

14 June 2019

Mrs Cathy Moore
Headteacher
Duston Eldean Primary School
Main Road
Duston
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN5 6PP

Dear Mrs Moore

Short inspection of Duston Eldean Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 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 second short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in February 2011. The first short inspection was carried out in February 2015, when the school was found to be continuing to be good.

This school continues to be good.

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

Together with your leadership team, you have continued to develop an aspirational and inclusive learning community. Parents and carers are strongly supportive of the school's ethos of delivering an education which develops pupils academically, socially and physically so that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They appreciate the wide range of opportunities on offer to them. Pupils feel that they play an important part in making the school an even better place to be.

Leaders have continued to refine and improve the quality of teaching and learning for all pupils. They have ensured that examples of the high-quality teaching and learning taking place within the school are shared with all staff so that teachers learn from each other. Teachers share the leaders' vision of wanting to provide the very best education for pupils. Teachers in the early stages of their careers receive well-judged training which reinforces the consistently strong teaching across the school. They feel well supported and staff morale is high.

Parents who I spoke with praised the pastoral support that the school provides and the difference that this has made to their children. Leaders ensure that pupils' needs are well supported so that they can make the most of learning opportunities.

For example, sensory circuits enable pupils to develop muscle strength and concentration before the start of the school day.

Leaders have developed a wide range of roles for pupils so that they can demonstrate leadership and enrich the school community. Mathematics ambassadors invent and organise special mathematics activities to demonstrate to parents the mathematical concepts that pupils are learning. Pupils in the eco club enjoy growing fruit that can be used in cookery lessons and learning how to care for the world around them.

Leaders and teachers have ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils enjoy participating in 'forest schools' and can explain how they develop self-confidence and learn to become more independent as a result of residential visits. Teachers ensure that pupils have opportunities to write for different reasons. Pupils choose their words well, whether to persuade the headteacher to agree to a reward for their hard work or to describe the sequence of actions in instructions clearly. However, the quality of pupils' work in their learning project books is not always as strong as it is in their other English work.

Areas for improvement at the last inspection focused on tracking the use of additional funding such as the sports premium. Leaders have evaluated carefully how this funding has been spent. They have increased the number and the range of sports available to ensure that there are opportunities for all pupils to participate in. They have checked to see that this has had an impact. The proportion of pupils who are involved in sporting festivals or who represent the school has increased sharply. Leaders have listened to pupils about how to make playtimes more active and checked to see that the changes that they have made have improved pupils' fitness.

At the time of the last inspection, you were also asked to improve the progress of pupils who do not make as much progress as others. Leaders meet with staff regularly to evaluate the progress of all pupils. Leaders and teachers identify pupils who have not made as much progress as others and provide additional support for them before or after lessons to consolidate their learning. Governors work with school leaders to review additional support and check that it is making a difference. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are making improved progress. For example, some pupils have made strong progress and now access the same curriculum as their peers. Some disadvantaged pupils are making strong progress. However, this is not yet consistent in all year groups.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders have provided training which has kept staff knowledge up to date. Staff feel that they receive good advice from safeguarding leads and feel confident about how to record any concerns that they have. Leaders ensure that these are dealt with in a timely manner. They have developed strong partnerships with families and the agencies that support them to ensure that pupils' welfare is at the centre of all decisions that are made.

Pupils, parents and staff say that bullying is rare but that when it does occur it is dealt with effectively. Leaders display no complacency about this. They ensure that pupils regularly learn about how they should deal with unkind behaviour and there are visible reminders around the school about this. Pupils explain how the FAB (Friendship and Anti-Bullying) groups can help them on the playground if needed. They also learn about the importance of tolerance and respect for all through their lessons and during assemblies.

Inspection findings

- Outcomes for pupils have improved since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected and higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1 and 2 was higher than the national average in 2018.
- Children get off to a flying start in their Reception Year. They gain a strong understanding of phonics and use their knowledge to write independently. They build on this knowledge in Year 1 in spelling more complex words. The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check is consistently higher than the national average. Pupils who do not reach this standard receive regular support in Year 2. However, not all the texts that they read independently support the development of their phonics knowledge well.
- A culture of reading is strongly promoted throughout the school. Leaders have ensured that all pupils have regular access to high-quality texts which stimulate discussion and challenge pupils' thinking. This has developed pupils' vocabulary and comprehension. Younger pupils identify alliteration and explain why the author has used it. They can explain how the text makes them feel, what they think is going to happen next and why. Older pupils build on this secure learning and make insightful comparisons between texts and they use their knowledge to infer meanings. As pupils become increasingly fluent readers, they learn how to identify words that they may not immediately understand and how to find out the meaning of them.
- Pupils use a wide range of vocabulary in their writing and most pupils present their work well. Older pupils use their knowledge of how authors shape their sentences for effect to produce more sophisticated writing. However, not all teachers expect pupils to use punctuation consistently well. Misconceptions are not always addressed and so some pupils continue to make the same errors in their written work.
- The progress that disadvantaged pupils made dipped at the end of key stage 2 in 2018. Leaders made changes to some of the additional support that disadvantaged pupils received to ensure that there were more opportunities for pupils to consolidate what they were learning in class. Scrutiny of current pupils' workbooks confirms the school's own assessment information which indicates that some disadvantaged pupils are making stronger progress than before, including pupils with SEND. However, leaders have not evaluated sharply enough the progress of different groups of disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils learn how to lead healthy lifestyles. They enjoy learning to bake apple

muffins and make salads and know why eating a balanced diet is important. They can explain the impact of exercise on the body and the difference that regular activity, such as the daily mile, is making to them and enjoy the range of clubs on offer.

- Older pupils are prepared well for transition to secondary school. They learn about how to use the internet safely and report any messages that they receive which upset them. They also discuss questions about the values and choices that are important to them, for example through discussing the appropriate use of mobile phones. They share their opinions with maturity and become confident and articulate communicators.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the evaluation of the use of pupil premium is further refined to check that all disadvantaged pupils make the best possible progress
- all teachers ensure that misconceptions in pupils' writing are consistently addressed and that the quality of pupils' writing is consistently strong.

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

Yours sincerely

Hazel Henson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and other leaders in the school. I spoke with the chair and three other representatives from the governing body. I spoke with four members of teaching staff and considered the 32 responses on the staff survey. I met with a group of six pupils and considered the response on the 114 pupil surveys. I observed learning jointly with you in all key stages. I scrutinised a selection of pupils' workbooks with you. I examined a range of the school's documentation, including its self-evaluation document, development plan and documents related to safeguarding. I observed behaviour around the school during the day. I considered the views of parents by speaking with some of them before school. I analysed the 121 responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.