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Mrs Rachel Horan
Headteacher
Park Spring Primary School
Wellstone Avenue
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Dear Mrs Horan

Short inspection of Park Spring Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 22 February 2017, 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 July 2013.

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 created a calm and purposeful environment in which pupils and staff work well together. Consequently, pupils are making good progress in their learning across a range of subjects.

At the previous inspection you were asked to make sure that pupils were challenged by the work set for them and given opportunities to work things out for themselves. As I visited classrooms and analysed pupils' work, I noted that the 'pitch' of work is appropriately challenging for all abilities, including the most able, and that pupils set to work with confidence and enthusiasm. You and your staff have worked well to make sure that pupils have good attitudes to learning and seek help only after they have tried to work things out for themselves or with other pupils. Pupils contribute well to the good progress they are making.

Improving subject leadership was an additional area identified as requiring attention from the previous report. You and your deputy have developed a training course for subject leaders and given them more time to check the quality of teaching and pupils' work. Subject leaders provide advice and support to staff as well as taking opportunities to share good practice. Subject leaders have regular meetings with governors and are held to account for the work they are doing. You are making sure that leadership has good capacity to tackle your plans for further improvement.

Since the previous inspection, pupils' progress in all key stages has been strengthening to be consistently good, especially in key stage 2 in 2015. However, at the end of key stage 2 in 2016, reading seems to have slipped particularly for middle-ability pupils. I was keen to find out why this occurred and how you responded. You identified that a large number of pupils joined the school very late in key stage 2 and overall, from low starting points, pupils found it difficult to match the higher standards of the new reading tests. This led to low outcomes in reading but you still managed to ensure effective outcomes in writing and mathematics.

You have made sure that leadership's capacity for further improvement is good. You have given additional time to the leader of English to create a very structured scheme for reading and testing pupils' understanding of what is being read. You have made sure that the leader of English is available at all times to support staff in ensuring consistently high standards of reading and writing. When visiting lessons and analysing pupils' work, I found that your response is working effectively and current pupils read well and have a good understanding of what they are reading.

You have made sure that teachers use texts that capture pupils' interests and introduce pupils to challenging vocabulary. Staff are clear about what is expected of them and pupils are making good progress. Good leadership is making sure reading is strengthening and pupils' written work is benefiting from the use of more extensive vocabulary. Occasionally, pupils, particularly boys, have not been given sufficient time to respond well to comprehension exercises before moving on to other tasks and this can slow their progress. The quality of pupils' writing is good but they are not given sufficient opportunities to write at length in subjects other than English to strengthen their writing skills further.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and of high quality. Pupils are well cared for, especially the most vulnerable. Your designated lead for safeguarding keeps meticulous records that effectively support children's safety. She keeps staff appropriately informed of the needs of children and how they should be supported throughout the school day. The school works closely and successfully with parents and external agencies in the local authority as well as health professionals to make sure children's needs are met. The vast majority of parents and staff believe that children are well cared for and safe in school.

Safeguarding training for staff and governors means they are knowledgeable and up to date with the most recent legislation. Staff, including those in after-school clubs, are vigilant and know how to raise any concerns they might have about children's welfare. A governor meets regularly with the safeguarding leader to make sure that support for pupils is of a high standard.

Inspection findings

- You have created a very positive culture in school where staff are clear about the

aims of the school and are working well to support you in providing a good education for all pupils. Morale is high and staff are proud to be members of the school. There has been a significant increase in staffing to accommodate increasing pupil numbers and you have managed this well. Parents are very positive about the school.

- You, and other leaders, have an accurate understanding of the work of the school. Plans for improvement focus well on the key actions to strengthen outcomes and teaching. However, you are not always clear about how much you want pupils to progress because of the actions you are taking and this limits precise analysis of how effective these actions are.
- You have made sure that the additional government funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used effectively throughout the school. Progress of these pupils is checked regularly and appropriate action is taken should any be falling behind. Pupils appreciate the additional time given to them throughout the school day and at the start and end of the school day. I was keen to find out how well middle-ability pupils and disadvantaged pupils learn. I checked much of their work and listened to them read. I found that disadvantaged pupils, as others, are making good progress in their subjects and are learning well.
- Pupils are pleasant and polite. They told me they enjoyed school and that they are safe in school. The school teaches them well about how to stay safe when using the internet. They know that they should not respond to unknown emails and they should report them to adults in school or at home.
- Attendance is broadly average. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6, including disadvantaged pupils, are attending regularly because of the good work of your family liaison team. However, an above-average proportion of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, in Years 1, 2 and 3 are absent too often and they miss out on the good education the school provides.
- Teachers' questioning is good and engages pupils well. Relationships are good with pupils confident in seeking clarification if they are not sure about what has to be done. Pupils' work in mathematics, English and a range of subjects showed secure progress because of good teaching, challenge and support in class. Now and again, pupils' comprehension work is not checked swiftly enough in class to make sure it is of the very highest quality before moving pupils on to further tasks.
- Governors know the school well and are clear about its strengths and areas for improvement. They are supporting and challenging leaders appropriately to ensure that children receive a good education. They are well informed and visit the school regularly. They receive reports at their various committee meetings and keep a check on the quality of teaching and pupil progress. Although the school website provides useful information for parents, leaders have not made sure it meets all the statutory requirements on the publication of information.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- plans for improvement are crystal clear and identify the progress you expect pupils to make because of actions being taken
- there are increased opportunities for pupils to write at length across a wide range of subjects
- teachers swiftly check pupils' comprehension work, particularly that of boys, to ensure that it is of the highest quality
- the attendance of pupils in Years 1 to 3 is strengthened
- the school's website meets statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education.

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

James McGrath
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met regularly with you as part of a professional dialogue throughout the day. I also met with the chair of the governing body and three other governors. I held a separate meeting with a representative of the local authority. I conducted an analysis of pupils' writing and comprehension work with the leader of English. I analysed pupils' work in mathematics with the deputy headteacher and checked work across a range of subjects. I observed a range of teaching and listened to pupils reading in each class. I spoke to pupils throughout the day about their safety and learning in school. I spoke with parents at the start of the school day. I analysed 28 staff questionnaires along with 57 parents' responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. I looked at the school's review of its own performance, its development and improvement plan, a number of key school policies and the minutes of governing body meetings. I met with the school's designated safeguarding lead. I considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding and attendance.