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Mrs Elspeth Warren
Headteacher
Ashfield Primary School
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Dear Mrs Warren

Short inspection of Ashfield Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 January 2018, 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 November 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 have successfully steered the school through challenging circumstances created by changes in staffing, not taking your eye off the ball in continually making improvements to pupils' learning. Leadership is the responsibility of all staff, and you have created a skilful and highly effective school team in which morale is high.

Improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are accelerating quickly the rates of progress of current pupils across the school. The whole school team has diligently addressed issues raised at the last inspection. The most able pupils are set work which challenges their thinking and stretches their understanding. The proportion of pupils working at a greater depth in their learning is in line with that found nationally. The quality of teaching in key stage 1 is much improved, and the support offered by teaching assistants is having a marked effect on pupils' rates of progress.

Teachers routinely establish high expectations. You, governors and other school leaders keep a close eye on the quality of teaching, undertaking monitoring of teaching in lessons and analysing work in pupils' books. You acknowledge that differences remain in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils compared with other pupils nationally who have similar starting points. You have well-thought-through plans to continue to support disadvantaged pupils across the school, which are already having a positive impact. Differences in the rates of progress made in learning by disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged classmates have

been virtually eliminated for this academic year, but in some year groups differences in standards of attainment remain.

Pupils respond well to the high expectations of staff and this is seen in their excellent attitudes to learning in lessons. Pupils develop good citizenship skills, being keen to take on responsibilities through roles such as being a member of the school council, taking on a monitor's role in a class, being a librarian or a digital leader. Some pupils are excited at the prospect of training to be a sports leader. Pupils' behaviour in class and around school is mostly of a high standard.

You have worked hard to develop a curriculum that meets the needs of your pupils and fires their interest through visits to important sites across the region linked to their topic work. For example, areas of study have resulted in visits to places such as the York Chocolate Story (Mayan civilisation), Skipton Castle (the Normans) and Eden Camp (Second World War). You acknowledge that further work is needed to develop and embed systems to assess and track pupils' progress in subject-specific skills other than in English and mathematics. This will ensure that pupils' skills in these foundation subjects develop well as they progress through school, building on previous knowledge.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and all leaders ensure that a culture of safeguarding is embedded among all staff, who ensure that no stone is left unturned in their duty to keep pupils safe. The school has a tangible ethos that is positive and caring, putting the welfare and well-being of each pupil at the heart of all that it does. This is clearly seen in the friendly and confident manner of the pupils in school, who report feeling very safe at all times. They have full trust in their teachers and teaching assistants who look after them, assuring me that any minor disputes are immediately and effectively dealt with by adults. The curriculum supports pupils well in maintaining their own safety, including keeping themselves safe online. Pupils know the dangers of social media and never to post personal details online.

Policies, procedures and records are of extremely high quality. Detailed records are maintained, including those for any minor behaviour incidents or extremely rare incidents of racist name-calling. Staff training is thorough, including training to ensure that pupils are kept safe from the risk of extremism and online dangers. Registers of staff training are completed diligently, showing all employed staff's training is up to date. Staff have access to well-written policies and guidance and, as a result, have a very secure understanding of their individual responsibilities for safeguarding pupils.

Inspection findings

- You have ensured that the school continues to work tirelessly to ensure that all pupils are safe and well cared for. The strong relationships in school and high levels of trust between adults and pupils ensure that pupils' conduct in lessons and around school is consistently good. Pupils are polite, caring, considerate and

friendly to each other and to visitors. Playtimes are harmonious occasions where pupils play happily together. Safeguarding is highly effective and the school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is excellent.

- Staff and leaders at all levels share the same ambition to eradicate underperformance. Morale within the school community is very strong. You have ensured that pupils have access to a curriculum that sparks their imagination and fires their curiosity in learning. Imaginative use is made of places of significant interest in the local community linked to topics such as the Victorians and the Normans. You acknowledge that systems to assess and track pupils' progress in subject-specific skills to allow pupils to use and build upon skills and knowledge in the foundation subjects other than in English and mathematics are not yet embedded.
- Based on detailed and accurate tracking systems, it is clear that current pupils are making very strong progress in their learning in every year group in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of current pupils working at standards expected for their age has risen since last year, and the proportion working at a greater depth in learning remains strong and a positive aspect of pupils' achievement. Work seen in pupils' books in visits to classes during the inspection was of a consistently good quality.
- Teaching is of a consistently good standard across the school and has improved significantly since the previous inspection, including in key stage 1. Staff are skilled at prompting and challenging pupils to produce their very best work. Teachers are increasingly skilled in the promotion of reasoning in mathematical problem solving, such as seen in a Year 5 lesson when pupils were challenged to design and draw an imaginary zoo based on dimensions for animal enclosures in which some dimensions were missing. Pupils' skills in working cooperatively allowed them to successfully find the missing quantities and construct the plan. Pupils in Year 1 enthusiastically discussed the information needed for a 'wanted poster' to catch the wolf in the story of the 'Three Little Pigs', supported well by strong teacher knowledge and effective interventions from teaching assistants.
- You have ensured that pupil premium spending is managed effectively to provide targeted support for disadvantaged pupils. This support is regularly evaluated to assess its impact on pupils' learning, and amended or changed as a result. The positive impact of this support is seen through the very strong progress made by current disadvantaged pupils across the school in every year group, their progress matching that of their non-disadvantaged peers. However, differences still exist in the standards they attain compared with those of other pupils nationally with the same starting points. The school acknowledges that further work is required to accelerate the progress of this group of pupils.
- You have ensured that the school is committed to ensuring that all pupils have the highest rates of attendance possible. To this end, valuable work is undertaken by the attendance officer, as well as through a range of innovative school actions such as pupils' access to playing 'Otleyopoly' as a reward for high attendance. Pupils understand that missing school unnecessarily could have a detrimental effect on their learning, although rates of attendance are still adversely affected by holidays taken in term time. Disadvantaged pupils' rates of

attendance have risen and are now above those found nationally for similar pupils. You acknowledge that more work is required to ensure that their attendance at least matches that of other non-disadvantaged pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- differences in the standards of attainment and the rates of progress made by disadvantaged pupils compared with other pupils nationally who have the same starting points continue to diminish rapidly
- systems to assess and track the progress of pupils in subject-specific skills across the curriculum become embedded to ensure pupils' good progression in all subjects as in English and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Philip Scott
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the assistant headteacher, the administration assistant and a representative of the local authority. You and I visited lessons in each key stage, and I observed pupils' behaviour during break. I met with the chair of the governing body and two other governors. I spoke to pupils about their work and their views of the school. You and I looked at pupils' work in workbooks when in lessons. A range of documents was considered relating to safeguarding and external evaluations of the school. I examined the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, the school's monitoring of its own performance and its assessment and tracking of current pupils' progress. I also scrutinised pupils' recent achievement in the 2017 statutory assessments, responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents and carers, Parent View, and the school's website.