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Mrs Lisa Tabbner
Head of School
Summerfields Primary Academy
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Dear Mrs Tabbner

Short inspection of Summerfields Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 28 November 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 2014.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

In the short time you have been in post, you have quickly gained the confidence of the school community. All staff who responded to the online survey said that they were proud to work at the school. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and recognise the difference you have made since your appointment. They have strong confidence in your leadership. As one parent commented, 'Mrs Tabbner has made a fantastic difference to the school! Since joining Summerfields, she has restored the happy and welcoming atmosphere which made me choose the school in the first place.'

Pupils told me that they value the sporting and musical activities available to them and they clearly enjoy coming to school each day. Pupils behave well in lessons, where they show a keenness and enthusiasm for learning. Relationships around the school are strong and pupils relate well to one another and to adults.

On your appointment in January 2018, you quickly identified some areas for immediate improvement. You acted decisively to make sure that weaker teaching was quickly addressed in the early years and key stage 1. As a result of improved teaching, in 2018, the proportion of children attaining 'a good level of development' by the end of the Reception Year increased and is now broadly average. Pupils'

standards of attainment at the end of key stage 1 also improved when compared to 2017.

You have worked hard to ensure that teachers' assessment is reliable. You have used links with other schools in your multi-academy trust to enable teachers to compare and check the accuracy of their assessments. Teachers have also done this in school, and external checks made by the local authority have confirmed that teachers are assessing pupils' work accurately. Nevertheless, some teachers in key stage 2 do not yet use this information effectively to plan activities which challenge middle-attaining pupils in mathematics effectively.

At the time of the last inspection, the school was asked to raise pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. Since the last inspection, pupils' achievement has declined in key stage 2, especially in writing and mathematics. In 2017 and 2018, pupils' progress in writing was well below average and in the bottom 20% of schools nationally. In 2018, the progress of middle-attaining pupils in mathematics dipped to below average when compared to similar pupils nationally.

Inspectors also asked the school to improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that subject leaders check on and improve the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility closely. Subject leaders for English and mathematics are committed to improvement. However, their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in writing and mathematics is not yet strong enough. They do not check regularly on the quality of teaching with rigour and, consequently, do not hold teachers to account for the quality of the work in pupils' books.

From your latest assessment information and our scrutiny of work in pupils' books, the progress pupils make across key stage 2 in writing and mathematics remain areas of concern for the school. These are key areas for improvement in the school's development plan.

There have been changes to the governing body since your appointment, including the appointment of a new chair of the governing body. Previously, governors did not have an accurate enough understanding of the urgent action required to make improvements. As a result of more regular visits to school, governors now know what is working well and what could be better still. They are fully committed to the success of the school. They offer a healthy balance of challenge and support to you and your team.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is an established culture of safeguarding at the school and there is a clear ethos that everybody is responsible for safeguarding. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders have ensured that all members of staff and the governing body are regularly trained in different aspects of safeguarding, including

safer recruitment. Leaders and governors ensure that records are effective and that relevant checks are made on visitors and staff before they enter or join the school.

Most parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their children are happy at school and feel safe. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that they know who to go to if they have a problem. Pupils receive regular information about how to stay safe, including when using the internet. They know they should not share personal information with people online.

Inspection findings

- As part of the inspection, we agreed to look together at the achievement of disadvantaged pupils across key stages 1 and 2. This is because, in Year 2 and Year 6 in 2018, disadvantaged pupils did not make as much progress from their starting points as other pupils in the school and others nationally. Their standards of attainment also lagged some way behind that of others in the school and others nationally.
- Since your appointment, you have reviewed the school's strategy to support disadvantaged pupils. Actions are more precise and targeted to address the specific pastoral and academic needs of these pupils. Inspection evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making good progress. Previous differences in their achievement compared to others in the school are diminishing.
- My second line of enquiry was to explore how effectively leaders are addressing the progress that middle-attaining pupils make in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. This is because, in 2018, these pupils made weaker progress than other pupils in school.
- Assessment information is not used well by some teachers in key stage 2 in mathematics. Consequently, these teachers plan lessons that do not always meet middle-attaining pupils' needs properly and lack challenge. Pupils' mathematics books in key stage 2 show that the school's focus on embedding pupils' mathematical understanding is being developed through exercises to secure fluency. However, books show that these pupils are not sufficiently challenged or expected to apply their skills within reasoning and problem-solving activities.
- Leaders have ensured that a culture of reading exists in the school. Pupils told me that they enjoy reading a range of books. You have changed the way reading comprehension is taught and this is paying dividends. Pupils read challenging texts such as 'The Butterfly Lion' by Michael Morpurgo and use these to answer a range of precise questions which develop their reading skills well. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop their vocabulary in reading lessons. In a Year 6 class we visited, we observed pupils confidently discussing the definition of words such as 'solitary', 'receptive' and 'venture' and using these words correctly in discussions with the teacher. As a result, current pupils are making good progress.

- My third key line of enquiry was to explore how effectively leaders are addressing the well-below-average progress pupils make in writing by the end of key stage 2.
- English grammar, punctuation and spelling skills are taught regularly. However, some teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to apply these skills by writing at length in different styles across English lessons and in different subjects. Teachers do not have consistently high enough expectations of the quality or presentation of work that pupils produce and do not routinely identify common errors. Furthermore, there is inconsistency in the degree to which pupils edit and improve their writing. As a result, many pupils do not take care in producing work to be proud of and some basic errors are repeated over time.
- Finally, I considered how well leaders ensure that children make a good start to school in the Reception Year and make strong progress across key stage 1.
- Children in the Reception Year enjoy their learning and are enthusiastic to tell adults about their activities. Children are keen to participate because adults make learning fun. During the inspection, I observed children join in enthusiastically with well-planned activities indoors and outdoors which promote children's language, writing and mathematical development well. For example, children enjoyed making repeating patterns using 'Jack's magic beans from the beanstalk' and writing the story of the 'Gingerbread Man'. Parents speak warmly about the support offered by the school and the welcoming atmosphere that has helped children to settle in so well.
- Across key stage 1, pupils continue to make good progress from their starting points. The 2018 data indicates that standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved when compared to 2017, especially in writing. The proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check also improved and is now above the national average.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils in key stage 2 to develop and apply their English grammar, punctuation and spelling skills across a range of styles and subjects
- pupils in key stage 2 more regularly edit and improve their writing and teachers raise their expectations of the quality and presentation of work that pupils of all abilities produce
- teachers use assessment information more effectively in mathematics and give middle-attaining pupils in key stage 2 more opportunities to practise and apply their mathematical skills through more challenging and complex reasoning and problem-solving activities
- the skills of English and mathematics leaders in checking on the standards of teaching and learning and holding staff to account for the quality of work and presentation in pupils' books are developed further.

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 Barnsley. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mark Randall
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, your executive principal, your English and mathematics leaders and 10 members of staff. I also spoke to two governors. I spoke informally with pupils during lessons and at lunchtime. I visited classes with you, where I observed teaching and learning and looked at pupils' work.

I took account of 13 free-text responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire and 18 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey. I met with parents before school. I also evaluated a range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, safeguarding records and information about current pupils' achievement and attendance. I undertook a review of the school's website.