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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mr Alex Wirth
Headteacher
Anston Greenlands Primary School
Edinburgh Drive
North Anston
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S25 4HD

Dear Mr Wirth

Short inspection of Anston Greenlands Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in May 2010.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. School leaders know the school well. You lead a united team in celebrating strengths and tackling any aspects of underperformance. You are constantly refining and developing systems for checking on the quality of teaching and learning with your team. As a result, leaders' evaluations of the school are accurate and the priorities identified for improvement are the right ones. Your professional and thoughtful approach to leading school improvement is highly valued by parents, staff and governors.

Recent changes in the organisation of middle leadership have had a positive impact on improving pupils' outcomes. The small-team approach to improving subjects has empowered leaders to share their expertise, highlight areas for improvement and make careful checks on pupils' learning. You rightly identify ways to develop this further in the school development plan.

Leaders have devised new systems for checking on pupils' achievement and progress, something that the predecessor school was asked to do at the last inspection in 2010. These systems are fully understood by everyone. The emphasis on pupils' progress, across the year and from the previous key stage, gives leaders a clear view of where to provide additional support and challenge. Leaders use this information to steer conversations with teachers about how to support the needs of individual pupils.

You continue to reflect on the accuracy and impact of any systems you use. For example, your plans identify refinements in the assessment system for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, to give a clearer view of the progress they are making.

There is a recent track record of leaders successfully addressing any areas of underperformance. For example, work to diminish the difference in pupils' outcomes in reading in relation to stronger performance in writing has been thorough. Training and support for teachers and teaching assistants, with strategies to help pupils catch up, have had a successful impact on pupils' progress as well as developing their enthusiasm for reading. The community project to create a special outdoor place to read has resulted in many pupils choosing to read alone and together in the calm, sheltered and engaging reading garden. Writing continues to be incorporated frequently and successfully across a wide curriculum by key stage 2 pupils. You agree that this could be better developed for pupils in key stage 1.

In mathematics, a focus on equipping pupils with the skills to reason and explore tasks in depth has resulted in a greater proportion of pupils reaching higher standards. This was an area identified for improvement in the last inspection of your predecessor school. Improvement is evident in pupils' work, school assessment information and the 2017 provisional end-of-key-stage results. Many pupils use mathematics confidently in their work across the curriculum. Tasks are often practical and purposeful. Pupils of middle- and higher ability check their work against success criteria independently and use teachers' clear direction to help them make improvements to their work. However, pupils who are working just below the national expectations find this more difficult. Leaders have clearly identified these pupils through school assessment information. You agree that leaders now need to ensure that these pupils have more specific focus and direction in every class to help them make rapid progress.

Governors have managed to keep the quality of education and the safety of pupils as top priorities through the challenge of changes within the trust. There is a clear plan to put in place effective and sustainable partnerships for the school. Governors have given careful consideration to making sure that the changes made are the right ones for the pupils at Anston Greenlands.

Governors have a clear handle on the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know about the quality of teaching and learning through the detailed information you share, as well as from the thorough reviews by the local authority. The local authority has a clear understanding of the improvements in leadership overall and agrees with the school's evaluations and priorities for improvement. Leaders have made sure that the school is outward looking, taking opportunities to work with others and being open to seeking advice when necessary. Leaders know that this is particularly important through the transition within the trust.

You have now extended your philosophy on shared leadership to the pupils themselves. Pupils eagerly lead areas of school improvement through roles such as team captains, school councillors, ICT cadets, the 'Ground Force' team, and 'ECO Amigos'. Pupils feel that their views are valued and they work hard to seek the opinions and ideas of everyone across school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. All staff receive regular training and information about safeguarding pupils. They know how to spot and report any concerns. There are good links with external agencies, but leaders are confident to speak out if they think aspects of multi-agency work could be better.

Leaders take their responsibilities in teaching pupils about how to keep safe very seriously. As well as a range of activities to teach pupils about keeping safe in school and at home, they give close attention to helping pupils develop and recognise positive relationships and contributions to society. For example, older pupils are able to choose topics for class debate. They spoke confidently about their planned discussions about gender equality.

Pupils love coming to school and do not want to miss a day. They think that their school is 'brilliant'. They speak particularly highly of the exciting curriculum and end-of-term events, as well as how the staff are 'extremely kind and forgiving'. Pupils are very proud that their overall attendance is consistently better than that found in other schools across the country. Pupils know the importance of the school rules. They say that everyone behaves 'almost all of the time'. Fall-outs sometimes happen, they say, but bullying is extremely rare. Pupils are confident in 'having a go' at resolving problems first, but know that if they ask for adult support, it is quick and effective.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, I looked at the quality of writing across the curriculum. Leaders have been successful in designing an engaging, exciting curriculum that sparks pupils' interest and results in memorable learning. Throughout key stage 2, pupils have plentiful opportunities to write in a variety of styles in subjects such as science and history. Although pupils in key stage 1 have an equally stimulating curriculum, leaders agree that pupils have fewer opportunities to try out their skills by writing at length. Teachers' emphasis on improving pupils' skills in grammar and punctuation is developing pupils' accuracy in short pieces of writing, but pupils are not as confident in writing longer pieces over a sustained period.

- All leaders are clear in their commitment to providing a curriculum rich in purposeful opportunities that will support pupils well in their journey to adulthood. The focus on activities based on enterprise, and spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, global citizenship and the local environment gives pupils a well-rounded curriculum. Learning is widened further by visits and visitors into school, as well as involvement in activities and competitions with other schools. Pupils say that the end-of-term events are highlights of their learning. Events such as a banquet, creating a golf course and performing the play 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' give pupils the chance to showcase their learning and experiences, as well as lead and organise the events.
- Another area I looked at was the historically weaker performance of the most able pupils, particularly at the end of key stage 1 across subjects and in mathematics by the end of key stage 2. Provisional results for 2017 and school assessments suggest that teachers' work to support these pupils more effectively in their learning has paid off. Pupils' books from last year show a direct focus on supporting the most able pupils in knowing how to improve their work. There is clear evidence that teachers have moved pupils on in their learning when they have sufficiently grasped a concept. As a result, a greater proportion of pupils are currently working at higher standards throughout school and across subjects.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Every parent I spoke to during the inspection and each of the 43 parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, expressed their full confidence in the school. This included a very positive view of the leadership team, the staff and the opportunities that their children are given to make the best progress possible across the curriculum. They all praised the school's work to keep their children safe and happy. Many said that they could not wish for their children to be anywhere better.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils in key stage 1 have more opportunities to write at length across the curriculum
- plans to ensure that work is more closely matched to the needs of pupils who are working just below the national expectations in mathematics are quickly actioned, to result in more rapid progress for these pupils
- changes in the trust are carefully implemented to fully support the continuing success of the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Kate Rowley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I looked at specific aspects of the school's work, including leadership, the quality of teaching and learning throughout school, and safeguarding arrangements.

You and I worked closely together throughout the inspection, observing teaching and learning, looking at pupils' work and discussing the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Much of this took place with other leaders. You and I discussed recent changes in the trust and resulting action plans. I reviewed school documentation, including that relating to safeguarding. I met with school leaders, administrative staff, and pupils, as well as the head of education from the local authority. I spoke to parents before school and noted the 43 responses to Parent View.