

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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9 February 2017

Mrs Janet Lucas and Mrs Jackie Walsh  
Co-headteachers  
Green Lane Primary Academy  
Green Lane  
Acklam  
Middlesbrough  
TS5 7RU

Dear Mrs Lucas and Mrs Walsh

### **Short inspection of Green Lane Primary Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 31 January 2017 with Alison Ashworth, Ofsted Inspector, 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 September 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

You have maintained the good quality of education in the school since your predecessor school's last inspection. You have sustained the school's strengths and tackled the areas needing further improvement. Your strong child-centred values and high expectations are at the heart of the school's work. Crucially, you have built a strong, cohesive and passionately committed team of leaders and staff who share your values, ambition and determination for every one of your pupils to be 'the best they can be'.

Pupils make strong progress in their learning. The curriculum provides a rich range of experiences and opportunities which capture their interest and spark their enthusiasm. Learning activities are carefully planned so that they build on what pupils already know and can do and, importantly, teachers are quick to spot when pupils get stuck and need extra help. Pupils' personal development is promoted exceptionally well. Pupils are keen, curious and inquisitive learners. They work hard and apply themselves well, sticking at their work even when they find it hard. Pupils conduct themselves sensibly and maturely throughout the day with minimal direction from adults and absolutely no fuss.

Inspectors identified two areas for improvement at the predecessor school's last inspection: first, to further improve the quality of teaching; and second, to improve the progress made by pupils in Years 1 and 2. You have tackled these well. You have worked hard to develop teachers' practice and, over time, the progress pupils make in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2 has improved.

You and your senior leaders have a clear view of the school's strengths and the areas needing further work. This is because you check teachers' work meticulously and keep a close eye on pupils' learning and progress. You know, for example, that some Year 2 and Year 6 pupils did not make fast enough progress in 2016. As a result of swift and decisive action, current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are already making faster progress in reading and mathematics. Importantly, you have a realistic view of the impact of this work. You know that the changes you have made to the way pupils' progress is assessed and tracked need to be fully embedded. You also know that in order to achieve the age-expected standard, some key stage 1 and 2 pupils need to make accelerated progress in both reading and mathematics.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's effectiveness. Many of the parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, or spoke to inspectors, highlighted the school's excellent curriculum and strongly nurturing culture. Parents told inspectors that communication between home and school is excellent and staff listen and respond quickly to any concerns they raise. The actions taken by you, senior leaders and the governing body have placed the school in a strong position to secure further improvement.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. There is a strong culture of keeping pupils safe. Pupils trust and respect you and the other adults who care for them and say that they feel valued and safe. You take great care to identify when children need additional help. You work closely with other professionals and services to ensure that children and families receive the timely help and effective support they need. Records show the effectiveness and positive impact of this work.

### **Inspection findings**

- Key stage 1 and 2 pupils are making faster progress in reading and mathematics as a result of more effective assessment and better teaching. Teachers have a clear picture of how well pupils are doing and use this information to plan interesting and challenging learning activities. Disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language are making accelerated progress in reading and mathematics as a result of effective teaching and well-targeted additional help. Occasionally, however, the work that teachers set does not help some pupils to quickly secure their knowledge and understanding before they move on to new work.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, enjoy reading and say that they love books. They read confidently, fluently and with expression, showing a good understanding of what they are reading and the different techniques writers use to make their work interesting to read. Key stage 1 pupils are developing their phonics skills well because teachers have good subject knowledge, and learning activities promote good learning and fast progress.
- There is a sustained upward trend in the outcomes achieved by children in the early years. In 2014, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year was below the national average. The proportion of children

reaching this level increased in 2015 and again in 2016, when it was above the national average. Children make strong progress from starting points which are, typically, below those seen nationally.

- Senior leaders and governors have an accurate and in-depth understanding of the school's effectiveness. This is because they systematically monitor all areas of the school's work to make sure that the actions they are taking are having the intended impact on pupils. The impact of additional funding on disadvantaged pupils, for example, is routinely checked to ensure that it is making the biggest difference to the outcomes they achieve. Importantly, there is a comprehensive and effective programme of professional development and training for teachers. This is highly valued by those who are newly or recently qualified and, equally, by those who are keen to develop the skills and confidence needed to move into a leadership role.
- The strengths in pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, identified at the predecessor school's last inspection, have been sustained and developed further. Pupils are, rightly, proud of themselves and show great consideration and respect for other people. Notably, pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep healthy and stay safe because these important aspects of their personal development are taught consistently and effectively.
- Senior leaders and staff make a significant and highly valued contribution to professional development and training beyond the school. This includes initial teacher training and support for other schools. This wider aspect of the school's work has been skilfully led and managed so that it benefits both teachers in the school and those in other schools.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's new approach to assessment and tracking the progress pupils make is fully embedded
- teachers use this information to make sure that more pupils are making the accelerated progress needed to achieve or exceed the age-expected standards in reading and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Nick Whittaker  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors met with you and other senior leaders, pupils, a representative from the local authority and Teaching School Alliance and two representatives from the governing body. Inspectors visited lessons with you, looked at the work in pupils' books and talked to them about their learning. Inspectors looked at the survey results from 'Parent View' and examined a range of documents including information about safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and information about pupils' progress.

Inspectors focused their inspection activities on:

- the progress pupils make in reading and mathematics in key stages 1 and 2
- how well leaders use additional funding to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils
- leaders' understanding of the school's strengths and the areas needing further work
- pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare
- the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements.