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Mr G Cunningham
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Dear Mr Cunningham

Short inspection of Oakwood Avenue Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 March 2019 with Moira Atkins, HMI, 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. Your drive and enthusiasm for learning are shared by staff and governors. Together, you promote high expectations and are aspirational for the future. Pupils thrive in the safe and nurturing environment you have created. Pupils strive to live up the 'Oaky' expectations, to be respectful, be committed, be creative, be flexible but above all be yourself.

Parents and carers who spoke with inspectors, and those who accessed Ofsted's online questionnaire, commented very positively about the school. The majority of parents would recommend the school to others. They appreciate the many opportunities provided for their children. Parents feel well informed by the information they receive through the school's social media updates and the online app. Parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and who attend the designated provisions, appreciate the care and support they receive, not just for their children, but for the whole family. A view reflecting that of many parents was, 'This is a great school. The staff are friendly and approachable, and nothing is too much trouble. Despite being a big school, it feels like a family, I couldn't have chosen a better school for my child.'

Pupils are polite, well mannered and happy. They conduct themselves well and are extremely well behaved. Pupils treat each other with respect and socialise amicably together at playtimes in the well-resourced outdoor areas. Pupils appreciate the range of clubs available at lunchtimes and after school, for example rugby, cooking, book club and choir. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to broaden their

horizons. Residential trips provide pupils with the opportunity to develop resilience as they face new challenges. They spoke excitedly about the choir's forthcoming performance at a Liverpool cathedral. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously as role models for the younger pupils, members of committees and as junior leaders. Pupils who spoke with me said that they feel they have a real input into the decisions leaders make. Pupils enjoy learning because teachers make learning fun and interesting. For example, while planning the centenary celebrations for the school, pupils researched the history of past pupils from the old school record logs. Pupils made contact with past pupils, including those who had relatives who had fought in the Second World War. Pupils with whom I spoke said that, 'visiting the tomb of the unknown soldier in London was very emotional. Our school is very special, and we feel part of its history.'

Leaders have successfully resolved the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Leaders check on the quality of teaching and provide advice, support and training for staff when necessary. Staff appreciate the opportunity to share knowledge and expertise with colleagues, including colleagues in other schools. This is especially important for the staff new to teaching. Leaders ensure that staff have the knowledge and understanding they need to support pupils' learning effectively. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Changes to the way in which mathematics is taught have been successfully embedded and pupils make good progress, including disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding is given a high priority. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including learning about 'stranger danger', road safety and how to ride their bikes safely on the roads. Junior e-safety champions check that pupils know how to keep themselves safe when they are using the internet.

Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take. Any incidents of bullying are rare, and pupils are confident that should any bullying occur, it would be dealt with quickly by staff. Pupils feel safe in school. Younger pupils who spoke with me said, 'Teachers look after us and make sure we are happy.'

Leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Robust systems are in place to check that all adults in school are safe to work with children. Safeguarding arrangements are understood by staff. They understand the signs of neglect and abuse to look out for because of the high-quality training they receive. All records are detailed and securely kept. Leaders work very effectively with other agencies to ensure that pupils and families receive guidance and support where necessary.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection we followed up several key lines of enquiry. The school has three designated provisions for pupils who are supported by an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Provision for these pupils is well led and well managed by a

highly skilled and knowledgeable team. Pupils settle well into calm and nurturing environments. The positive relationships fostered by staff contribute to pupils' improving, positive attitudes to learning. Pupils respond well to adults. They are happy, polite and conduct themselves well. Inclusion is a key priority. Pupils join their mainstream peer groups during the school day for a range of activities and learning activities.

- The training staff receive ensures that they have the knowledge, skills and understanding to meet pupils' complex needs well. Staff use questions skilfully to encourage conversations and to effectively develop pupils' vocabulary and communication skills. Pupils' social, emotional and mental health development is supported very effectively. Parents contribute to the detailed plans in place to support pupils' learning and development. Pupils who attend the provision make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Next, we looked at whether the changes to the way in which writing is taught have resulted in improvements in pupils' outcomes in this subject. Training for staff on how to develop learning which builds on pupils' prior knowledge has been successfully implemented. Teachers encourage pupils to use evermore challenging vocabulary, including technical vocabulary in other curriculum subjects. They plan activities which capture pupils' interests and develop their ability to present their research verbally with increasing confidence and accuracy. Pupils apply their improving vocabulary knowledge effectively in their written work. Pupils use their knowledge of spelling, grammar and punctuation well. Their written work is well presented and of high quality. Pupils' written work is displayed proudly in the school's 'writing hall of fame'. A higher proportion of pupils are working at a greater depth by the end of key stage 2. Attainment in writing at the end of key stage 1 is improving. There is still more to be done to further improve pupils' use of technical vocabulary across the curriculum.
- The high-quality training staff receive from leaders ensures that phonics is taught systematically and consistently from the start of the Reception Year. Teachers' strong subject knowledge, and pupils' positive attitudes to learning, contribute well to the good progress pupils make. Teachers plan activities which build on pupils' prior knowledge. Pupils apply their phonics knowledge in their own writing with increasing accuracy. Staff identify quickly those pupils who are struggling. Pupils are given the help they need to catch up. Carefully chosen reading resources are accurately matched to pupils' phonics skills. You and the staff work closely with parents to ensure that they have the skills they need to help their children at home. Pupils are becoming skilful and competent readers.
- The inspection team also evaluated the quality of provision for the youngest children. Leaders in the early years have a good understanding of how children learn. They work well with other local providers to share knowledge and information. Children settle quickly into well-established routines. Children, including the very youngest, thrive in the safe and nurturing environment the early years leaders have created. Strong, positive relationships are fostered well by adults. Teachers use assessment information to identify the next steps in children's learning. Training for staff enables them to support well children's language and ability to communicate. This has a positive impact on improving children's confidence as readers and writers. Carefully designed activities spark

children's interests and capture their imaginations. For example, in the Nursery classes, children enjoyed listening to traditional tales. They joined in enthusiastically as the Billy Goats Gruff 'trip trap' over the troll's bridge and squealed with excitement when the troll appears.

- Children in the Reception classes work cooperatively, share and play harmoniously together. They support each other and celebrate each other's successes. They are enthusiastic about their learning because of the well-designed activities leaders provide. Children were eager to tell me all about the life-cycle of a caterpillar, and how tadpoles change and grow to become frogs. They chat happily with their friends during a lunchtime picnic. A higher proportion of children are on track to reach a good level of development. Children are prepared well for Year 1.
- I was interested to know how leaders supported the high proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school. Leaders have identified the barriers to learning for these pupils. Training for staff enables them to support well the most vulnerable pupils. Support staff are deployed effectively to enable pupils who are struggling to catch up quickly. Strong pastoral systems are in place and pupils confidently report that there is always someone they can talk with if they have any concerns or worries. Pupils are developing strategies to cope in stressful situations, through mindfulness activities. The breakfast club and community cafe are well attended. Leaders work closely with other agencies and charities to provide additional support for pupils and their families. The majority of disadvantaged pupils make good progress.
- Finally, we looked at attendance. Attendance is given a high priority. Pupils and their parents understand the importance of attending school regularly. Leaders monitor attendance carefully and take swift action, including phone calls and visits to the home, if pupils do not arrive at school. You know the families very well. Leaders for safeguarding and attendance engage well with parents. Staff work effectively with charities and other agencies and professionals to ensure that the most vulnerable families receive the help and guidance they need. Awards, certificates and regular meetings with parents have a positive impact on reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Attendance is improving and is now broadly in line with the national average. There is still scope for leaders to build on the effective strategies in place to ensure that pupils who are persistently absent from school attend regularly and on time.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they continue to:

- build on the successful strategies developed to improve pupils' vocabulary, including technical vocabulary in other curriculum subjects, so that it impacts further on the quality of pupils' writing
- further improve pupils' attendance to ensure that pupils who continue to be persistently absent attend school regularly and on time.

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

Yours sincerely

Amanda Stringer
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, inspectors met with you, other members of the leadership team and staff. The lead inspector also spoke with members of the board of governors. We visited classrooms with you and members of the leadership team, where we had the opportunity to speak with pupils and look at their work. The lead inspector met with a group of pupils formally during the day, and we spoke with parents at the start of the school day. There were no responses to the staff's and pupils' questionnaires. We considered 13 free-text comments and the 18 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. We also reviewed the parental questionnaire information provided by the school through their parent app. We scrutinised a range of documentation, including the single central record.