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2 March 2018

Mrs Tabitha Smith
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Dear Mrs Smith

Short inspection of Moss Hey Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 February 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 May 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

As a result of your highly effective leadership, the school is in an even stronger position now than when it was last judged to be good. You have achieved something very special at Moss Hey in the inspirational way that you have unified the whole school community around your educational ethos.

This is a truly inclusive school where every pupil is valued. Staff support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities very effectively. You and your deputy headteacher have designed an engaging curriculum that focuses on developing a love of learning. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning help them to make strong progress across a range of subjects.

At the heart of the success of this school is the way that you genuinely value all of your staff. Relationships in your school are built on mutual trust and respect. Staff know that you care about their well-being. Consequently, they are keen to do their best for you and the pupils. The quality of teaching across the school is stronger

than when the school was last inspected. You have developed and empowered subject leaders to lead their respective areas very effectively.

Parents are extremely positive about the school. Many of them took the time to respond in the free-text section of the online questionnaire. Many of these comments spoke very highly of your leadership and the dedication of the staff. They commented on how welcoming and friendly the school is. Many parents said that their children are happy and flourishing. One parent summed up these positive views by saying that when people ask what school her daughter goes to, 'I am proud to say Moss Hey.'

Pupils really enjoy coming to school. They are enthusiastic about their learning and value the support that they receive from their teachers and other adults. They particularly enjoy the regular trips, workshops and external visitors that the school organises. Year 6 pupils relish the opportunities that they are given to take on responsibilities, for example as 'buddies' to children in Reception, or as 'digital leaders'.

At the last inspection, you were asked to sharpen the quality of your improvement planning. You responded to this swiftly. Improvement planning across the school is now very effective as it focuses on the impact of leaders' actions on pupils' progress.

You were also asked to make sure that work for the most able pupils was challenging enough, particularly in mathematics. The work you have done in response to this has enabled the most able pupils to achieve well in mathematics in recent years. However, in 2017 not all of the most able pupils made good progress in reading and writing. You have introduced a new tracking system that means that all teachers now routinely focus on ensuring that the most able pupils make the best possible progress and attain high standards in all three areas.

Pupils at Moss Hey make excellent progress in Reception and key stage 1. Your actions now are focused on ensuring that all pupils continue to progress at this rapid pace throughout key stage 2.

Safeguarding is effective.

You ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. You and your staff know your pupils extremely well. This, coupled with the high-quality training that staff receive, means that they are well placed to spot any signs of potential abuse or neglect.

You make it a priority that your pupils gain an age-appropriate understanding of potential dangers, including how to stay safe online. As well as ensuring that your pupils know how to use the internet safely, you communicate frequently with parents on this topic, including offering regular workshops. Pupils feel safe in school and know that there is always someone who will listen to them if they are worried about anything.

All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, including protocols and practices for record-keeping. Systems to ensure that only suitable people are recruited to work with children in the school are secure.

Inspection findings

- In 2017, the most able pupils in key stage 2 progressed well in mathematics. At the end of Year 6, the percentage of pupils who attained the higher standard in mathematics was above the national average. However, some of the most able pupils did not achieve as well in reading and writing. Consequently, my main line of enquiry for this inspection was to find out what you are doing to ensure that your most able pupils make the best possible progress and attain high standards in these areas. We discussed the specific contextual reasons why a very small number of pupils did not achieve well in 2017. More importantly, you shared with me the actions that you are taking to ensure that the most able pupils continue to make the same rapid progress in key stage 2 as they make in key stage 1. For example, high-ability readers now move on to 'directed reading'. This means that their choice of books helps them to develop their reading skills further.
- You have devised what you refer to as a 'far smarter' pupil-tracking system. The key to its effectiveness is its simplicity. The system enables key stage 2 teachers to focus particularly on those pupils who attained high standards in key stage 1 and ensure that they continue to make strong progress. This tracking information shows that the most able pupils currently in key stage 2 are making strong progress. Evidence of this was seen in the high-quality work in pupils' books. Pupils, including the most able, make excellent progress in key stage 1. As a result of high-quality teaching, children in Reception also make rapid progress. Consequently, a high proportion of them achieve a good level of development.
- During the inspection, I was interested to find out whether you had sharpened the quality of your improvement planning since the last inspection. There is no doubt that improvement planning across the school is now extremely effective. Pupils' learning and progress are at the heart of everything that happens in the school. If actions do not have a positive impact on outcomes for pupils then, quite simply, you do not continue with them. This clarity of purpose means that all leaders in the school, including governors, are sharply focused on what really matters.
- My final line of enquiry related to the wider curriculum. I wanted to find out how effectively pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in subjects other than English and mathematics. The work that you and your deputy headteacher have done in this area is very impressive. You both have a very clear vision, not just of what you want your pupils to learn, but also of how they will learn and the skills that they will develop. Working collaboratively with all staff, you have designed a curriculum that genuinely enriches pupils' experiences. A scrutiny of a selection of 'learning journey' books provided strong evidence that pupils learn about topics in a meaningful and connected way.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the excellent progress that pupils make in key stage 1 continues at the same rapid pace throughout key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

Anne Seneviratne
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and the deputy headteacher. I also met with a group of staff, six members of the governing body, including the chair, and had a meeting with a representative of the local authority. I met formally with two groups of pupils and talked informally with others in lessons and during morning break. I listened to pupils read. I also talked with parents informally at the start of the school day. Accompanied by you, I observed teaching and learning across the school. Together with you and the deputy headteacher, I scrutinised the work of a small group of pupils. I examined your self-evaluation document and improvement plans. I also undertook a review of the school's website. As part of the inspection, I considered the 124 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 79 free-text comments. I also considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils.