

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



21 January 2019

Mr Julian Gorton  
Headteacher  
Shakespeare Primary School  
Lincoln Road  
Leeds  
West Yorkshire  
LS9 7NP

Dear Mr Gorton

### **Short inspection of Shakespeare Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 9 January 2019 with Ofsted Inspector, Alison Ashworth, 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 January 2015.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have led the school with consummate skill and a clear sense of moral purpose through a very significant increase in pupil numbers. Within the last 12 months, the school has also moved to a new site. During this time, the school population has grown to 679 pupils, with almost 200 joining over the past year. These pupils were admitted into every year group at the school. The vast majority of these new pupils were new to English. Throughout, you have not lost sight of the absolute necessity to put your pupils at the heart of all you do. You have been very ably supported by the governing body. Also, because of your approach and actions, staff remain in good heart and are well placed to take the school to the next stage of its development. Staff morale is high. The local authority has supported you and the school effectively during this challenging time.

You know your community well and respond to its needs. Your openness and accessibility were commented on, very positively, by many of the parents we spoke with. The strong relationships which you and your staff have with parents and carers are a real strength of the school. For example, they have had a positive effect on improving and sustaining above-average overall attendance. In addition, because of the actions of the school, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is lower than the national average. This is because you have put in place energetic, thoughtful and tenacious staff, supported by thorough and efficient checking systems, to address and reduce persistent absence. You understand very clearly the challenges facing many of your families and parents. However, you are

also clear and unwavering in ensuring that they understand that their children must attend school regularly if they are to learn and be safe.

The previous inspection in January 2015 identified the need to focus and improve the effectiveness of middle leaders. You have addressed this very successfully. Middle leaders are ambitious, well trained and effective. They are very well supported by you and other senior leaders. They also work closely with governors. As a result, you are able, for example, to monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' knowledge and skills across the school in an effective and detailed way. Middle leaders are now identifying strengths and areas for improvement in their subject and phase areas and, working with you and your senior team, providing prompt, effective support and training to improve the service the school offers. You are also using middle leaders effectively to develop a wider curriculum.

You have put in place a stimulating and interesting curriculum that is, increasingly, focusing on subjects beyond English, mathematics and science. You and the governors are very clear that a broad curriculum, rooted in subject-specific knowledge and skill, is essential to pupils' success, now and into their futures, as informed, contributing citizens. You are also clear that there is more to be done to further develop this wider academic curriculum by providing more opportunities for pupils to write in a range of ways that reflect the nature of the subject being studied. You and governors are very clear that all pupils should have a rich extra-curricular experience that is rooted in the arts, sports and regular trips. These help pupils broaden their horizons and develop a helpful range of skills. You make sure that pupils have a growing sense of their responsibilities through opportunities to be of service to others, both at school and in the wider local, national and international community. Pupils spoke with real pride and pleasure about their roles as, for example, reading and playground buddies. They are also keenly aware of the multi-faceted nature of modern British society and the way the school positively reflects this. The curriculum also takes full account of, and provides opportunities for, pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, as well as the importance of developing healthy approaches to eating and care of their bodies. Pupils eat happily together at lunchtime in an attractive communal dining area. They told me that they enjoy this and the opportunities it gives them to meet and talk.

Reading suffuses the life of the school. Pupils spoke with us enthusiastically about the high profile that reading has at the school. You have worked very effectively to develop reading across the school. Working with the whole staff, you have embedded a shared approach and attitude to reading that recognises the vital role it plays in pupils' learning success and pleasure. This approach is rooted in ensuring that pupils are not only skilled readers but also that, through access to a wide range of books and texts of quality, they develop a love of reading. We saw examples of this. I heard Year 4 pupils using their higher-order reading skills in mathematics to identify exactly what was being asked for in knotty word-based problems. We also heard pupils talking animatedly and with real enthusiasm about the wide range of texts and books that were available for them to read and enjoy. They were well versed, for example, in understanding the power of inference in the hands of a

skilled writer. Similarly, in early years classes, we saw children and expert adults deploying their phonic skills. The children were engaged by their learning and fully involved, using both sound and actions to develop their vocabulary and read and write new words.

Governance is a significant strength of the school. The governing body is very well and effectively led. Governors are well informed, skilled and constantly seeking to improve both their own and the whole staff's expertise and insights. They, like you, see the school as a vital aspect of the community and a servant to it. Governors are realistic about what needs to be done and are highly motivated. They have set in place careful and regular checks of the school's performance that challenge and support the school and its leaders. You and your team provide governors with regular detail about how the school is progressing. However, governors do not rely on this alone to ensure that they have insights into the impact of the school's work. Governors regularly visit the school and speak with pupils, staff and parents. Additionally, there are strong links between nominated governors and middle leaders of subjects and phases at the school. These links give governors detailed, subject- and key stage-specific insights. As a result, governors, effectively supported by the local authority, are knowledgeable and able to take well-informed action.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are regularly updated and are of high quality. Governors monitor the accuracy and quality of these records through regular checks and visits.

You have established a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. You, your staff and the governing body take your safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. You ensure that regular and effective training is provided for all staff and governors. As a result, they are all up to date in their knowledge and understanding of all aspects of safeguarding. You have very strong links with outside agencies. The records of your dealings with these agencies are very detailed and show that you act appropriately. You engage with the local authority promptly and follow up safeguarding issues tenaciously.

### **Inspection findings**

- A significant number of children, but by no means all, enter early years with skills and experiences below those normally expected for their age. A high proportion of children are new to English. Because of the very thorough work of the leader and her team, children quickly settle into school and enjoy a safe and exciting, language-rich, environment that is full of interesting experiences. They make good progress through the Nursery and the Reception classes. This is because staff monitor their progress carefully. They identify aspects of children's learning and well-being that need extra attention and, through careful planning, provide experiences to suit and engage them.

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are safe and well behaved. They learn how to get on together because of the carefully established and maintained classroom routines. Across the last three years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development, including those who are disadvantaged, has been improving steadily towards the national average. Parents are encouraged to play a very active role in their children's learning. They appreciate and welcome this. There are regular, very well-attended, sessions for parents that cover a wide range of ways in which parents can support their child's learning and well-being. Parents welcome these. Parents are very complimentary about the range of effective ways in which staff in early years keep them informed about their children's progress and happiness.
- Reading is well taught. We saw examples of both teachers and teaching assistants using their knowledge and skills in the teaching of phonics to engage and enthuse children. They are not only taught the 'mechanics' of reading but also, through their actions and attitudes, a love of reading and of books. For example, in the Nursery classes there are cosy book corners where children can listen to stories and explore books in comfort. Skilled adults engage pupils not only in talking and listening but also in exploring the physical nature of books and the effect of pictures and illustrations. Making sure that reading continues to be a high priority across the school and further developing staff's skills is an important next step.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and they are rarely absent. They want to learn and they want to do well. Overall attendance is above the national average. The small proportion of families whose children are persistently absent are supported in a range of thoughtful, yet forthright, ways. If there is an issue with attendance, school staff visit homes promptly and agree strategies with parents and carers to reduce absence. These strategies are then monitored very carefully. As a result, persistent absence is below the national average.
- Pupils get on very well together. Relationships among pupils and between adults and pupils are relaxed yet purposeful. The atmosphere in lessons and around the school is marked by politeness, kindness and mutual understanding. Pupils welcome and embrace wholeheartedly the Golden Rules that underpin the school's ethos. The school gives pupils many opportunities to develop their skills as leaders as, for example, reading ambassadors and playground buddies. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that the school provides for them.
- Pupils are safe. They say that they feel safe. They told us that there are regular training sessions at school that help them keep themselves safe, including when online and out and about in the community. They said that they knew about the range of forms that bullying can take and what to do if it happened to them or to a friend. They said that if they did feel anxious or concerned about anything, including bullying, they would tell a member of staff and that they were very confident that adults at the school would deal with it promptly and well.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective and very well led. Teachers and teaching assistants provide purposeful support for pupils with SEND. This is because the SEND leader works

closely with staff to ensure that these pupils' needs are met in a flexible, yet focused, manner. The SEND leader regularly checks the progress of pupils to ensure that no pupil is left behind.

- Parents are very satisfied with the education and care the school offers their children. They spoke with real energy about the care that the school takes to keep them informed of their child's well-being and progress. They also spoke positively about staff and their availability. As one parent wrote in a text to me, 'This school is making my daughter believe in herself, they go above and beyond to make sure she reaches her potential.' Parent attendance at school information and other educational sessions is very high.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the development of reading continues to be a high priority across the school with a particular emphasis on further developing staff's skills so that pupils deepen their enjoyment and love of reading and further develop their understanding of the links between their reading and their writing
- they continue to develop and embed the wide-ranging and interesting knowledge and skills-based curriculum beyond English, mathematics and science, so that pupils are even better prepared for their next steps as learners and as thoughtful, considerate and informed citizens.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Evans

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

We visited all classes to observe learning and, where appropriate, talk with pupils about their work and experience of school. We were accompanied by you or a member of the senior leadership team in most of these visits. We scrutinised a range of pupils' books. We spoke with you and other leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, the leader of early years and a group of phase and subject leaders. I also spoke with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. I spoke on the telephone with an officer of Leeds local authority schools service who has been supporting the school.

We observed and spoke informally with pupils at the start of the day and during break and lunchtime. Ofsted Inspector Alison Ashworth spoke with parents at the start and end of the day. We met with groups of eight Year 6 and Year 2 pupils,

formally, to discuss their views of the school. We also listened to and discussed reading with groups of Year 3 pupils of a range of abilities. I spoke with a group of nine pupils of a range of ages who are new to the school and to English. I took account of the views of eight staff who responded to an anonymous survey undertaken during the inspection. I considered the 30 text messages from parents and the views of the 13 parents who responded to Ofsted's online facility, Parent View. I read a range of documents about the school's progress, safeguarding systems, monitoring, staff training, attendance and governors' work.