

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



7 March 2019

Mrs Jacqueline McGibney
Headteacher
Whitmore Park Primary School
Halford Lane
Coventry
West Midlands
CV6 2HG

Dear Mrs McGibney

Short inspection of Whitmore Park Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 February 2019 with Barry Yardsley, 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 the school was judged to be good in February 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since the last inspection 15 new teachers have joined the school. The executive headteacher resigned her post in July 2018. An additional assistant headteacher has been appointed to the leadership team. A new school business manager joined the school at the start of this academic year. The school's enhanced resource provision, which caters for pupils with speech and language needs, no longer admits pupils and will close when its current pupils leave the school.

You, school leaders and governors are committed and ambitious to achieve the best outcomes for pupils. You are developing your middle leaders through training and support so that they contribute to school improvement through the analysis of data and the monitoring and evaluation of their subject areas. As a result of accurate self-evaluation, you have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to improve. However, while you have established the actions you will take, the ways of measuring the impact of some of these actions are not explicitly focused on the difference they will make to pupils.

The federated governing body has undergone several changes since the previous inspection. Governors continually reflect on their practice to check that they adopt a rigorous approach. They are currently seeking additional governors and some governors are new to post. Governors have audited their skill set to ensure that new governors bring strength and expertise to the governing body. Governors support

the school well. They visit the school regularly and meet with staff to discuss school priorities. They demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the school. Governors are a visible presence. They make themselves available to parents and carers on a regular basis so that they may gather parents' views. For example, following recent feedback from parents, governors are considering ways in which the school might improve communication further.

Most parents and carers who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and those who spoke to inspectors during the inspection, shared positive views about the school. Several parents commented that their children were well supported both academically and emotionally so that they make good progress.

Most pupils behave well. In lessons there is a positive working atmosphere. There are strong relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils listen carefully to adults and respond well. Pupils move around school sensibly and are well supported by staff. Pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as football, tennis, athletics, gymnastics and dance. During the inspection pupils were observed taking part in a running club before school.

You have continued to address the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection. You introduced a new spelling policy, raised expectations and regularly review the teaching of spelling. As a result, spelling has improved so that pupils achieved outcomes above the national average in spelling at the end of key stage 2 in 2018. You have ensured that planning is in place for all subjects across the curriculum and are currently reviewing the assessment of foundation subjects. You analyse pupils' outcomes to check if there are significant differences between boys' and girls' achievements but have found that there are no meaningful trends.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that staff and governors are well trained and informed so that there is a vigilant and thorough culture of keeping children safe. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of safeguarding and their responsibilities. The inclusion team and the family liaison worker work together effectively. Leaders know families and pupils well and ensure that they receive appropriate support from the school and external agencies when necessary. You are mindful of local issues and adapt the curriculum so that these can be addressed. Pupils know who to talk to if they have a concern or a worry. You are refining your administrative procedures so that these can be improved further. As a result, the leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

Inspection findings

- Over time, pupils' progress in reading has been in line with the national average. In 2018, progress declined and attainment remained below the national average. As a result, leaders introduced a new approach to the teaching of reading to make sure that specific skills in reading are taught explicitly. Pupils are

developing skills in retrieval, inference and in widening their vocabulary. Pupils' ability to discuss and share their understanding of text and meanings of words has improved. Pupils find evidence from the text to support their ideas about a character, for example. Most pupils make good progress in reading. Through training, staff have developed effective questioning that encourages pupils to think and explain the meanings of words and retrieve relevant information. In some classes, the new approach to reading is not as well embedded or used as skilfully as in others. Sometimes, pupils do not have a good enough understanding of the vocabulary to be able to answer questions effectively.

- The learning environment supports reading effectively. Pupils can choose books independently and know which books are appropriate for them to read. Pupils' reading books are matched to their ability and interests or their favourite authors. Pupils read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction and read regularly at home. Pupils enjoy reading and can talk about the books they have read and their favourite authors. Pupils discuss and review books through reading clubs and homework. Pupils recommend books they have enjoyed and the school buys them for others to read. However, there are few planned opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to participate in discussions and write about the books they have read in any depth or detail.
- In 2018, at the end of key stage 2, although pupils' progress declined to below the national average in mathematics, their attainment improved closer to the national average. The school's approach to the teaching of mathematics ensures that pupils develop and apply skills over time. Pupils engage in activities through the effective use of resources. Staff demonstrate good subject knowledge and address pupils' misconceptions promptly. Swift interventions ensure that pupils secure their understanding quickly and do not fall behind. Pupils reason mathematically with each other to explain and demonstrate different ways of calculating. Work in pupils' books shows that most-able pupils are challenged appropriately to deepen their learning. On occasion, some pupils are moved on too quickly before they have secured their understanding fully.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils has been below the national average in reading and mathematics for the past two years. The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving but this is not yet consistent across all year groups in all subjects. Disadvantaged pupils are targeted and supported effectively to catch up with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. For example, the additional reading group has enabled staff to target gaps in pupils learning and as a result gaps are closing. Staff training, effective teaching, interventions and additional resources in mathematics have enabled current disadvantaged pupils to improve their attainment and progress. In some year groups, disadvantaged pupils perform better than other pupils in the school.
- Historically, pupils' attendance has been below the national average. It has improved because leaders take a rigorous approach to tackling pupils' absence. As a result, pupils' attendance is now broadly in line with the national average. Leaders help pupils to improve their attendance by ensuring that 'attendance buddies' greet pupils daily or they provide transport for pupils who might need additional support in getting to school. Persistent absence has also improved closer to the national average, including for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with

special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- In 2018, leaders reviewed the school's behaviour policy in consultation with pupils, staff and governors and implemented a new reward system. Lunchtime staff were trained in effective behaviour management and additional resources were bought for lunchtime play. Pupils play well together in a range of activities such as table tennis, using the trim trail and reading books on blankets. Pupils say, 'We have lots of equipment.' A well-structured lunchtime makes it a positive experience for pupils, resulting in a significant reduction in the number of recorded behaviour incidents.
- Leaders use their enhanced provision to support some pupils with additional needs by providing a higher staff ratio and a bespoke curriculum. Leaders also access support from the local authority's inclusion team and use local authority provision to provide additional and effective support for some pupils who may be at risk of exclusion.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they embed the school's new approach to reading further to ensure greater consistency across all classes
- teachers plan opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to participate in discussions and write in greater depth about their enjoyment of books and reading
- teachers make sure that pupils understand mathematical concepts fully before moving them on in their learning
- the school's plans for improvement demonstrate more explicitly what difference they will make to pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Cameron
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, the family liaison worker, the chair and other members of the governing body. I spoke to a representative of the local authority by telephone. Inspectors spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day and considered the 32 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the 18 written comments. We also considered the 20

responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and the 46 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation, including the single central record, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, the minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding information and records of behaviour. Inspectors visited classrooms with you and the deputy headteacher and looked at pupils' work in reading, writing and mathematics. We observed pupils' behaviour throughout the day. Inspectors spoke to pupils informally at lunchtime and in lessons. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about reading.