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Mrs D Wrigley
Headteacher
Greenbank Primary School
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Dear Mrs Wrigley

Short inspection of Greenbank Primary 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 June 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Pupils are at the heart of everything that happens at your school. Inclusion is well promoted and diversity of race, gender and culture is celebrated in all aspects of school life. Everyone receives a warm welcome.

Senior leaders work well together to ensure that pupils get the best possible start to their education. Under your leadership, the school is on a journey of continuous improvement. This is reflected in children's outcomes in the early years and pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 1. Both are a real strength of the school. For example, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard and greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 has increased significantly in recent years.

Many of your staff are relatively new to the profession and are well supported. They work well as a team and are proud to work alongside you. They share your aims and ambitions and morale is high. They have access to regular, high-quality training in a wide range of subjects to keep their teaching skills fresh and up to date. With your support and encouragement, many staff feel empowered to further their careers and develop their roles in education.

Most parents and carers are equally resounding in their praise. They are quite rightly proud of the good progress that their children make and find staff friendly and approachable. Parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are particularly appreciative of the high levels of support and

care afforded to their children. The following comment typifies the views of many parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire: 'Our school may not be the biggest in Liverpool, but in my eyes it's the best.'

Staff have created a learning environment which is purposeful and conducive to learning. Displays around the school and in classrooms are bright, informative and magically bring the curriculum to life.

Friendly, well-behaved and polite pupils are a credit to the school and their families. They give visitors to the school a warm welcome. Pupils wear their school uniform with pride and move around the school in a sensible manner. Relationships at all levels are respectful. Pupils said that bullying does happen occasionally, but that 'staff soon sort it out'. They talked with enthusiasm about what they have learned in subjects such as history and geography. There is an exciting range of trips and out-of-school clubs to broaden their experiences and enhance their life skills.

Governors are supportive of you and are proud of the school's achievements. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and some of the priorities for development. The local authority also holds you in high regard and uses the school as an exemplar of good practice.

All areas for improvements identified at the last inspection have been addressed successfully. Pupils now write at length and in depth across a wide range of subjects. Middle leaders monitor their subject areas of responsibility more effectively. Staff regularly observe each other to ensure that best practice is shared across the school. Finally, teachers plan activities which encourage pupils to think more deeply.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that keeping pupils safe is a central part of the school's work. All safeguarding training is up to date. Staff are aware that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They have a secure understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and the procedures to follow should they be concerned about a pupil's welfare. They talk with confidence about issues relating to the safeguarding agenda, such as female genital mutilation. They are also aware of the risks that children face in the local area.

Pupils feel safe and the school site is secure. Visitors' credentials are closely checked before they enter the school. Vulnerable families receive timely support and case files are appropriately maintained. The single central record of checks made on adults before they work with children is compliant with statutory requirements.

Inspection findings

- New initiatives have been put in place to improve pupils' progress and attainment in writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. For example, your school

has taken a leading role in working with a consortium of schools to develop staff's skills in the teaching of writing. With regard to mathematics, additional training has also been provided, some of which has a particular focus on developing girls' reasoning skills. These new initiatives are bearing fruit. Work in current pupils' books and the school's own assessment information show that pupils' achievement in both of these subjects is improving. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard in mathematics and writing is still not as high as it could be. Consequently, this remains an area for improvement for the school.

- You have a good understanding of the barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils face. As a result of your monitoring, senior leaders immediately noted that the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils dipped in reading, writing and mathematics in 2018, having previously been strong. You have taken swift action to address this issue by ensuring that more-targeted use is made of the pupil premium funding to improve pupils' outcomes in all of these subjects. Inspection evidence shows that your actions have been successful. Disadvantaged pupils at your school flourish socially, academically and emotionally.
- The progress that middle-ability pupils in key stage 2 made in reading slowed in 2018. Again, senior leaders reacted quickly. There is now a much more targeted approach to the teaching of reading. The progress that pupils are making, particularly those of middle ability, is monitored more closely. Staff have had additional training to enhance further their skills in the teaching of reading. Trained volunteers come into the school to read with pupils, particularly those requiring extra support. Workshops have been provided for parents to help them develop their children's reading skills at home. Good use is made of the well-stocked library to foster pupils' and their families' love of reading. The result of your increased focus on the teaching of reading is bearing fruit. Middle-ability readers, along with other readers in key stage 2, make good progress from their starting points.
- When pupils read they are able to talk about the skills they are acquiring, such as inference and deduction. Most read with fluency and expression. They talk confidently about their favourite authors and the types of books they like to read.
- Every effort is made to ensure that pupils attend school on a regular basis. Regular attendance is rewarded and any unexplained absences are diligently followed up. Pupils with SEND are offered good levels of support in overcoming barriers which prevent them from attending school on a regular basis. Parents are discouraged from withdrawing their children during the academic year for family holidays. They are also made aware of the impact that non-attendance can have on pupils' progress and attainment. As a result of leaders' actions, pupils' overall attendance is now broadly in line with the national average.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- an even greater proportion of pupils reach the higher standards in writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

Sheila Iwaskow
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Classes in key stage 2 were visited alongside leaders to see the learning that was taking place. Three pupils from Year 6 read to an inspector and examples of pupils' work in books were scrutinised. Pupils were spoken to informally at various points throughout the day. A range of documentation was reviewed, including the single central record and the school's self-evaluation and development plans. The school's own assessment information relating to pupils' progress and attainment as well as the published data were taken into account. Fifty-seven responses from Ofsted's online questionnaire were received from parents, 19 from staff and 25 from pupils and these were taken into account.