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Mrs Christina Gibbon
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Gibbon

Short inspection of Wilkinson Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 October 2016, 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 May 2012.

This school continues to be good.

You and your leaders have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. As a result of the high expectations you set, standards have continued to rise, especially in mathematics and writing. The rate of pupils' progress in both subjects from Years 3 to 6 was very high in 2014 and 2015. Work in pupils' books indicates that this trend is set to continue.

You fully promote the school's ethos of ensuring all are valued and all are encouraged to fulfil their true potential.

As a result of good leadership:

- leaders and governors know the school's strengths well and what still needs to be done to secure further improvements
- the quality of teaching and learning has improved despite a number of staffing changes
- outcomes for pupils are rising rapidly, including for disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and low-attaining pupils
- the difference between all pupils nationally and disadvantaged pupils in the school is diminishing rapidly, including for the most able disadvantaged pupils, in reading, writing and mathematics

- the curriculum is inspiring pupils to succeed, particularly in writing and numeracy across a range of subjects
- pupils report that behaviour is good and that they feel very safe in school
- attendance has improved and persistent absence is very low.

In the school's previous inspection your leadership was praised for steering the school through difficult times and, despite the external challenges, pupils' progress had improved and standards were rising. You have maintained the improvement in outcomes. Provisional results for the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics in 2016 were above the national average. Inspectors reported that the school needed to strengthen further the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. You have improved the good quality of teaching and learning in the school.

You recognise that the school is not yet outstanding. The proportion of pupils achieving the highest possible levels in reading in 2015 in Year 6 and the progress pupils made in reading from key stage 1 to key stage 2 was not as strong as it was in mathematics and writing.

Older pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 reported that their classes have not used the library, although younger pupils said it was a regular feature of their learning. Pupils spoken to said they are not so keen on reading, which they found at times too hard because they did not understand key words. Few of them borrowed books from a public library.

The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what information schools should publish on their website about special educational needs and/or disabilities, the pupil premium and the PE and sports premium.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture to promote safeguarding throughout the school. Consequently pupils feel very safe. Leaders keep up to date with information and guidance and ensure that staff are well trained to carry out their responsibilities. Policies and procedures are thorough and staff know what to do in any potential situation involving female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation or radicalisation. Staff and governors are also well trained to ensure safer recruitment of staff. Risk assessments are carried out in a timely way. Governors carry out their duties conscientiously to ensure that the school is meeting all of its requirements.

Inspection findings

- You, your leaders and governors know your school well. You have accurately identified its strengths and where further improvements are needed. You have enhanced the school's capacity to improve through strengthening the school's leadership team. You have demonstrated your impact in the way that outcomes in mathematics have significantly improved after you had identified it as a key issue for improvement.

- Provision in mathematics has been enhanced through the appointment of a mathematics coordinator, specialist mathematics teaching and revisions to the curriculum to ensure numeracy is taught through other subjects as well as in dedicated lessons on mathematics.
- In provisional results for mathematics in Year 6 in 2016, the proportion reaching the expected standard and working at the higher standard was above average.
- Writing has also been a focus for the school. Outcomes have improved as writing has been promoted across the curriculum. In topic work, pupils write for a range of purposes including descriptions, reports, diaries and narrative. Recent events in the news are also used so that pupils have a real reason for their writing.
- Pupils spoken to said they especially enjoy their lessons in art, writing and mathematics. They all have the opportunity to study Spanish. Through topics such as Black History Month and Diwali, pupils are extending their awareness of diversity in the United Kingdom and wider world, for example by writing a biography of President Obama in Year 5.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have made good progress. They are supported well, not only in their learning but also in their mental and emotional well-being through effective individual planning to meet their specific needs. Role models of Olympic and Paralympic champions are used to encourage pupils to aspire and overcome challenges they may face.
- Teaching is improving. When experienced staff have left, they have been replaced through effective appointments and well-organised induction and training for new members of staff including those training to teach.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, have benefited from high-quality teaching throughout the school and additional funded support through the pupil premium. Consequently, in 2015 the proportion of Year 6 pupils making expected and more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was higher compared with other pupils nationally.
- The difference in attainment over time between disadvantaged pupils in the school and other pupils nationally has diminished in mathematics and writing, but not in reading.
- This is the same for most-able disadvantaged pupils as well, based on the proportion attaining the highest possible levels in 2015.
- Outcomes for children in early years have also risen and the proportion of them reaching a good level of development has risen from below average in 2014 to broadly average in 2015.
- There has been a significant increase in the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in the national phonics screening test in Year 1 over the last three years. Standards in 2015 were well above average.
- There has been a five-year rising trend in outcomes for pupils by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards were above average in 2015, including for the most able pupils.

- Pupils confirmed that behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils are respectful and tolerant of others. They engage well with each other and with their learning in lessons. There are very few behaviour incidents and any that occur are dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- Older pupils have the opportunity to take on responsibilities such as being house captains or prefects. The appointment processes enable them to experience application forms, voting and interviews, which is preparing them well for the future.
- The rate of attendance is above average. Back in 2013, it was below average. The appointment of a senior leader with responsibility for family liaison has led to a significant reduction in the rate of persistent absence, which is now very low.
- The large majority of comments made by parents on Parent Freetext were positive about the leadership and management of the school and the safety of their children in school. A very small minority expressed individual concerns around uniform, communication and staff turnover, which were not repeated by other parents.
- All staff who responded to the staff questionnaire said that the school has improved since the last inspection and that they are proud to be a member of staff.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- outcomes in reading are as high as they are in writing and mathematics, especially for those who are most able and including those who are disadvantaged
- pupils read more widely to enhance their understanding – older pupils should have more regular access to the school library as part of their learning in lessons and most-able disadvantaged pupils should have greater support and encouragement to read more widely at home, for example by making more use of the public library
- the website complies with all Department for Education requirements concerning publishing information on special educational needs, the pupil premium and the PE and sports premium.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Sims
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met you and your deputy headteacher, as well as other senior members of staff. I met two members of the governing body, including the chair. I took part in a learning walk with you, visiting parts of nine lessons and looking at pupils' work. I also observed pupils as they moved around the school. I met with two groups of pupils and heard four of them read. There were too few responses to Parent View to take into account, but there were 22 responses to Parent Freetext. There were 17 responses to the staff questionnaire. I considered the school's analysis of recent performance by pupils and evaluated other records, including those concerning keeping pupils safe.

The key lines of enquiry for this inspection were:

- progress in reading through from key stage 1 to key stage 2, with special regard to the most able pupils and those who are disadvantaged
- the reasons for there being a clear strength in mathematics
- the strength of the curriculum and the provision for modern foreign languages
- progress and provision for pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities.