learning across the school during learning walks with you. I held meetings with school leaders and members of the governing body. I had discussions with parents at the start of the school day and scrutinised the 29 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I analysed the 14 responses to the Ofsted staff survey and the 18 responses to the online pupil questionnaire. I considered a range of information supplied by the school, including checks on the quality of teaching, the school's development plan, school policies and records relating to attendance and safeguarding procedures. I listened to some pupils reading in lessons and scrutinised pupils' books in different subjects and school assessment information from the current school year.