

24 October 2017

Miss Nadine Harvey
Headteacher
Oxford Grove Primary School
Shepherd Cross Street
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Dear Miss Harvey

Short inspection of Oxford Grove Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 September 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 September 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. From the moment you walk through the door there is a friendly and warm welcome. Governors highlighted the fact that the change in context and dynamics of the school since the previous inspection has been 'seismic', with nearly a quarter of all pupils being new international arrivals. Governors and parents recognise that you and your deputy are the 'driving force', galvanising this diverse school community. You are 'ambitious' for all pupils and you set high expectations. You and your team are passionate and highly motivated to make a difference to pupils' outcomes and to their life chances. You have created a bright and stimulating environment and it is clear that you are committed to improvement and that staff morale is high. Relationships between staff, and between staff and pupils, are positive, warm and friendly.

Governors know where there are strengths and where there is still further work to do. They hold you and your leadership team to account, challenging you and supporting you appropriately. Pupils told me they receive a 'rich education' and an interesting curriculum. This was exemplified in a music lesson where pupils in Year 6 sang beautifully in a round and in canon, while non-singers played percussion instruments to accompany the singing. Pupils like their teachers and told me they have 'challenging and stimulating lessons'. Pupils feel respected and welcomed and commented that 'it's amazing to be in this school'.

The school was asked, in September 2012, to improve the quality of teaching for

the younger children, to raise the standards and quality of teaching in mathematics and to improve the quality of teaching in information and communication technology (ICT).

During my visit it was very clear that leaders and managers have demonstrated improvements in relation to the areas of concern from the previous inspection. Since the previous inspection, the school has gained numerous nationally recognised awards, including the ICT Mark. The school has invested in new resources, appointed a subject leader and made use of an external consultant to model good practice and act as a peer coach and mentor. As a result, ICT provision has improved significantly. There has been an upward trend in the outcomes for pupils in the early years and mathematics over time. This is as a result of nursery and reception classes working more closely together, and external support from a mathematics specialist. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving and pupils are making better progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You place the highest priority on the safeguarding of pupils. Policy, practice, processes and procedures are rigorous and keeping pupils safe is at the heart of your school. Staff receive high-quality safeguarding training to keep them informed of all types of risk to pupils. This enables them to quickly spot concerns and to take rapid action with confidence.

The pupils are a delight. They told me they are 'all part of a multi-cultural, Oxford Grove family'. They say that behaviour is 'impeccable' and that they feel safe and happy to come to school. They are adamant that bullying is rare and are confident that any incidents are satisfactorily dealt with. They have great pride in their school, can share any concerns they may have with a 'trusted adult' and learn about e-safety and British values. They say that this helps them 'to learn to be tolerant'.

Inspection findings

- In this inspection, I focused my time on five different aspects, including safeguarding and how well leaders and managers addressed the areas for improvement from the last inspection.
- Pupils at Oxford Grove are making good progress relative to their starting points. Your analysis and evaluation of pupils' performance and progress in 2016/17 are accurate. You have identified the need to improve provision so that more pupils achieve a higher standard in writing and in mathematics by focusing on the application of their key skills across the curriculum and throughout the school. Your analysis is very clear in identifying that achievement in the early years is also an area for further improvement. Your analysis is in line with the focused lines of enquiry during the inspection.
- First, I considered what leaders and managers are doing to accelerate progress for children in the early years so that more attain a good level of development. Historically, children's achievement has been well below the national average.

You and your leaders have responded well to this challenge and have improved outcomes for children significantly since the previous inspection. Provisional data for 2017 indicates that 57% of children achieved a good level of development, which, although below the national average, represents good progress relative to the children's starting points. This also represents a continuous upward trend of improvement in outcomes for the early years.

- Teaching of reading and writing in early years is effective. For example, Nursery and Reception children responded well to staff's modelling of letter sounds, which enabled children to sound out letters correctly. This helped them to read and spell simple three-letter words accurately. Girls and boys are increasingly secure in their pencil grip, with some writing simple three-letter words accurately with excellent letter formation.
- Children show a good level of engagement in their learning, listening to stories or developing their physical skills in your outdoor environment. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support children's learning. For example, they skilfully model writing skills or support children's self-chosen activities. One of your priorities is to develop your outdoor provision further. This is in order to engage the boys even more and to try to diminish the difference in achievement between boys and girls. You have already enlisted the help of specialist speech and language therapists and external support to enhance the learning of the growing number of new international arrivals that the school admits. This is clearly beginning to have a positive impact on children's outcomes.
- Another line of enquiry was to investigate how effectively the school ensures that the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, achieve the higher standards. Where pupils are being challenged in their writing and their mathematics, teachers have high expectations of pupils. This is beginning to have an impact. However, strategies for challenging the most able pupils are not yet being applied consistently throughout the school.
- Leaders spend the pupil premium funding well to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, using targeted support. Observations of learning and evidence in pupils' books clearly demonstrate that this group are developing key skills in all subjects. They are being challenged appropriately and consequently produce work which is equal to or better than that of their peers. As a result, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are improving.
- Finally, I investigated how the school was tackling attainment in key stage 1 and in particular pupils' performance in mathematics. Provisional information for 2017 demonstrates an improving picture in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1. In all areas, you have managed to increase the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard and higher standard compared to that of 2016. Mathematics outcomes are improving in line with reading and writing. This is as a result of improvements in training opportunities and consequently improvements in the quality of teaching.
- The school's current assessment information shows that an increasing number of pupils in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6 are exceeding the school's own aspirational targets for achieving the expected and higher standard. You identify in your self-

evaluation that there is further work still to do to ensure that outcomes for pupils improve further. You intend to do this by ensuring that teaching, learning and assessment continue to improve.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- standards in writing across the curriculum improve so that they are as high as they are in English
- pupils throughout the school are given greater challenge in their mathematics lessons so that the proportion of pupils achieving a higher standard in mathematics improves.

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

Yours sincerely

John Daley
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection I met with you, your deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding. I also met with six governors, including the chair of governors, and a local authority representative. I held a telephone conversation with your local authority school improvement partner. We talked about the improvements made since the last inspection. I spoke with a number of parents at the school entrance and took account of eight freetext comments as well as 33 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire for parents. I carried out a series of short visits to lessons with you and your deputy headteacher. Together, we visited the nursery, early years, literacy, mathematics and a music lesson. During these visits I had the opportunity to speak to pupils and see their books. Later in the day I was privileged to meet with 12 pupils from key stage 2. I scrutinised a range of documentation including the single central record, a personnel file, a safeguarding case study, assessment information, documentation on self-evaluation, strategic school improvement planning and monitoring.