

1 March 2018

Mr Micah Cummings
Headteacher
Ashton West End Primary Academy
William Street
Ashton-under-Lyne
Lancashire
OL7 0BJ

Dear Mr Cummings

Short inspection of Ashton West End Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 13 February 2018, 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 November 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Ashton West End Academy is a happy school where pupils develop as confident, polite and well-behaved children. You teach pupils to appreciate and respect their different cultures and beliefs. Pupils enjoy coming to school because learning is interesting and fun.

You and the leadership team have focused on exactly the right priorities to improve learning across the school. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved and pupils achieve well. This is because leaders provide teachers with helpful and detailed advice to develop their skills. You offer teachers appropriate training and they have welcomed opportunities to watch outstanding teaching in the school and in other settings. You and your staff check pupils' learning meticulously. Teachers make sure that where pupils are falling behind, staff provide well-planned extra support to improve pupils' learning. As a result of improvements that you have made, pupils develop their skills and knowledge across the curriculum. Teaching and pupils' progress are good.

You have improved pupils' outcomes across the school. Most pupils enter the school with levels of development that are below those typical for their age. They make good progress in the early years. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development in the Reception Year has improved and is now close to the national average. The proportion of children who passed the Year 1 phonics screening check has risen and was around the national average last year. Pupils make good progress through key stage 1 across the curriculum. In 2017, at the end

of key stage 2, pupils' made good progress in mathematics and writing from their low starting points. Pupils made less progress in reading. You have taken prompt action to ensure that the progress pupils make in reading matches their progress in mathematics and writing.

Governors know the school well as they visit regularly. As a result of your accurate and thorough evaluation of the school's areas for development, governors know what the school needs to do to improve. For example, you have recently improved the system that you use to measure pupils' progress. You and your governors are now able to use this new system to keep a closer watch on the progress of different groups of pupils. We agreed that governors need to check the school's website carefully to make sure that it is up to date and useful to parents and carers.

Pupils take pride in their well-presented work, which they were keen to share with me during my visit. This included their highly decorative art and craft which enhances the school environment. I saw that pupils behave well in lessons and move calmly around school. Those pupils who spoke to me during the inspection said that teachers help them with their learning and that they feel safe. They were confident that adults in school would deal with any incidents of bullying very quickly. Pupils told me how much they enjoy the opportunities you give them to develop their skills in music, including being part of a samba band. Members of the club were thrilled to have visited the Hallé Orchestra to take part in a performance.

Most of the parents who spoke to me share pupils' and teachers' positive view of the school. They were keen to tell me how happy pupils are and how staff help children with their learning. A small number of parents told me that leaders do not resolve issues that they have. They would like to see communication between school and parents improved.

You have responded well to the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. You have ensured that teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to develop their skills in grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting. Staff display lovely examples of pupils' high-quality writing around school. As a result, pupils know that staff expect high standards of work from them. Teachers tell pupils exactly what they need to do to improve. Their progress is above average at the end of key stage 2. Pupils leave school with standards in line with pupils nationally in grammar, punctuation and spelling. The most able pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, staff and governors place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. Leaders have made sure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You provide appropriate and frequent training. As a result, staff have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding and the school's procedures. You and your staff work well with other professionals in relation to safeguarding concerns. You ensure that pupils receive the correct level of support and care. Leaders have planned a curriculum that

includes opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, including fire safety, road safety and online safety.

Leaders carry out statutory checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. You have made sure that the appropriate monitoring and filtering arrangements are in place for the school's internet connection. Governors have taken effective actions to make sure that the school is a safe and secure place for children. Parents and staff agree that pupils are safe and well cared for.

Inspection findings

- The inspection focused on a number of key lines of enquiry. The first of these was to check that pupils who have special education needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress. I found that leaders are meticulous in ensuring that this group of pupils achieve well. Staff work closely with parents to identify the barriers to learning for these pupils. Leaders listen to what pupils tell them and involve them in decisions. Teachers plan work carefully to meet pupils' varied needs. For example, staff give pupils additional support in social skills and speech and language. School provides additional practical resources to help with learning. Leaders make careful and regular checks to make sure that extra provision is improving pupils' progress. As a result of leaders' actions, this group of pupils achieve well. However, I found that the attendance of this group of pupils is lower than other pupils in the school and of pupils nationally. You recognise that you need to take additional steps to improve the attendance of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- My second key line of enquiry related to whether pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. I found that you have planned a curriculum which develops pupils' skills across different subject areas. Teachers plan interesting lessons. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about their learning in subjects including art, physical education and history. For example, in Year 4, pupils were excited to show me the detailed coats of arms that they had designed and painted as part of their history project on knights. Older pupils described how trips to the local Jewish synagogue and Hindu temple had helped them learn about other religions. As a result of leaders' careful planning, pupils receive a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum.
- For my third focus, I looked at the achievement of key stage 2 pupils in reading. This was because, in 2017, pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 was lower in reading than their progress in mathematics and writing. I found that you have raised the profile of reading across the school. Leaders make sure that all pupils read with adults very regularly. Pupils told me that they enjoy their weekly visits to your well-stocked school library. You have given more time in the curriculum to teaching reading skills. This has developed pupils' comprehension when reading, including pupils who speak English as an additional language. Pupils extend their reading skills due to skilful teaching and they enjoy reading for pleasure. As a result of improvements that you have made, standards are rising in reading.

- I found that your school website is easy to navigate. However, we agree that in some areas it is not compliant. For example, information about the curriculum for each year group is missing. You have not included up-to-date information about the use and impact of the primary physical education and sport premium and pupil premium funding.
- During the inspection, only a small number of parents responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Most of those responding were positive about the school. You acknowledge that you could do more to improve communication with parents and involve them in their children's learning. This is particularly the case for the many parents who speak English as an additional language.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they improve communication with parents and support them to become more involved in their children's learning
- pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities attend more frequently
- the school's website is compliant and is regularly monitored to ensure that it remains so.

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

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Stevens
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, your assistant headteachers and a group of teachers, including middle leaders. I also spoke to two governors, including the chair of the board of trustees. I spoke to the virtual school headteacher about pupils in the care of the local authority. I met with nine pupils from key stage 2, and spoke informally with other pupils during lessons. I visited classes in each key stage with leaders, where I observed teaching and learning, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils. I looked at pupils' work in a range of subject areas. I also heard pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.

I took account of 11 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including free-text responses. I spoke with parents at the start and end of the school day and by telephone at lunchtime. I looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, information about pupils' attainment and progress, behaviour logs, teachers' performance

management monitoring and pupils' personal education plans. I also evaluated safeguarding procedures, including policies to keep pupils safe, safeguarding checks and attendance information. I undertook a review of the school's website.