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Mrs Kathryn Herron
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Herron

Short inspection of Canning Street Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 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 November 2014.

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 as headteacher in September 2017, you have used your knowledge of the school from your previous leadership roles to continue the drive for improvement. Along with other leaders and governors, you have accurately identified the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. There is a shared ambition across the leadership team and governors to improve pupils' outcomes and to provide high-quality personal development and welfare for pupils. The staff plan lessons which are well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils told me they find lessons interesting and fun. As a result, pupils' progress and attainment are improving and pupils thrive in your caring and nurturing school.

Leaders, staff and governors have worked successfully to address the areas in need of improvement identified at the previous inspection. Since that time, there have been several changes to the school's staffing and leadership. Governors have taken a determined and astute approach to leadership appointments. Consequently, the leadership structure matches the school's needs effectively. Along with governors, you have ensured that the changes to teaching staff have been well managed. Appropriate support and development for staff who are new to teaching or leadership roles are helping to develop their skills further. This is helping to strengthen the quality of teaching, and leadership capacity and expertise.

At the last inspection, the first area to tackle was improving the teaching of phonics. You and the staff have reviewed the approaches to the organisation of groups for phonics lessons and approaches to teaching phonics. This has improved the use of

time and raised expectations for what pupils can achieve. You still maintain smaller support groups for pupils who need to catch up quickly or for pupils who are new to English. The teaching of phonics in the Reception Year is helping children to make a positive start in learning early phonics skills. Consequently, there have been improvements in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. However, that proportion remains below the national average. During our visits to phonics lessons, we noted that there are some further refinements required to ensure that there is a consistency in approach to phonics teaching. In addition, on occasion, pupils' home reading books do not match pupils' phonetic development sufficiently.

The second area for improvement was to ensure that children in the Nursery and Reception classes had enough opportunity to apply their phonics knowledge. The development of adult-led phonics teaching, which staff follow up with opportunities for reading and writing, is having a positive effect. Planning by staff to enable children to practise their phonics skills when they choose activities helps to reinforce their learning. Consequently, children make at least good progress from their starting points in reading and writing. In 2017, the proportions of Reception children achieving the expected standard in reading and writing compared very well to national averages.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture at your school. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders carry out appropriate checks for all staff, governors and volunteers. Staff and governors receive regular and appropriate training so that they know how to keep pupils safe, including training about how to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism. Consequently, staff and governors understand the safeguarding procedures and their own responsibilities. You and your staff work effectively with parents and carers and other agencies. Your family support team works hard to support pupils and families who may be vulnerable, to ensure that these pupils meet success at your school.

Your pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. Pupils know the different forms that bullying can take and that staff will help them if they ever have concerns. Pupils believe that behaviour is very good and that incidents of bullying are rare. Your detailed records confirm this and demonstrate that staff follow up the limited number of bullying incidents promptly. Pupils told me that one of the best things about the school was that everyone was friendly. During the inspection, pupils' behaviour was exemplary in lessons and at playtime.

Inspection findings

- Your approaches to recording pupils' progress and attainment are detailed and purposeful. You and the leaders use these effectively to identify pupils' starting points and the progress they make over time. This thorough analysis is responsive to the above-average levels of pupils' mobility and the fact that

international new arrivals often do not have any prior assessment information. When we reviewed this evidence, it was clear that overall pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stages 1 and 2.

- You check the accuracy of the assessment judgements by moderating these with other schools. You have recently introduced more formalised regular testing to support teachers' overall assessments of pupils' attainment. This is sharpening the accuracy of your assessment judgements.
- You, leaders and staff are working to improve pupils' progress in reading. Leaders have implemented a range of initiatives, both to improve pupils' love of literature and to improve pupils' vocabulary and comprehension skills. Our visits to English lessons demonstrated how staff used quality texts to inspire pupils' writing and to improve pupils' reading abilities. Pupils like this approach and they enthusiastically recounted the content of the books they were reading. Pupils' work in books shows that their reading and writing skills are developing well. This work is at a relatively early stage of implementation, and you and the English subject leader recognise that there is more to be done to embed this work.
- Building upon your work to improve pupils' reading, you are reviewing the curriculum for the next academic year. The intention of this review is to widen pupils' experience and enhance the use of quality texts as a central element in the curriculum. Your aim to widen pupils' horizons and develop their knowledge, vocabulary and comprehension skills links well to the school's priorities.
- Much has been done to raise the profile of reading for enjoyment. Pupils really enjoy the 'Reader of the week' award. Teachers model reading well for pupils, both in lessons and by sharing their enjoyment of reading. Partnerships with parents are getting them more involved with supporting pupils' reading outside school. For example, when we visited a 'Stay and read' session in the Reception classes, parents told me how supportive the school was in helping with reading. During this session, there was a real buzz in the classrooms as parents shared books with children or the staff animatedly read stories to groups of children, capturing children's attention.
- There have been recent changes to the leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, and for English and mathematics. These new leaders have quickly identified the key priorities for development in their areas of responsibility. They are taking action to drive improvement, checking alongside other leaders and external experts for improvement. You recognise that these leaders are still relatively inexperienced in their roles and you need to maintain their development and support to help them increase their leadership skills further.
- The early years leader has a good understanding of the priorities for improvement and makes effective changes in the early years provision. These are increasing the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development. Consequently, more children are well prepared to start Year 1. Detailed records of children's progress, including their progress in phonics development, assist staff in matching teaching to children's needs. The provision for two-year-olds is used to good effect and helps children make a positive start from joining the school and across the early years.

- You and the staff use a wide range of strategies to improve pupils' attendance. The pupils with whom I spoke know the reasons why good attendance and punctuality are important. They value the education you provide and enjoy being in school. Many told me the school is a friendly place, where they are well cared for and staff make learning fun. The family support team provides pupils, who may be vulnerable to poor attendance and their families with well-structured and thoughtful guidance. Nevertheless, attendance remains too low and some pupils are absent too often. Consequently, improving attendance remains an area on which leaders need to keep a watchful eye.
- Governors have a good understanding of the community the school serves and the school's priorities. They have managed the recent changes in leadership effectively. Governors have taken a determined approach to appointing leaders who understand the challenges the school needs to tackle. Their visits to the school, for example to see the teaching of reading, along with information from you, keep them well informed about school developments. This helps governors to check that their strategic decisions, for instance in funding resources for reading, are having the intended effect.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the approaches to improving pupils' reading and phonics, including the current curriculum review, are embedded, so that pupils' progress continues to improve and their attainment reaches the national averages in these subjects
- middle leaders new to their roles continue to receive support and training so that they develop further the skills needed to drive improvements and to check the effectiveness of their actions in their areas of responsibility
- they continue their focused efforts to improve attendance overall and to reduce persistent absence.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Reeves
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this one-day inspection, I discussed the work of the school with you and leaders for the early years, English and mathematics. I observed and spoke with pupils during playtime and at other times during the day. I met with a representative from the local authority. My discussions with four governors, including the chair of the governing body, provided me with additional information.

I took into account school documentation, assessment information, and policies and information posted on the school website. I considered the two responses to the Ofsted questionnaire Parent View and discussed the support provided by the school with some parents of Reception Year children. Along with you, I visited nine classes to observe teaching and learning. I listened to pupils read, both within lessons and individually. I looked at pupils' reading and writing work to help evaluate the quality of teaching and learning over time. I considered information relating to safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and bullying.