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4 December 2017

Mrs Corinne Thornton
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Dear Mrs Thornton

Short inspection of Gorseybrigg Primary School and Nursery

Following my visit to the school on 21 November 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 May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment, in September 2017, you have set a clear path to improving the school further. You have meticulously evaluated the school's effectiveness, including its strengths and areas you want to develop. You are ambitious for the pupils and have high expectations of what they can achieve. You have a dedicated team of staff who are committed to providing pupils with a high-quality education.

The governing body plays a valuable role in the school's improvement. Governors are experienced and knowledgeable. They check on the effectiveness of leaders' actions to bring about identified improvements. This ensures that the school continues to provide a good-quality education for its pupils. Governors check that the extra funding, provided for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, is used well. This is also true for the school's use of the pupil premium funding.

The school environment is bright and welcoming. Pupils behave well. They are polite, smartly dressed in their uniforms and proud to be a part of the school community. Pupils were keen to tell me what it is like to be a pupil at the school. They talked confidently about their learning. The school's curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of subjects. Pupils explained how much they enjoy all their subjects. They said that this was because teachers set engaging and fun activities.

They were particularly complimentary about the help they get from their teachers. Pupils have a good understanding of fundamental British values. They are considerate, thoughtful and respectful to each other and to adults. You provide pupils with many opportunities to take part in extra learning, for example the discovery club, different sporting events and music lessons.

Teachers provide pupils with stimulating and purposeful learning activities. Pupils complete their tasks conscientiously and with determination to succeed. An effective homework programme strengthens pupils' understanding and reinforces classroom-based learning. This is especially true in mathematics.

Children leave the Reception Year with above-average skills and abilities. High attainment continues through key stage 1 and key stage 2. Pupils make average or above-average progress during their time at the school. You make frequent and thorough checks on pupils' progress. Pupils are then provided with targeted support where it is needed to help them catch up. Some pupils, however, are capable of making even more progress.

At the last inspection, leaders were asked to make sure that teachers provided pupils with suitable work that matched their needs. Teachers now provide pupils with more focused work. Pupils understand the tasks that teachers set and engage quickly in their learning. In addition, leaders have amended the school's marking and feedback policy. Teachers apply this policy consistently. Furthermore, leaders have taken action to improve writing. In particular, pupils' grammar skills are better developed. Teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to write in their different subjects. Leaders have also increased the effectiveness of teachers' assessments of pupils' writing. In 2017, pupils made more progress in writing than they did in reading and mathematics.

You acknowledge that pupils' progress can be even faster in reading, writing and mathematics. You also know that middle-ability pupils do not consistently make as much progress as other pupils. The school's assessment system indicates that pupils' progress has accelerated this term. However, this acceleration has yet to be sustained. You also recognise that the school's 'home reading' programme is not yet effective enough in developing pupils' reading skills further.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a high quality. Leaders and governors place a high importance on safeguarding. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at Gorseybrigg Primary. You provide staff with relevant and timely training so that they know what to do if they have any concerns. Staff are confident when they take action to deal with any safeguarding concerns.

You, and the deputy designated teacher for safeguarding and child protection, have created strong relationships with external agencies. You deal with referrals sensitively and work effectively to engage and support parents.

Pupils told me that they feel safe at school. They explained to me that adults are always there to sort out any problems they may have. Parents agreed, through Ofsted's online survey (Parent View), that their children are safe.

Governors have a good understanding of safeguarding issues. They use their knowledge to check on the school's safeguarding systems and effectiveness in keeping children safe.

Inspection findings

- In key stage 1, pupils attain similar standards in writing to those nationally. Pupils make at least expected progress between leaving the Reception Year and leaving Year 2. Leaders want pupils' progress to be even better. They have taken action to create better links between the early years curriculum and the key stage 1 curriculum. New teaching approaches help pupils to make faster progress in writing in key stage 1.
- Boys have not attained as well as girls during key stage 1 in writing. Leaders have introduced different resources and tactics to stimulate boys more in their learning. Boys currently in key stage 1 are now making more rapid progress in writing and are keeping up with the girls.
- Pupils attain highly in key stage 2 in reading. Leaders have focused on accelerating pupils' progress in reading, which had been average over the last few years. Leaders' actions are proving effective. Pupils currently in key stage 2 are making faster progress in reading than in previous years.
- The pupils I listened to reading did so with confidence and fluency. Most demonstrated a good understanding of the text they were reading. Some were also able to predict what they thought might happen in their stories. Pupils told me that they enjoyed reading and did so frequently at school. They know that they receive good support from adults in school. However, some pupils explained to me that they do not receive similar support when they read at home.
- Pupils achieve high standards in mathematics in key stage 2. However, pupils' progress shows more variation. In 2016, pupils' progress in mathematics was below average. Leaders took quick action to rectify this decline. They introduced new programmes and different ways of learning mathematics. Teachers are now providing pupils with more opportunities to solve problems. They are also checking pupils' understanding more thoroughly by asking them to explain how they arrive at their answers.
- In 2017, pupils' progress in mathematics improved to average. Leaders are not complacent about this improvement. They continue to set even higher expectations for what the pupils can achieve. Leaders' ambitions are being realised. Pupils currently in the school are making faster progress in mathematics than in previous years. This is especially true for the girls. Gender differences in mathematics are reducing.
- The most able pupils attain similar standards in reading, writing and mathematics to those of other most-able pupils nationally. They also achieve well in grammar, punctuation and spelling and in science. Middle-ability pupils, however, do not

attain as highly as other middle-ability pupils nationally. Leaders have identified this and focus sharply on middle-ability pupils during pupil progress meetings. Teachers are providing middle-ability pupils with a higher level of challenge in the activities they set.

- The middle-ability pupils I spoke with during the inspection told me that they are encouraged to think hard. They also said that they feel well supported. Work in pupils' books shows rapid progress, especially in handwriting and mathematics. Middle-ability pupils are now making faster progress. At times their progress is more rapid than that of others, especially in mathematics.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- maintain a strong emphasis on accelerating pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics, especially for the middle-ability pupils
- work with parents to help them to contribute more effectively to their children's learning, especially in reading.

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

Yours sincerely

Vondra Mays
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and the deputy headteacher. I also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.

You and I made a series of visits to lessons. I spoke with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. I listened to pupils from Year 3 and Year 5 reading.

I considered a range of documents. These included the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan and information on pupils' attainment and progress. I looked at how effectively leaders and governors use the pupil premium funding. I also examined the school's website to confirm that it meets the requirements on the publication of specified information. Safeguarding practices were also reviewed. I considered the views of the 64 parents posted on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. These included 32 free-text responses and an email from, and a phone call with, a parent. The 17 staff responses were also reviewed.