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Ms Jo Atherton  
Headteacher  
Lord Blyton Primary School  
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Tyne and Wear  
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Dear Ms Atherton

### **Short inspection of Lord Blyton Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 1 March 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 January 2012.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

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

Under your clear and ambitious leadership, your committed and talented staff have ensured that standards have continued to improve. You know the school very well and lead with an understated authority, which is recognised and admired by governors, pupils, parents and staff alike. Owing to your high aspirations, the school has continued to improve since the last inspection, and pupils are receiving a very good quality of education. All staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They know what is expected of them and share your vision to provide the very best care and guidance. Because of this, pupils thrive at Lord Blyton, and staff are overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of working at the school.

During the last inspection, you were asked to improve the progress and achievement of pupils in key stage 1, especially in pupils' reading. You have done this successfully and standards now exceed the national average. You have developed well the teaching of phonics and use a wide range of books that excite and interest pupils. These actions have strengthened the teaching and consequently pupils make better progress. With the introduction of a very effective Nursery and the more recent provision for two-year-old children, the capacity for further improvement is very clear. The early years provision is very strong.

You have continued to improve outcomes for pupils in the school. For example, in 2016, from starting points that are generally below what is typical on entry to the school, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards was above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2. In addition, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards was also above average in reading and mathematics in key stage 2. The most able pupils overall achieve well, but you have correctly identified that the most able disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well as other pupils nationally. This is one of your current school priorities and you have detailed plans for improvement. You are clear about what success will look like and how to achieve your aim. You have wisely focused on this and improvements are already evident.

Although there was a slight dip in the Year 1 phonics check in 2016, the reasons for this were understandable. A number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities joined the school at the start of the year and, despite their good progress from their starting points, they were unable to achieve the expected standard in Year 1.

Leaders now look very closely at the progress of pupils over time and provide teachers with a clear analysis of what is working well and details of any minor improvements that need to be made. Consequently, teaching and learning in the school are good. However, while you have developed your own systems to measure attainment and progress throughout the school, and you generally use them well, you have identified that the current method could be further improved. By doing so, it will provide a detailed and efficient overview of the progress made by specific groups of pupils in a range of subjects and make it easier for leaders to moderate the skills, knowledge and understanding achieved by pupils.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The school has robust systems and procedures to ensure that pupils are safe. Governors and staff understand their responsibilities well and are vigilant where the protection and safety of children are concerned. Statutory guidelines are followed regarding policies and the training of staff.

All parents spoken to during the inspection feel that their children are safe at school. Children are taught about the potential dangers when they use the internet or social media and told me that they feel safe in school. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They are adamant that behaviour is good and that bullying is very rare. Pupils understand what bullying is and the different forms that bullying can take. They collectively state that adults will set aside time to talk with them and help to resolve problems they might have. All pupils know that they are able to ask for help and will be provided with in-school support if they are worried about anything. Pupils say that a member of the school council, a buddy or a friend will also help them if they need it. Pupils feel safe because they have very strong relationships with each other and are cared for by staff who know them well.

## Inspection findings

- The inspection focused on a number of key lines of enquiry. A review of current evidence shows that most pupils make good progress across all phases of the school. Children get off to a flying start in early years and the relationship with and support of parents are very effective. The 'Bags of Opportunities', known as 'BOO' baskets provide parents with well-considered resources to practise with their children at home in order to develop children's personal and social skills and their communication and literacy skills. Children leave Reception well prepared for the rigours of Year 1.
- Standards at the end of both key stages compare favourably with those seen in many schools nationally, because most pupils continue to make good or better progress after leaving Reception. The majority of most-able pupils do very well because of the high expectations of staff and the well-pitched level of challenge offered to pupils.
- Self-evaluation is extremely thorough, leading to very detailed improvement planning. You have identified the correct priorities and have created plans with the clarity to allow leaders to focus on the few key areas that need developing. Parents and staff are extremely positive about the impact of your leadership and are supportive of the leadership and management of the school. You have a good understanding of the school's many strengths and those aspects that could be even better.
- You and your leaders identified correctly that the achievement of some most-able disadvantaged pupils and some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was in need of improvement. Through high-quality teaching, timely interventions and by ensuring that disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have access to enrichment activities, their progress is becoming more rapid.
- Additionally, leaders have identified that boys do not make as much progress as girls in reading and writing, and that outcomes in writing across the school are not as strong as those seen in reading. These aspects are already a major focus for school improvement planning. School leaders and governors track their progress with keen interest, ensuring that their academic and pastoral needs are given the highest priority. However, the current system of tracking pupils' progress could be further improved to ensure that the progress of specific groups of pupils is measured even more accurately.
- Classrooms are happy places. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good because of the good quality of teaching and the wide range of interesting things they learn about. For example, the school's wider curriculum and promotion of British values are strengths. You have ensured that pupils have a good grounding in the diversity of cultures and faiths present in Britain today.

- You successfully promote respect and tolerance of all groups. Pupils respond by showing a deep understanding of British values. For example, one child wrote, 'We understand how prejudice can lead to hate and how important it is to overcome prejudices.' Topics are chosen carefully and provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Of particular note was the Year 6 work inspired by the story of 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas'. The writing produced by pupils was especially moving. For example, one pupil, when describing how it must have felt being held in Auschwitz, wrote, 'Long ago I was someone, but now I am just a face. I had a name, but now I am a number.'
- Last year, a small number of pupils did not attend regularly enough. The school has been diligent in its efforts to improve attendance. All staff take responsibility for this, and letters home, discussions with parents and the support of the young person lead worker and the family support worker are making a positive difference.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's system to track the progress of pupils is further developed to enable teachers to:
  - effectively and efficiently focus on the progress of all groups, especially disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - improve their knowledge of assessment and consistency in assessing the different levels of pupils' work against the higher expectations of the new curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephen Bywater  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, a number of staff, the vice chair of the governing body, accompanied by three other governors, pupils and a representative of the local authority. You accompanied me on visits to all classrooms, during which I talked to pupils and assessed the quality of their work. I observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and as they moved around the school. I spoke to a number of parents and took into account 14 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also viewed well over 100 responses to the school's own survey of parents. Staff responses to the online staff questionnaire were also considered. I scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning, policies, minutes of meetings, and pupil progress information.