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Ms Sarah Ruddy
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Ruddy

Short inspection of Bankside Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 1 March 2016, 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 March 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are dynamic and enthusiastic about your role within the school and wider community. Your love of the job shines through in all your actions. You put families and children at the heart of all you do and know every child by name, remembering personal details and setting high standards of positive relationships throughout the school. Your strong leadership team mirrors this commitment and its members are excited about their roles in leading the school forward. This positive climate has resulted in a stable teaching staff who are passionate about improving outcomes for pupils.

Key strengths from the last inspection remain and have been consolidated and built upon, resulting in pupils in Key Stage 2 making exceptional progress. The strong focus on developing personal, social and emotional skills across the school equips pupils to understand their responsibilities and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

The areas identified at the last inspection remain similar to those identified at the current time, but are being managed well in a context of high pupil mobility. The changing nature of the catchment area and the constant flux of pupils moving in and out of the school create a significant challenge to raising attainment. You are meeting this challenge head on. Secure assessment systems are enabling leaders to have a clear picture of pupils' progress from different starting points. This allows

support and challenge to be precisely focused where they are most needed. As a result, progress is continuing to improve.

You and your leadership team regularly visit classes and scrutinise books to ensure that progress is improving over time. Leaders at all levels are involved in ensuring that comparisons are made across all parallel classes. This is supporting teachers who are less experienced to improve their own practice. There is a huge commitment to ensuring pupil progress meetings are accurate and developmental for staff. The regular process of analysing the information and discussing individual pupils is embedded in staff performance procedures.

Your understanding of the local community and determination to develop a greater preparedness for school is having a positive impact on the number of children who enter the school ready to learn. The 'Birth 2 Bankside' work with families is enabling key messages to be passed to parents about ways in which they can support the development of their children. Links with local community groups make sure that you are targeting those children whose need is greatest. Further commitment to improving outcomes from birth has resulted in your recent acquisition of the adjacent children's centre. This holistic approach to educating families and children in its widest form is having a positive impact on outcomes for all pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

Systems to ensure safe recruitment of staff are fully in place. The single central record is up to date and contains appropriate information on each staff member. Staff sign to record that they have completed annual safeguarding training.

Effective action is being taken to safeguard pupils who are identified as being at risk, and leaders are meticulous in completing actions to support individuals. A case study showed how leaders acted promptly to address concerns raised initially through poor attendance. The swift action taken resulted in all services working together to put a plan into place to support the family and the child. Improvements in attendance and well-being and progress in learning resulted.

Inspection findings

- Leaders work well together and share ownership, ambition and responsibility for the well-being of pupils and for improvements in attainment and progress across the school. Delegation of wider leadership responsibility is working well and empowers staff to be creative in their approach to breaking down barriers to learning. This results in improving outcomes over time.
- Work in the early years provision identifies children's interests and uses these as a hook to entice them to want to learn more. Strong relationships and high levels of care enable pupils to develop good social skills. Pupils are motivated and interested in their learning, showing high levels of concentration and engagement because activities are well planned.

- The governing body is effective. Minutes of meetings show that governors offer challenge that is having a positive impact on expectations. They are active in seeking support and further development opportunities. Governors are frequent visitors to school and familiarity contributes to their understanding of the progress made by the different groups of pupils.
- Moderation of assessment on entry and over time is being strengthened. This is helped by the team leader utilising her experience as a trained local authority moderator. Children are assessed on entry and throughout their time in the early years provision. The 2015 entry information for Nursery shows a marked improvement in most areas, validating the success of the early intervention work carried out with families. Leaders need to check that current early years assessments accurately reflect where children are in their stages of learning.
- Standards in phonics (the sounds that letters make) are not at the level they should be. As a result, leaders have reviewed recent outcomes and have changed the way in which they teach phonics. Small groups are now receiving targeted work specifically at their level and this is helping them to move forward at a faster pace. Closer tracking is helping to identify groups who need extra support. Teaching assistants have been trained to target particular groups, especially those pupils who are new to the country.
- The school's tracking and assessment system shows that pupils are now making more consistent progress across year groups. Scrutiny of writing and mathematics books verifies this.
- Pupils are interested in their learning because teachers link the learning to interesting topics. This week's focus of 'The Bake Off' stimulated work on measuring, writing instructions, labelling and baking. The majority of pupils are given work that closely matches their abilities, but teachers' expectations of what the most-able pupils are capable of are not always high enough.
- Strong partnerships with family support workers, attendance officers, health workers and the community are helping leaders to improve the attendance of pupils. Leaders know the reasons why families do not attend, and implement a strong attendance policy. They are targeting Nursery children to ensure that good habits start early. Many initiatives are in place and there is evidence of slight improvement.
- Bankside School wraps its arms around everyone and gives them a hug. Families and parents are embraced and nurtured. The care, guidance and support offered to families from the wide variety of backgrounds are exemplary. Parents know that their children are safe and happy. Established relationships result in a strong sense of community, good behaviour and pupils who work hard and play happily together from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- attainment in all year groups continues to improve, particularly for the most-able pupils
- teaching in phonics enables pupils to reach standards that are close to, or above, the national average
- attendance rates continue to improve.

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 City Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janet Lunn
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

This inspection was carried out by two inspectors over one day. Between us, we met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, a group of pupils, and staff from the pastoral team. Information was provided from Parent View, and pupil and staff questionnaires. Joint lesson observations were carried out with senior leaders and yourself. A sample of books was scrutinised from four different year groups, along with yourself and another leader. Learning journals were looked at and pupils were observed during their learning time in Nursery.