

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Mrs Amanda Campbell  
Headteacher  
Kippax Ash Tree Primary School  
Gibson Lane  
Kippax  
Leeds  
West Yorkshire  
LS25 7JL

Dear Mrs Campbell

### **Short inspection of Kippax Ash Tree Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 25 January 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 May 2012.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your determined and resolute leadership has brought about improvements to teaching and learning in each phase of the school. Working alongside a skilled and equally determined governing body, and very ably supported by your two highly skilled deputy headteachers, you have created a strong teaching team. This has improved the quality of teaching, and had a positive impact on outcomes for pupils.

You have accurately identified the strengths and current priorities for the school which are outlined in your evaluation of the school's position. You detail the necessary actions needed to address these priorities in the school improvement plan, clearly outlining staff responsibilities, monitoring arrangements and how actions will impact on outcomes for pupils.

You, your staff and governors have not been satisfied with the progress that pupils have been making in their learning and the standards that they have reached, especially in key stage 1 in recent years. You have raised your expectations for pupils' outcomes, and improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through sharing good practice at other local schools. Teachers are working hard to embed and implement agreed actions, although you recognise that some variation in practice across year groups remains. Improved teaching is accelerating the progress that pupils make in their learning. However, you acknowledge that

sometimes teachers do not pitch work appropriately, and so activities do not always challenge and stretch the most able pupils sufficiently.

Pupils' personal development and excellent attitudes to learning remain key strengths of the school. Pupils develop good citizenship skills. They are keen to take on responsibilities such as through the 'pupil parliament', where individual pupils lead on different areas of school life, including diversity, health and safety, and behaviour. The school has many strategies in place to encourage and celebrate pupils' regular and punctual attendance. As a result, attendance overall is just above the national average. However, you recognise that these strategies are currently having minimal impact on improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, some of whom are regularly absent. Pupils have access to a wide variety of after-school enrichment clubs, enjoying gardening, keyboards, knitting or reading for pleasure. The school is well ordered and organised. Displays in classrooms and shared spaces celebrate pupils' work but also play a key role in supporting their learning.

You have largely tackled the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Due to teaching being better, the quality of pupils' work in mathematics and writing has improved, with most pupils on track to reach standards expected for their age. Pupils have many opportunities to write at length, often inspired by the topic they are studying. Pupils regularly use reasoning and problem-solving in mathematics. Teachers' ongoing assessments and monitoring of pupils' successes or misunderstandings in their work allow planned activities to be amended or changed, or extra support deployed. Ensuring that the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged is an area that you are continuing to address. Teaching seen during the inspection and analysis of work in books suggest that most-able pupils are often given appropriately challenging work, but not in every class or year group.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have undertaken the role of designated safeguarding lead effectively, ensuring that all policies, procedures and records are of high quality and up to date. Records of incidents of concern are meticulously kept. Any allegations of bullying are taken seriously and they are recorded and acted upon. All staff are appropriately trained, including all non-teaching staff. They have access to well-written policies and guidance. As a result, their understanding of their responsibilities for safeguarding is very secure.

Pupils say that they feel safe. They have regular teaching on good behaviour, bullying and e-safety, and as a result are very knowledgeable in these areas. Pupils know how to stay safe and free from worries while in school, and understand how to avoid situations that may prove dangerous when not at school.

The vast majority of parents state that their children are safe in school. The culture of keeping pupils safe and putting them at the heart of the inclusive, friendly school community is deeply rooted at Kippax Ash Tree. The school makes excellent use of the pastoral leader. Their work and the work of those responsible for promoting pupils' personal, social and emotional development in each phase of school ensures

that pupils' welfare is secure. The school motto of 'Respect, Believe, Care' sums up the school ethos very well.

## **Inspection findings**

- You have been steadfast in your determination to improve the progress that pupils make and the standards they reach in key stage 1. Aply supported by the governing body, you have taken swift and effective action to address and eradicate previous underperformance. The steps you have taken are now having a positive impact on outcomes for current pupils, who are making strong progress. The vast majority are now on track to reach the standards expected for their age by the end of this school year. As a result, the decline in recent years in the progress made and standards reached by pupils in key stage 1 has been reversed.
- The expansion and restructuring of the leadership team have been highly effective. Your role and that of the new deputy headteachers are having a marked impact on the school's improvement, which is rapid. Senior leaders effectively monitor the quality of teaching across the school. They ensure that teachers' appraisal and objectives set for performance management link closely to whole-school priorities. Accurate and detailed tracking of the progress that pupils make in their learning allows teaching and support to be targeted well.
- Governors are skilled in their roles and know the school very well. They are very well informed and they question, support and challenge school leaders effectively. Governors are fully engaged in putting into place key actions to rapidly move the school forward and participate in monitoring activities alongside you.
- Children get off to a fast start in their learning in the early years. Nursery and Reception children play and learn happily alongside each other, sticking at tasks and maintaining their concentration. Adults support children's learning well. They use effective questioning and provide a range of activities to support children's writing and understanding of number. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception is now above average.
- Pupils are now getting off to a good start in their reading. The systematic teaching of phonics starts in Reception, and is also accessed by the most able children in Nursery and continues into key stage 1. Pupils in key stage 2 are beginning to develop skills of inference and deduction when reading. However, you acknowledge that effective strategies to teach reading in key stage 2, although in place, are in their infancy.
- Pupils are attentive in lessons, driven to succeed and have largely excellent attitudes to learning. Relationships are strong. Pupils know how well they have done in their learning and the next steps that they need to take to do even better. Pupils value the feedback that they get from teachers, and take time to respond or complete further challenges.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to write at length. Teachers' choice of material and their skilful links to topic work capture pupils' imagination and interest well and so pupils enjoy different types of writing. For example, pupils in Year 5 were inspired to write about the work of the charity formed by Doctor Barnardo, linked to their topic on Victorian London.

- Pupils' enjoyment of mathematics is obvious. A number of pupils informed the inspector that this is their favourite subject. The work in pupils' books is copious, and teachers use materials and apparatus well to allow pupils to understand number patterns and calculations. Older pupils are becoming proficient in their reasoning and problem-solving skills.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should:

- ensure that they continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning and strengthen its impact on outcomes for pupils by:
  - checking that whole-school initiatives and agreed actions are implemented consistently across every year group
  - making sure that teachers challenge and stretch the most able pupils more consistently so that they reach the higher standards of which they are capable
- ensure that pupils who are persistently absent are supported to attend regularly so that no time for learning is lost to them.

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

Philip Scott  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, your deputy headteachers and some of your teaching team. Your deputy headteachers and I observed English and mathematics lessons in each key stage 1 class and some key stage 2 classes, and visited early years. I met with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I spoke to pupils about their work and their views of the school both in lessons and in meetings. I listened to pupils read. I considered the views of parents from the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. I scrutinised pupils' work in books. A range of documents were considered relating to safeguarding, governors' meetings, external evaluations of the school, performance management, the school's development plan and self-evaluation, the curriculum and pupils' achievement.