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Mrs Peta Cocker
Headteacher
Headlands CofE Voluntary Controlled Junior, Infant and Nursery School
Headlands Road
Liversedge
West Yorkshire
WF15 6PR

Dear Mrs Cocker

Short inspection of Headlands CofE Voluntary Controlled Junior, Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 25 June 2019, 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 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Your dedication to the school and your pupils is clear. You are very ably supported by your strong deputy headteacher. Together, you are a compelling team, determined to provide your pupils with the best school experience that you can. You have very high expectations of both staff and pupils. Your staff support you well. They appreciate your concern for their well-being, while understanding the importance of reflecting your high expectations for all.

Your accurate evaluations have enabled you to develop the school well through your astute improvement priorities. You evaluate these regularly, and this allows you to accurately judge the success of your actions.

Your pupils are very enthusiastic about their school. They enjoy the wide variety of subjects that are on offer in the broad curriculum that you have in place. They are highly enthusiastic learners, which is reflected in their exemplary behaviour in lessons and the very well-presented work they produce. Pupils enjoy their lessons and know that their teachers expect them to work hard and do their best. Pupils have well-developed attitudes to people's differences and display mature viewpoints which reflect the school's values.

Pupils receive a good quality of education. Teachers plan engaging and motivating

lessons that are often practical and interactive. These are the lessons that pupils enjoy the most. Pupils make strong progress in writing and mathematics. Combined attainment scores for Year 6 pupils were above the national average at the end of the last academic year.

Provision in the early years is now a real strength of the school. Children get off to an excellent start. This is because the early years leader is inspirational in her development and improvement of this area of the school. Children delight in the variety of practical and inventive activities available to them. Staff encourage them to use their creativity. Children quickly become fully immersed in their imaginative play and learning. This parent's comment is typical of those received about the early years provision:

'My child is in Reception, and I have seen a massive improvement in her abilities throughout the year. We are well informed by the teachers on a weekly basis with the pink book, and parents' information evenings. I am very pleased with my child's progress and feel extremely confident in the teaching ability and leadership.'

You have successfully rectified the area for improvement identified at the last inspection. You have a thoughtful and considered approach to the development of your middle leaders. You have put thorough training, mentoring and support in place, alongside collaborative working and shared good practice. Your middle leaders are now knowledgeable about the standards of teaching and learning in their subject. They monitor and evaluate following the consistent procedures that you have established.

Governors are highly supportive of the school. They take time to make sure they understand the information they receive from yourself and your subject leaders. However, they do not have a good appreciation of the difference that additional funding makes to the progress of disadvantaged pupils in the school. Consequently, they do not hold leaders to account sufficiently for the use of the funding.

Overall, most pupils have good attendance, because they enjoy school and want to attend every day. Your inclusion leader has done much work to encourage parents to make sure that their children attend school daily. Unfortunately, there is still a small group of parents who take their children out of school for holidays during term time. This means that a few pupils are absent for a significant number of days per year.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders make sure all requisite employment checks are thoroughly completed for anyone wishing to work at the school. All checks are kept securely in a highly organised way which is understood by all those who require access for regular reviews. The school has a strong safeguarding culture in which all staff understand their responsibilities for keeping children safe. They receive frequent,

good-quality training which makes sure they are up to date with current legislation.

Pupils understand how to keep safe in and out of school and online. They speak clearly about the things they learn and they can apply their knowledge in different situations. For example, in an English lesson, pupils could talk about how important it is not to include personal information in correspondence with others. Pupils say they feel safe and that they have someone to talk to at school if they have any concerns. They are confident that teachers and support staff would deal quickly and effectively with these.

Pupils know to be healthy and are knowledgeable about what they should eat and drink to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Behaviour around school and in classrooms is exemplary. Pupils are kind, considerate and welcoming. They show respect to all members of the school community and those who are new to the school.

Inspection findings

- The staff in the Nursery make learning fun and enjoyable for children. Children can access a range of activities, both in and outside of the classroom, which develop and enhance their learning. Children are happy and very welcoming to visitors. Parents of children in Nursery are pleased with how much progress their children make. One comment from a parent notes that the staff are 'wonderful with children' and 'The Nursery has really improved my child's confidence and academic ability'.
- The early years provision is of high quality, and pupils thrive in this environment. Staff provide activities that are very well thought out and provide many opportunities for learning and development. Children are extremely enthusiastic about their learning and, when asked, can explain exactly what they are doing and what they are learning. Children engage with each other very well and social skills are well developed; the sharing of equipment and resources happens without question.
- Lessons are well planned and take into account the different abilities and needs of pupils. Teachers provide a range of stimulating and engaging activities. Pupils can talk about their learning and explain their procedures for solving the problems set by teachers. Throughout the school, teachers encourage pupils to use 'talk partners' to discuss and share their thoughts and understanding. As a result, pupils become more socially aware, learning to listen to others and the importance of sharing ideas.
- There are frequent opportunities for pupils to write at length. Teachers model writing effectively and give good-quality examples for pupils to learn from. Expectations are high and, due to the consistent quality of teaching, pupils make good progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported throughout the school. Those with an education, health and care (EHC) plan receive short-term targets that support progress towards the long-

term outcomes on their EHC plans. Staff encourage pupils with SEND to be independent learners, wherever possible. They are very well supported by their peers, who show a mature understanding of the difficulties others have at times.

- You and your senior leaders expect much from everyone involved in the school, including staff, pupils and governors. You are thorough in identifying the areas for improvement and meticulous in making sure plans are followed through. For example, by improving facilities and resources and adding library time to the timetable, you have encouraged pupils to develop a love of reading. You are clear about the standards you expect from teaching staff and ensure that quality remains high by your regular monitoring of teaching and learning in classrooms.
- You have made improvements in individual cases of pupil absence by working closely with parents. Currently, several pupils with a history of persistent absenteeism now attend regularly, although there are still a few parents who take their pupils on holiday during the school term.
- Governors are aware of the way that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent by leaders. However, they lack a clear understanding of how leaders are making sure that disadvantaged pupils receive help and support, if needed, in order to improve their progress. Governors are thus unable to explain the difference the funding is making to pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- further initiatives are developed to increase attendance and reduce the incidence of term-time holidays
- governors sharpen their understanding of the use of the additional funding that the school receives for disadvantaged pupils and the difference it makes to their outcomes.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Leeds (CofE), the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kirklees. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sara Roe
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, your deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher for inclusion and nine subject leaders. Together, we visited classrooms to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. I met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. I spoke to pupils informally in lessons and around school and met formally with a group of pupils to discuss their views of the school. I scrutinised a range of pupils' workbooks. During the inspection, I evaluated a range of school documents, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and outcomes for pupils. Before the inspection, I analysed the school's website and evaluated a range of additional documentation. I considered the 217 responses from parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Responses from 16 members of staff and 44 pupils to Ofsted's online staff and pupils' surveys were also taken into account.