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Mr Ian Blackburn
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Dear Mr Blackburn

Short inspection of Ireland Wood Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 31 January 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 demonstrated vision and determination to improve the quality of teaching: this was an area for improvement at the previous inspection. You have ensured that staff have had access to high-quality training and development and consequently have created a reflective, 'can-do' learning culture among the staff. As a result, teaching is highly effective and is leading to secure learning for the vast majority of pupils in school.

Pupils' attainment and progress in key stage 2 is excellent. In 2015, overall progress between key stage 1 and 2 was in the top 16% when compared to other schools nationally. In 2016, progress within key stage 2, when compared to similar schools, was extremely high. Although the progress and attainment of girls in key stage 2 is very rapid, the progress of a few low-prior-attaining boys in key stage 2 is less secure in reading and writing. In key stage 1 there is a similar picture; attainment overall was above the national average in 2016 but the progress of some low-prior-attaining boys was less secure, leading to them underachieving in reading and writing. Current assessment information shows that this pattern prevails in some classes in key stage 1.

Leaders have supported staff to accurately assess pupils' work and to evaluate the progress that pupils are making. Teachers are regularly held to account for the progress of their pupils. Consequently, outcomes at the end of 2015 and 2016 show that in key stage 2, most-able pupils are attaining very well. Work in pupils' books

shows that the most able pupils in school are making at least the progress expected of them. Often, they make rapid progress, particularly in writing and mathematics. However, insufficient numbers of pupils in key stage 1 attained knowledge at a greater depth in reading. Evidence in pupils' books shows that this is unlikely to be the pattern this year because the most able pupils are demonstrating secure understanding and are applying this in their work.

In addition to improving the quality of teaching, at the previous inspection you were charged with the task of improving standards in mathematics. The leader for mathematics has successfully introduced new methods of teaching into school. Staff have quickly adopted her advice and lessons are well-pitched to match the needs of different groups of pupils. Work in pupils' books shows that teachers carefully plan sequences of lessons that will help pupils to deepen their understanding and strengthen their knowledge of number and calculations. Differences between the attainment and progress of groups of pupils, including boys, girls and disadvantaged pupils, are diminishing rapidly. As a result, pupils' progress in mathematics is secure.

Safeguarding is effective.

Ireland Wood promotes a robust safeguarding culture. Every aspect of pupils' safety is rigorously assessed. Governors regularly check school policies and centrally held records to ensure that they comply with legislation. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet. The school's approach to protecting pupils against radical views is effective. Pupils say that bullying is very rare and dealt with effectively by staff when it happens. Consequently, pupils report that they feel happy and safe at school.

Inspection findings

- Leadership at all levels is strong and leading to a responsive teaching force. You are very effective in spotting talent and developing new leaders. Consequently, middle leaders are very effective in their roles. Each subject leader is skilled in teaching their subject and adept at supporting other teachers.
- You are insistent that all pupils will have opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge across a wide range of subjects. For example, you and your staff have ensured that almost all pupils have taken part in competitive sports against other schools. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the wide range of after-school clubs, trips and visits which they have access to. You have gained several awards and accreditations that acknowledge the very good opportunities pupils have to experience the arts and to learn about healthy lifestyles.
- Governors have a thorough understanding of the effectiveness of the school at all levels. They have sought regular training to ensure that they conduct their roles well. Their long-standing relationship with each other has brought cohesiveness to their work and they are well equipped to hold leaders to account.
- Children enter school with skills and abilities generally below those seen typically. The majority of children make secure progress through the early years. In the

past, boys have not been well prepared to meet the demands of Year 1. This picture is changing due to a determined effort by the early years staff to adjust provision to meet the needs of boys. As a result, the difference between the proportion of boys and girls reaching a good level of development is diminishing. Despite this, the attainment and progress of boys, particularly in reading and writing, continues to fall behind that of girls.

- Last year, leaders accurately identified reading as an area to improve. Consequently, the teaching of reading has been adapted and teachers have selected challenging whole-class and individual texts for pupils. Leaders have successfully created a 'reading culture' within school, regularly rewarding pupils who read daily at home. Although the most able pupils read with fluency and expression in both key stage 1 and 2, low-prior-attaining readers in key stage 1 are less able to use a range of skills, including phonics, to read with fluency and understanding.
- You have ensured that the pupil premium is appropriately spent to provide additional teaching and support to disadvantaged pupils. However, the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils in reading and writing are less secure than for other pupils, particularly in key stage 1. Differences are diminishing as pupils move through the school so that at the end of key stage 2 there is little difference in the progress of these pupils compared to others.
- Leaders quickly identified the reasons for the decline in standards in phonics in 2016 and put in measures to ensure more effective teaching. Most pupils in Year 1 are now making appropriate progress in phonics and the difference between school outcomes and the national average is diminishing. However, some aspects of phonics teaching are yet to be developed to ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make the progress that is expected of them.
- Ireland Wood is a school that is very welcoming to all pupils, no matter what their needs. Pupils who attend the resource unit those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported to ensure that their physical and learning needs are met. The inclusion team carefully tracks the progress of all pupils, sometimes measured against small and precise steps. They support pupils in class and ensure that targets are achievable and appropriate. Leaders can show that pupils who have a statement of special educational needs and other pupils who receive support through funding from the local authority are making secure progress. The progress and well-being of pupils who are looked after by the local authority are effectively tracked by the inclusion team. These pupils are thriving in school due to the targeted support they receive, often provided by skilled teaching assistants.
- Some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have complex physical needs. Consequently, they have frequent medical appointments and so it is difficult for them to attend school as regularly as others. Despite this, attendance is broadly in line with the national average this year and the number of pupils who are persistently absent is declining.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- children, particularly boys, in the early years have more frequent access to resources and teaching that will rapidly develop their early reading and writing skills
- the teaching of phonics continues to improve in the early years and in Year 1 so that pupils are more quickly equipped to read and write independently
- teachers support low-prior-attaining pupils and disadvantaged pupils more effectively to improve their reading and writing, promoting consistently high expectations throughout key stage 1.

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

Lesley Butcher
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this one day inspection I was able to discuss the work of the school with you and your staff. We visited classrooms together to observe teaching and learning. I was able to look at pupils' work in books and to speak with pupils throughout the day. I listened to pupils read. Discussions with the school improvement partner and five members of the governing body helped to provide me with additional information. School documentation, assessment information, policies and information posted on the school's website were also taken into account. I took into account 41 parents' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I looked at the eight responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire, and four pupils' responses to the pupil questionnaire. My main areas of focus during the inspection included checking: what leaders have done to improve the quality of teaching across the school; how well leaders have improved standards in mathematics; the effectiveness of teaching to support all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils; and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.