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19 October 2018

Mrs Sarah Rudd
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Dear Mrs Rudd

Short inspection of Newall Green Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 October 2018 with Her Majesty's Inspector Aelwyn Pugh, 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 May 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

School leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths. You are honest in your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. Pupils continue to do well at this school. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year continues to be above the national average. High proportions of pupils achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check. By the time pupils leave key stage 2, they typically do better than other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils continue to make good progress.

Leaders recognise that attendance and greater levels of challenge for the most able pupils remain as key focuses of your work. The new behaviour policy you introduced last year is having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and attitudes. However, these improvements have not been communicated well to the wider school community.

When the predecessor school was last inspected, school leaders were asked to improve pupils' attainment in writing. Since then, a significant proportion of pupils have achieved the expected standards in writing at the end of key stages 1 and 2. Work inspectors saw in pupils' books shows that pupils are applying a wide array of

writing features to different genres and contexts. Teachers give pupils opportunities to engage in unstructured writing sessions. Teachers assess pupils' work accurately. They use this information well to plan further writing tasks. Pupils regularly reflect on their own writing. Pupils' ability to edit their own writing is a well-developed skill. They write well across the curriculum. For example, many classes have recently produced high-quality writing to support Black History month. The writing inspectors looked at in science books, and books from other subjects, is of a consistently good standard.

Inspectors also asked the previous school's leaders to improve the school development planning process. You now gather the views of all staff and governors. All views feed into the plan, which is presented to the governing body for approval. This working document helps you to track all areas of priority and provide support where needed. All targets on the current plan are relevant to improve the school further. Professional development for teachers is closely aligned to the school development plan.

Most parents and carers speak highly about this school. Those who spoke to the inspectors and those who responded to the Ofsted surveys, were positive in their views. Parents said that the school ensures that their children are safe and cared for well. Most parents feel that behaviour in school is good. However, a small number expressed their concerns about the behaviour displayed by pupils in the previous Year 6 classes.

Pupils said they are happy at school. They said lessons are fun and pupils behave well in lessons. In the classes we visited, pupils were keen to talk about their learning. Older pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the many roles and responsibilities they have. For example, pupils can become a member of the eco-council or the school council. They enjoy taking part in the many sports clubs that are on offer. Pupils said that behaviour had significantly improved this year. Pupils told me about the 'Peace Mala' approach that underpins your school ethos. For example, a typical comment was, 'We treat others how we want to be treated ourselves.'

Governors provide good support to you and the school leaders. They are knowledgeable about how well pupils do. Governors are realistic and honest in their evaluation of the school. Governors keep a close watch on how the additional funding through the pupil premium is spent. They challenge leaders on the impact of spending in relation to pupils' outcomes. Governors have ensured that all safeguarding procedures are effective. They check the accuracy of the single central record and have ensured that the school's web-filtering systems work well.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are effective and fit for purpose. All members of staff have received safeguarding training, including how to prevent pupils' exposure to radicalised views. You make careful checks on the suitability of adults to work in school. Several members of the senior leadership team are trained

in safer recruitment.

You work with a range of agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families receive timely support. For example, you work closely with children's social care, housing and the community police officers. All records of this work are of a high standard. Records of referrals to social care are thorough.

Members of staff with whom inspectors spoke were knowledgeable about their role in keeping pupils safe. They were able to talk about their training and how to spot signs of abuse. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, both in school and while on the internet. Parents said that their children were safe in school.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we focused on several lines of enquiry. The first of these related to pupils' attendance. Since the previous inspection, attendance has remained below the national average and rates of persistent absences have remained above the national average. You are proactive in your continued determination to improve attendance. You monitor rigorously the attendance of vulnerable pupils. When these pupils are absent, you ensure that contact is made with their parents. Where necessary, the attendance leader visits pupils at home to check on their welfare. You regularly issue fixed-penalty notices for unauthorised absences. You invite parents into school to meet with the attendance team. You have provided a walking bus to enable vulnerable pupils and those with poor attendance to be collected and returned home each day. Information in school indicates that a high proportion of pupils go on unauthorised holidays during the school year. You told me this was one of your biggest challenges. Through this rigorous monitoring and working with vulnerable families you have been successful in stabilising school attendance. Despite your many positive actions, the whole-school attendance figure remains below the national average.
- You told me that in 2017, the behaviour of Year 6 pupils was not as good as you wanted it to be. The behaviour of these pupils had a negative effect on the rest of the school. You and the staff adopted a range of strategies to manage the issues, but concluded that there was the need for a new behaviour policy. This policy has a clear graduated response to dealing with poor behaviour. You have now fully implemented the new policy. As well as this, you reviewed the use of alternative provision in school for pupils with challenging behaviour. These approaches have had a clear impact. For example, the number of behaviour incidents so far this term has fallen by over a half, when compared to the same time last year. There have been no exclusions this year. You keep detailed records of all behaviour incidents, no matter how small. Inspectors observed good behaviour across the school. For example, in the early years, well-established routines enable children to settle down to tasks and activities quickly. Across key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils behave well in lessons and at playtimes. Despite these improvements, a minority of pupils and parents who responded to the Ofsted surveys said that they continue to have concerns about past behaviour that were displayed in the school. Further work is needed to

ensure that all parents and pupils are more knowledgeable about the new behaviour policy and the many positive changes taking place in the school.

- In the past, the proportion of pupils identified by staff as needing support for special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities has been three times higher than the national average. In March 2018, on the advice of an external consultant, you re-examined the methods staff use to identify pupils who require this extra help. As a result, the proportion of pupils requiring support has reduced, but still remains high. However, the leaders of the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities provided convincing evidence that the assessment of pupils' needs is accurate. The actions to support pupils are carefully defined and monitored to see how effective they have been. Through reviewing examples of pupils' books and the school's own data, inspectors could see that pupils receiving SEN support make good progress. In several instances, they make greater progress than their peers. The school has effective means for supporting pupils with physical disabilities. This includes regular physiotherapy sessions for pupils, which are also attended by their parents.
- Through your own evaluation of the school, you have recognised that although attainment has remained high, pupils have made less progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 over the past three years. Despite this, pupils' overall progress remains good when compared to the national average. As part of your ongoing work to ensure that standards remain high, you make regular systematic checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in all year groups. Pupils' work we looked at together was of a good quality. Pupils are clear in what they need to do to improve their work further. From observing teaching, learning and assessment and viewing work in pupils' books, I could see that little time is wasted. Pupils have settled quickly and purposefully into the new school year.
- Subject leaders for mathematics and English are knowledgeable about standards across the school. As part of their work to keep standards high, they make regular checks on the quality of work in pupils' books. During a recent checking exercise, they noticed that teachers do not plan enough tasks that enable the most able pupils to strive for the higher standards. From observing teaching, learning and assessment and viewing samples of pupils' work from all year groups, inspectors noted that the most able pupils tend to do more of the same work as other pupils. For example, in writing, the most able pupils usually do more writing than other pupils. In mathematics, pupils are sometimes required to complete work of an easier standard, which they have already mastered, before they can move on to more challenging activities. In science books, inspectors noticed that although pupils cover a wide and exciting curriculum, the most able pupils did not have work that sufficiently challenged them to show a deeper level of understanding. Teachers do not routinely plan tasks across the curriculum to explicitly challenge and stretch the most able pupils to reach the higher standards.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- attendance rises further to be in line with the national average
- behaviour continues to improve, making sure that all members of the school community are more aware of the procedures in place and their positive effect
- the most able pupils are challenged across the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

John Donald
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, inspectors met with you and members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors visited classes in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their work and viewed examples of pupils' work in the classes they visited.

The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and held a telephone conversation with the school's improvement partner.

Documents relating to safeguarding were scrutinised carefully. Inspectors viewed records of attendance and behaviour.

Inspectors spoke with parents before the school day. They considered the 26 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. They considered the 11 free-text responses and the 37 responses to the staff survey. Inspectors met informally with pupils throughout the day. They considered the 62 responses to the pupils' survey.