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Mrs Lesley Cooper
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Dear Mrs Cooper

Short inspection of Kearsley West Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 26 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 the school was judged to be good in March 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You lead a friendly and welcoming school. You place the care and nurture of pupils at the heart of the school's ethos. Staff and governors are aspirational for pupils and have planned a rich and interesting curriculum. This gives pupils a wealth of experiences and reflects the school's motto of 'Be safe, be happy, be learning'. For example, pupils play brass instruments in Year 5 and learn to perform with confidence and skill. Older pupils enjoy visiting a nearby stables for horse riding lessons. Year 6 pupils relish the opportunity to take part in outdoor and adventurous residential trips each year. Through activities and events such as 'Chefs for the future' and 'Enterprise week', leaders ensure that pupils develop social skills, such as communication and teamwork. As a result of the very varied experiences that you provide, pupils develop as confident and enthusiastic learners who value and enjoy school.

The majority of parents and carers have a very positive view of the school and would recommend it to others. This was from parents responding to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and from those I spoke to at the start of the school day. Parents were keen to praise the friendly, approachable and hardworking staff. Parents feel welcome in school. They value teachers' very regular communication about their children's progress. Parents attend frequent information sessions to help them to support their children's learning, for example in mathematics and reading. A typical comment from parents was: 'You will never find a school that cares this much, not only about children's academic progress, but their emotional

development too.'

Pupils share parents' positive view of the school. Pupils enjoy school and attend very regularly. In class, pupils are enthusiastic learners and work very well with their peers to share their ideas and discuss their learning. Pupils try their best and follow teachers' instructions quickly, ensuring that the learning time is used well. Pupils' work is neat and well presented. The pupils with whom I spoke described lessons as fun and interesting, and said that staff are kind.

During the inspection, I found that pupils develop a good understanding of other religions, including Buddhism and Judaism. Pupils can describe their learning about these religions in detail. However, pupils' knowledge of British values, equality and diversity is limited.

Your governing body visit regularly and know the school well. Governors use their knowledge to provide a good balance of challenge and support for leaders. Governors keep a careful check on spending, including the impact of recent staff training on the quality of teaching. This training has improved pupils' outcomes, including in mathematics. Governors have a good understanding of the school's priorities to improve. However, the school's improvement plan lacks sharpness, and it is difficult to identify how success will be measured. This limits governors' ability to keep a close and accurate check on leaders' progress in school improvements. For example, leaders' focus on increasing the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception.

Leaders have taken appropriate action to address the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. You were asked to increase pupils' opportunities to apply their mathematics skills in a wider context. When checking pupils' workbooks, I could see that pupils have regular opportunities to practise their problem-solving and reasoning skills, including in subjects such as geography and science. As a result of the training that you have provided for staff, teaching has improved, including in mathematics.

You were also asked to support new subject leaders in checking the quality of teaching and how well pupils learn in all subjects in the curriculum. I found that leaders have put in place a detailed monitoring and evaluation timetable. This means that across different subjects, leaders check workbooks, speak to pupils and visit lessons. Leaders have also put in place a system to record pupils' attainment in a range of subjects, including art, science and history. You give subject leaders time to fulfil their leadership roles. They have also benefited from working with other teachers in school as well as with colleagues from other schools. Because of the support that you have given to subject leaders, they now have an accurate view of how well pupils are attaining across the curriculum. Leaders are further refining and enhancing the system in place to help them to measure pupils' progress in different subject areas as they move through the school.

During the inspection, I found that you have taken effective action to raise the attendance of pupils who are late or absent from school too often. The importance

of attending school very regularly is understood by pupils and their families. You ensure that swift action is taken when pupils are absent or late very regularly. Good attendance is celebrated. The actions that you have taken have been effective in improving whole school attendance, which is now in line with national averages. Pupils know how important it is to arrive at school on time and ready to learn, and the vast majority do so.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have made sure that safeguarding is given a high priority across the school. Safeguarding arrangements are thorough and fit for purpose. Leaders carry out statutory checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. Governors visit the school regularly to check on safeguarding arrangements. Pupils learn the different ways that they can keep themselves safe, including road safety and fire safety. Pupil 'digital leaders' help to support curriculum teaching about how to stay safe when online. Staff, parents and pupils agree that pupils are safe.

Through regular training, staff and governors have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding. As a result, they are alert and attentive to the potential risks that pupils may face. Records relating to pupils' welfare are of a good quality. Leaders work very closely with parents and other professionals to make sure that pupils are safe.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, I considered several key lines of enquiry. The first of which was to check how well pupils behave in school. I found that pupils behave well. Staff and the vast majority of parents agree with this. When learning, pupils listen respectfully to adults and their peers. Pupils move around the school calmly and sensibly, and they are friendly and welcoming to adults. Breaktimes are well supervised by staff. Pupil 'play leaders' in Year 6 are good role models to younger pupils, helping them to sort out any disputes and to play well. Where pupils need additional support for their behaviour, leaders work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that individual behaviour plans are appropriate and effective.
- I also wanted to check how well leaders develop children's early writing skills in Nursery and Reception. This has been a focus for school improvement this year. I found that across the indoor and outdoor classrooms, teachers plan a range of learning activities which develop children's early reading, writing and language skills. For example, outdoors, children mark make using chalks, paint brushes and pens. In Nursery, children were enthralled by the school's pet rabbit, Benjamin. They were talking excitedly as they stroked him, developing their vocabulary. Teachers share a range of stories with children and use these to inspire children to write. However, some of the activities planned lack a sharp focus for developing writing. Activities do not precisely match children's interests or build on their experiences. Children's workbooks show that they write for a range of purposes, developing their skills and making steady progress from their varied starting points. Some children do not make the strong progress of which they are

capable.

- For my final key line of enquiry, I wanted to check how well pupils achieve in writing across the school. In 2018, pupils' attainment in writing by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 was below their attainment in reading and mathematics. However, it had improved from the previous year. I found that pupils make good progress in their writing. This is because recent staff training has had a positive impact. The teaching of writing has become more effective. Teachers show pupils how to vary their sentence structure to make their work interesting to read. Pupils write regularly and for a range of purposes. Their handwriting is neat and well formed. However, pupils' workbooks show that they make some careless errors, such as omitting capital letters and full stops from sentences. This is because pupils do not check and edit their work with precision and care.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they improve the sharpness of school improvement planning to enable governors and leaders to check with greater accuracy the progress that the school is making towards achieving its goals
- pupils develop and deepen their knowledge and understanding of a wider range of equalities, British values and the full range of diversity in modern Britain
- teachers develop pupils' skills in editing and improving their writing, so that more pupils identify and correct errors that they make
- teachers in the early years plan high-quality opportunities which match children's interests, build on their experiences and develop their early writing skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Stevens
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, your deputy headteacher and middle leaders. I also met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and spoke to a representative of the local authority. I met with eight pupils from key stage 2. I visited classes with you, where we observed teaching and learning, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils.

I spoke to parents at the start of the school day. I took account of the 35 responses to Parent View, including free-text responses. I also considered the 16 staff responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire. I looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' attainment and progress, and records of pupils' behaviour. I also evaluated safeguarding procedures, including policies to keep pupils safe, safeguarding checks and attendance information. I undertook a review of the school's website.