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Mrs Fiona Cullivan-Ward  
Headteacher  
Littletown Junior Infant and Nursery School  
Bradford Road  
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Dear Mrs Cullivan-Ward

### **Short inspection of Littletown Junior Infant and Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 5 December 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 provide inspirational leadership and are passionate about providing your pupils with the best possible education so that they have the opportunity to achieve their best. Along with your senior leadership team, you have created a strong and caring ethos, where diversity is celebrated. Your vision that 'children experience a continuous line of quality and nurture from the moment that they enter Littletown until the moment that they leave' is shared by governors and staff, and underpins all aspects of your work.

Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School is a calm, welcoming and nurturing environment where staff help pupils to develop well, academically and personally. Without doubt, pupils enjoy being at the school, they enjoy learning and they thrive. They are cheerful, ambitious and display very positive attitudes towards their learning, school and each other. The overwhelming majority of parents think that the school provides a very good standard of education and are justifiably proud of the school. As one parent told me, 'My child is flying in all aspects of her work. She loves coming to school.' Another parent said, 'Teachers go above and beyond and always do their best for the children.'

Teachers share your high aspirations for pupils' achievement. They are enthused about teaching and are keen to extend pupils' learning even further. Teachers work constructively with each other to improve their practice even further. All members

of staff who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire say that they are proud to work in the school.

During your last inspection, the inspection team recognised the many strengths of your school, including high-quality teaching, especially in the early years; the behaviour of pupils; progress and standards in mathematics; the tracking of pupils' progress across school and the quality of your leadership. These continue to be key strengths of the school. You and your team have successfully addressed the key issues identified at the time of the previous inspection. The inspection team asked you to improve pupils' progress in writing, especially in key stage 1. You have secured a steady improvement in standards in writing at the end of key stage 1. Pupils' outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check are now above the national average and have improved year on year for the last three years.

At the end of key stage 2, pupils are making better progress than other pupils nationally in mathematics leading to them attaining standards that are above average. In reading and writing, pupils' progress is similar to that of others nationally and standards are in line with national averages. You and your team have rightly identified that the progress made by the most able pupils, especially in reading, has not been as strong as it could be and are now working to address this.

Governors bring a range of skills and experiences to their role and share the same passion and determination to excel. They have a positive impact through the support, challenge and level of questioning they afford school leaders. Together, governors and leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and direction and have evaluated the effectiveness of the school accurately.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is an established culture of safeguarding at the school and there is a clear ethos that everybody is responsible for safeguarding. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders have ensured that all members of staff and governors are regularly trained in different aspects of safeguarding. Leaders and governors ensure that records are robust and relevant checks on visitors and staff are carried out before they enter or join the school.

You know the families of pupils who attend the school very well and are vigilant about their welfare, especially any whose circumstances make them vulnerable. You work closely with local agencies to ensure that pupils receive the care and support they need.

Pupils say they feel extremely safe in school because staff are 'very kind and always there to help them'. Pupils also told me that they celebrate each other's similarities and differences and 'are all unique and equal'. They say that bullying does not happen at Littletown and are confident that, if it did, an adult would stop it immediately.

## Inspection findings

- The whole-school focus you have on reading is already paying dividends. Your 'Patron of Reading' regularly visits the school to inspire pupils, staff and parents alike. Special theme days such as 'Roald Dahl Day' and 'Grab a Grown-Up Day' are fostering a love of reading across the school and developing pupils' interest and engagement. Pupils thoroughly enjoy reading and were keen to share their varied reading experiences telling me about their favourite authors such as Shakespeare and David Walliams. As one pupil enthusiastically told me, 'We can travel to another dimension through books.'
- As part of the inspection, I explored whether the most able pupils are making good enough progress in reading. You have refined your approach to the teaching of reading and have made it more skills-based to improve pupils' comprehension. You are also providing more opportunities for pupils to discuss texts and to understand new vocabulary. We discussed, however, that most-able pupils could be challenged further to develop skills such as predicting, explaining and summarising.
- Teachers develop pupils' writing skills well. Drama is used to spark pupils' imagination before they begin writing. Teachers give pupils clear success criteria and pupils use these to check, edit and improve their work. Pupils take a pride in their writing and enjoy writing at length in many subject areas for a range of purposes and audiences. The development of vocabulary across all subjects is strong. In science, for example, every pupil wears a lab coat and writes a new word on it once they are secure with its meaning.
- Many children join the Nursery with knowledge and skills that are below those typical for their age. By the end of Reception, most children achieve a good level of development as a result of very strong teaching and well-planned activities which excite children. Activities are designed to encourage children to think carefully, and adults skilfully develop children's communication, language, and fine and gross motor skills. Children are well prepared for Year 1. Across key stage 1, pupils make good progress from their starting points. Standards at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics continue to remain in line with national averages.
- My final focus was to explore how well pupils develop a depth of knowledge and understanding across all subjects so that they achieve well and make good progress. The curriculum is planned well across the school to ensure that pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum, while at the same time developing their writing and numeracy skills. The 'Littletown curriculum' takes a series of themes that capture pupils' interest and imagination. Themes are well planned and include a range of memorable experiences which pupils enjoy. Pupils' work is of high quality as a result of teachers' high expectations and shows that, over time, pupils build on their skills in all subjects and therefore achieve well.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's new approach to developing pupils' reading skills is refined further and offers increased challenge to improve the progress and attainment of all pupils, especially the most able.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Randall  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I met with you, your two deputy headteachers, the English and mathematics leaders, five parents, six members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I talked with a small group of pupils informally during lunchtime as well as in the classrooms we visited. Along with you, I visited classes and looked at work in current books from pupils in different year groups.

I examined a range of documentation with you, including documents relating to attendance and safeguarding and the school's own analysis of pupils' progress. I took account of the school improvement plan and the school's own evaluation of how well it is doing. I reviewed the school's website. As part of the inspection, I considered the 79 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 24 responses from staff to Ofsted's online questionnaire.