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10 July 2019

Ms Sian Williams
Headteacher
Northwick Manor Primary School
Northwick Road
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Worcestershire
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Dear Ms Williams

Short inspection of Northwick Manor Primary School

Following my visit with Gill Turner, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 25 June 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 September 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

You have secured high standards of attainment and ensured that the rates of progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave at the end of Year 6 are improving strongly.

Pupils enjoy coming to school regularly and appreciate the extensive curriculum provision on offer, which is taught very well. This contributes significantly to their very strong outcomes, personal development and well-being.

Pupils get off to very good start in early years and in developing their phonics skills in Years 1 and 2, so that they are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

You and your leaders have established a positive ethos around the school and incidents of misbehaviour are rare. Almost all staff responding to the Ofsted survey said they were proud to be a member of staff.

You have recognised that there is more to do to improve the progress and standards for the very small proportion of pupils who are low attaining, disadvantaged or on the school's register for special educational needs (SEN) support. As a result of your endeavours, rates of progress are improving for these groups of pupils as well as for middle-attaining and most-able pupils, who do particularly well.

Most parents who responded to Parent View free-text were highly positive about all aspects of the school, including the care and support provided for their children. A minority expressed concerns around the capacity of leadership as you take on additional responsibilities for the leadership of an additional school.

Safeguarding is effective

There is a strong culture of ensuring that pupils are kept safe.

Leaders are well trained to carry out their duties. They ensure that all staff are kept regularly up to date with training, backed up by frequent updates and briefings. Staff are vigilant and know what to do if they have any safeguarding concerns, however small they might be.

The very large majority of pupils responding to the Ofsted survey and those who spoke to inspectors said there was an adult they could talk to if something was worrying them. They could all provide their 'top tips' to avoid stranger danger.

Where parents made safeguarding comments in the Parent View free-text, the overwhelming majority of them said that their children were safe and supported well at school.

The school's safeguarding policy has been very recently amended to ensure it complies with all of the Department for Education's guidance published in 2018. However, at the time of the visit it had yet to be ratified by governors, who were unaware of the recent changes.

Inspection findings

- Pupils do well at Northwick Manor by the end of Year 6, the overwhelmingly majority of whom are middle- or high-attaining pupils based on their prior starting points. They make strong progress to ensure that by the time they leave, their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above the national average. The proportion exceeding age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics combined was twice the national average in 2018. Current pupils throughout the school are making very strong gains in their learning
- There were too few pupils in Year 6 last year who were low attaining or receiving SEN support to evaluate their progress. The small proportion of disadvantaged pupils as a group did not make as much progress as other pupils nationally. This year, however, they are making more rapid progress throughout the different year groups. Leaders have given the highest priority to ensuring those at the

lowest starting points are making accelerated progress so that the difference will be diminished by the end of Year 6.

- Leaders deploy additional funding for those eligible for pupil premium and special educational needs support with care and precision. They have closely analysed what worked and what was less successful the previous year and have made changes to secure further improvements this year. As a result of strong leadership, careful tracking and appropriate support pupils with SEN, who are currently in the school, are making significant progress. Members of the school improvement board evaluate the impact of additional funding thoroughly and hold leaders to account.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, are being stretched and challenged to do as well as they can through teachers' targeted questioning. Those pupils spoken to said they receive consistently challenging work which they said they liked. Leaders' analysis shows that those pupils who are in school at the start of the academic year make at least the progress they expect, and many exceed this. Almost all pupils in the school, including those who are disadvantaged, left Year 2 having reached the expected standard in phonics. This has set them up very well for the demands of reading in key stage 2.
- Teachers ensure that their lessons are consistently well planned. They aim for the highest quality of work. Some of the presentation of written work, especially from most able pupils, was of an exceptionally high quality. Teachers prioritise low-attaining pupils and ensure that they receive high-quality teaching. The work in pupils' books indicates that low-attaining pupils have made rapid gains in their writing since the start of the academic year. On occasions where low-attaining pupils were placed together as a group they were very dependent on the teachers or the additional adult they were working with. When left to work on their own some of them found it hard to complete their work.
- A number of subjects are taught by specialists including French and music. All pupils have access to a full curriculum, which includes French for all in key stage 2. The rich curriculum is enhanced by numerous extra-curricular activities. Inspectors saw examples of this during their visit such as pupils enthusiastically celebrating India day in Year 4, suitably dressed for the occasion. Year 6 pupils were rehearsing for their end-of-year production 'Dream Coat.' They demonstrated a very high standard of singing in harmony. The curriculum is well planned and thought through to ensure that literacy and numeracy are promoted effectively across a range of subjects, for example six-figure grid references and the use of semi-colons in geography. There is no evidence that any pupil misses out from the wider curriculum to receive additional support. Support is planned in a way that does not interrupt learning in other subjects or activities.
- In lessons, pupils were well engaged and demonstrated very positive attitudes towards learning. On occasions pupils were disengaged when the work was too easy or tasks went on too long. Exclusions are extremely rare and very much a last resort. Pupils attend regularly, which ensures they miss very little schooling. Leaders are assiduous in following up of any absence and set high expectations of regular attendance with parents.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- Low-attaining pupils are making the same strong progress as middle- and high-attaining pupils
- they respond to those few parents who express concerns about the future capacity of leadership in the school when the headteacher takes on additional responsibilities at the additional new school within the trust.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Sims
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors met with you, other senior and middle leaders, and other members of the teaching staff. An inspector spoke by telephone to the chief executive of the trust.

Inspectors also met with five representatives of the school improvement board (including the chair) which has responsibility for governance.

Inspectors carried out learning walk of lessons jointly with you and other leaders, which included scrutinising pupils' books and talking to pupils.

Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and spoke to two groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2 respectively.

Inspectors took account of 112 responses to the Parent View free-text service. There were not enough responses to the Parent View survey to take account of the replies. They also reviewed 144 responses to the pupil survey and 23 responses to the staff survey.

Inspectors scrutinised the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, pupil performance information, behaviour information, and school policy documents, as well as safeguarding and child protection records. Inspectors also checked the school's website.