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Mrs W Moore
Principal
Priorslee Primary Academy
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Dear Mrs Moore

Short inspection of Priorslee Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 10 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.

Since the previous inspection, the school has formed a multi-academy trust and has been joined by another primary school. As a result, arrangements for governance have changed and an advisory board is now responsible for governance at the school. You and other senior leaders have broadened your roles across both schools. You have recruited several new members of staff as a result of promotion of previous staff, and just over half of the staff are new either to the school or teaching.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. There is a strong culture within the school community of care and respect. Staff place a high priority on positive conduct and relationships. This is reflected in pupils' harmonious relationships, evident in work and play. Pupils identify good behaviour and caring and inclusive relationships as the strongest features of their school. Pupils highly value opportunities they have to contribute to the school community and develop their own skills, for example by looking after younger pupils, being on the school council or serving as a prefect.

At the last inspection, leaders were asked to ensure that teachers evaluate pupils' progress regularly. Regular pupil progress meetings now take place between leaders and class teachers, where progress is discussed. These meetings inform support for pupils in class and through additional interventions. Leaders evaluate subsequent

assessments to monitor the impact of actions taken and teachers are held to account for the performance of their pupils. Teachers, and other adults in classrooms, talk confidently about the progress individuals and different groups of pupils in the class are making.

Following the last inspection, engaging with parents and carers was identified as a particular priority. Leaders have increased the range of opportunities to involve parents in the school, such as regular parent panels. Leaders use information from these sessions to improve school policies and inform development planning. The school has a quality mark for parental engagement and parents hold positive perceptions of leadership. Engagement with parents is now a strength of the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

School procedures to keep children safe at school are in place and fit for purpose. All members of the senior leadership team contribute to maintaining robust safeguarding procedures, which in turn are given a high priority by other staff. A culture of shared responsibility exists, as designated leaders review and check each other's work as a matter of course. An experienced governor has regular oversight of this work and checks that statutory requirements are met. Staff and governors are well trained and aware of their duties and responsibilities. They regularly receive additional information about safeguarding issues so keep up to date. A caring and professional approach towards safeguarding results in a culture of appropriate and timely response to meet pupils' needs.

Pupils say that they feel safe in all parts of the school, and that they could talk confidently to adults there should they have any worries about themselves or their peers. Parents feel confident that pupils are safe and well looked after when in school and that leaders often respond well to any concerns they may have.

Inspection findings

- Leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is based on a range of evidence and is accurate. Leaders know what needs to improve in order for the school's overall effectiveness to be outstanding. This enables them to plan and focus development on appropriate aspects of the school.
- Governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and relative weaknesses in the school and contribute well to the creation of development plans. They know how resources are allocated and evaluate their impact on pupil attainment and progress. Governors use the close links they establish with a particular year group to ensure that the information they are provided with is accurate and reliable. Governors use their knowledge about the school to support and challenge leaders well.
- Leaders have introduced a new system to assess and track pupils' progress. Regular progress meetings focus on the progress different groups of pupils are making. Detailed information exists about how well different groups of pupils

currently at the school are doing. Leaders ensure that teachers use this information well to inform how they plan and teach.

- Leaders identify that an increasing number of pupils join the school after Reception or leave the school before the end of key stage 2. The starting points of these pupils are assessed carefully, and their progress is regularly monitored to ensure that any impact of changing schools is identified and addressed.
- Staff in the early years identify quickly children's starting points and any additional needs they may have. As a result, children develop quickly and the proportion that achieve a good level of development exceeds the national figure and is increasing.
- The proportion of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, who achieve the expected standard in phonics in Year 1 is consistently close to the national average. However, a lower proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities reach the expected standard than other pupils. Levels of attainment at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics are at or better than national levels.
- In 2016, pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 in reading and mathematics was broadly in line with national figures. Pupils made less progress in writing, particularly boys and middle prior attaining pupils. In writing, although most-able pupils secured expected levels of attainment, a lower proportion achieved at greater depth than similar pupils nationally.
- Leaders identify writing as a key priority and teachers focus on developing pupils' skills in drafting and improving their written work. Teachers provide an increasing number of opportunities for pupils to write at length in English and in other subjects. The impact of planning writing activities with different levels of challenge for pupils' different starting points has yet to be realised in outcomes of national assessments, particularly for the most able.
- A wide variety of additional opportunities and experiences exist for the most able pupils. These events enrich the more challenging learning activities that teachers provide. Pupils engage well with increased levels of challenge and relish the opportunity to take on tasks that are more demanding. Leaders evaluate that opportunities to stretch most-able pupils are well established in English and mathematics subjects and are developing in other subjects.
- Pupils have a high level of awareness of how to keep themselves safe, for example when using electronic communication or when near traffic. Leaders have a well-planned and comprehensive personal, social and health education programme which explores safety in age-appropriate ways and uses effectively external speakers and opportunities outside of school. Pupils say that they feel well informed about how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. However, they were less clear about how they should respond to the risks posed by extreme views than for many other forms of potential danger.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that pupils' progress in writing improves so that it matches the rates of progress they make in reading and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Rob Hackfath
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspection focused on specific lines of enquiry about:

- how well leaders evaluate the school and use this to inform their plans
- how leaders monitor the progress of different groups of pupils over time and how effectively they support pupils that need to catch up
- the progress of most-able pupils, particularly in writing
- the effectiveness of safeguarding and how aware pupils are of keeping themselves safe in a range of situations.

During the inspection, I joined you in short visits to lessons where we spoke to pupils about their work and looked at work in their books. I met with you and other senior leaders, including designated leaders for safeguarding in the school. I met with two governors, including the acting chair of the directors.

I evaluated a range of documents, including the school's development plans, recent information on pupils' progress, the quality of teaching and records about keeping pupils safe.

Pupils gave me their views on the school when they spoke to me during a formal meeting, in lessons and at social times. School staff's views were taken into account through the responses to an inspection questionnaire and a recent school staff survey. The views of parents were considered through the 43 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.