

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



26 April 2018

Mrs Fearnley
Executive headteacher
Greasbrough Primary School
Munsbrough Rise
Greasbrough
Rotherham
South Yorkshire
S61 4RB

Dear Mrs Fearnley

Short inspection of Greasbrough Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 April 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 June 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

You and your effective senior leaders have maintained a strong trajectory of improvement since the previous inspection. You are determined that pupils, many of whom have considerable difficulties in their lives, should achieve the very best they can. As a result, teachers and teaching assistants have demanding expectations of what pupils can do. Pupils respond well to these expectations and reach very high standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make strong progress. This is because you and your team ensure that they are supported very well in overcoming their difficulties and that small steps of progress are celebrated.

Since the previous inspection, you have ensured that pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes have been maintained. Pupils with significant identified behaviour difficulties are making gains in learning how to moderate their behaviour. As a result, fixed-term exclusions have reduced markedly. Pupils' rates of attendance have improved and the number of pupils who are persistently absent is also reducing, albeit modestly. This is because of the dogged and determined work of

your staff.

You and the head of school have been tenacious in maintaining the quality of teaching despite a period of difficult staffing issues. You both act with speed where there are any dips in pupils' performance. You are equally as swift to support staff to ensure that teaching is of a very high quality. Teachers know their pupils well and expertly tailor the tasks they set to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. For example, teachers have made sure that writing tasks interest boys and, as a result, boys' writing has improved. You are currently tackling pupils' spelling skills, which do not reflect their otherwise strong writing skills. Teachers' high expectations and your wise use of the pupil premium funding have been successful in ensuring that there are few differences in the performance of disadvantaged pupils and their peers. Occasionally, leaders' evaluations of the impact of the pupil premium funding and other aspects of their work fail to capture the extent of improvements.

One of the main strengths of the school is the quality of the curriculum. You, with the strong support of the highly effective governors, have maintained a strong moral purpose. You and your team have ensured that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary because of the dynamic curriculum. Pupils in the early years and key stage 1 have plenty of opportunities to build strong basic skills. From this strong start, they develop a palpable enthusiasm for reading, which continues throughout their time at the school. Pupils enjoy a wide range of engaging and interesting experiences in and out of the classroom. Consequently, they are developing a rich vocabulary and strong knowledge across a breadth of subjects. Pupils are thoughtful, articulate members of the community, who can confidently challenge each other's ideas.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You and your team have been successful in establishing a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. All staff are confident in spotting any concerns and reporting them swiftly. Pupils have faith in staff to take action if they have any worries about themselves or any of their friends. Their ability to talk about tricky subjects is a significant factor in helping them to keep themselves safe. For example, Year 6 pupils explained to me strategies that they could use for removing themselves from controlling relationships. Pupils are equally confident in how they can keep themselves safe online. They have a strong understanding of the damage all forms of bullying can do.

The school has strong relationships with external agencies. Leaders refer concerns swiftly. They make sure that they attend external strategy meetings and case conferences regardless of school holidays. You and your staff take resolute action in following up referrals, especially when there is any delay in external agencies responding.

Inspection findings

- Pupils are highly motivated and engaged because of the memorable experiences they have in lessons and on the many visits and residential. Teachers routinely find exciting ways of bringing learning to life through drama and practical activities. Pupils help to plan their learning, which is also motivating for them. Year 5 pupils produced writing of a high standard following their project on the 'magic of film'.
- As we looked in books we noted that boys, in particular, are stimulated by the wealth of rich experiences. We saw that pupils are using a range of sophisticated language which improves as they move up through the school. We were especially taken with older pupils' creative writing. However, we also noticed that pupils frequently spell common words incorrectly.
- Teachers have been highly successful at instilling a love of reading. Disadvantaged pupils are supported in accessing high-quality reading materials. Leaders have developed a first-rate learning environment in which pupils' considerable talents are displayed and celebrated. Pupils make effective use of displays in classrooms which are designed to support their learning. As a result, they are developing resilience and they are confident in seeking out answers for themselves.
- Children in the early years enter the school with skills below those typical for their age. They quickly catch up because leaders and teachers ensure that they have lots of activities designed to promote their reading and writing skills. When we visited classrooms, we observed children re-telling stories and taking great delight in making up their own stories for their favourite characters. Older pupils told me they loved reading. As pupils read to me, they used their wide vocabulary to explain the meaning of words they had not come across before.
- You and your team, including governors, have used pupil premium funding effectively to improve the progress made by disadvantaged pupils. For example, pupils benefit from small-group sessions, so that teachers and teaching assistants can help them develop specific reading and writing skills. Staff are highly successful in supporting disadvantaged pupils and their families, especially those who are vulnerable. Staff know the individual barriers facing pupils and they are highly skilled in providing bespoke support. However, leaders' evaluations of the impact of this impressive work is not sufficiently detailed to allow you and governors to judge the extent of improvements. These lapses in sharp evaluation are also reflected in subject leaders' plans, which do not focus sufficiently well on how you, other leaders and governors will evaluate the success of actions in improving the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders' evaluations of school improvement and use of the pupil premium is

sharpened

- pupils' spelling improves.

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

Yours sincerely

Joan Hewitt
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the head of school and other senior and middle leaders, three members of the governing body and the chair of the trustees. I also had a telephone conversation with your school development partner. I visited lessons with you and the head of school, looked at pupils' work and spoke informally with pupils and support staff. I heard four pupils read. I looked at the results from Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and considered 11 responses, including four 'free-text' comments. I examined a range of documents, including information about safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation and its improvement plan.