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Mr Mark Grogan
Headteacher
Tyldesley St George's Central CofE Primary School
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Dear Mr Mark Grogan

Short inspection of Tyldesley St George's Central CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 September 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 April 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have developed a strong ethos where the school's Christian values are at the heart of everyone's work. You, your staff and governors have high aspirations for pupils and are determined to give them the best start to their education. You are not complacent and recognise that while the progress pupils make is good, more can be achieved. You have created new posts in your senior leadership team to help with this work, appointing two existing members of staff to be your assistant headteachers.

The school plays an important part in the local community and has developed strong partnerships with parents and the parish church of St George's. The local authority has recognised your influence and recently asked you to increase the early years provision by taking responsibility for a neighbouring nursery. The school has used this opportunity to offer places for two-year-old children.

Most parents are very complimentary about the school and appreciate the hard work and dedication of the staff. Typically, parents say that St George's Central is 'an excellent school with wonderful, professional and passionate staff'. I agree with the many positive comments that parents make about pupils' behaviour. During my visit, I was very impressed with how well pupils concentrate in their lessons. Around the school, behaviour was exemplary. Pupils were polite and friendly to adults and to each other.

Pupils are extremely proud of their school and feel valued. They were eager to talk to me about the many rewards on offer to celebrate their achievements and good behaviour. Pupils enjoy their learning and appreciate the wide range of out-of-school activities and sporting competitions that your staff provide. They also like that their work is challenging and explained that 'otherwise there would be no point in coming to school'.

The staff that responded to Ofsted's online survey are proud to work in the school and feel that you support them well. Staff appreciate the time you give them to manage their workload and the training they receive to improve their classroom practice.

You have taken action to tackle the areas for improvement from the last inspection. Inspectors asked you to help children improve their skills in mathematics and aspects of their writing. An able subject leader is supporting staff to improve their teaching of mathematics. Staff received additional training and there are now more opportunities for pupils to develop reasoning skills and apply their mathematical knowledge by solving problems. These actions have improved the progress that pupils make. Work in pupils' books confirms the school's own assessments that pupils make good progress in mathematics across all year groups.

The handwriting and presentation of pupils' work has also improved. A new handwriting scheme introduced in 2016 is having a positive effect. Pupils' books show that as they move through the school their spelling and punctuation becomes increasingly more accurate. The skills that pupils are taught in English lessons are used confidently in other subjects. Most pupils take pride in their work and by the end of Year 6 pupils achieve standards in their writing that are similar to pupils nationally.

You receive very good support from your consortium improvement advisor, who has helped you and your governors to accurately identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The systems in place to keep pupils safe are robust. Leaders and governors fulfil the statutory requirements when appointing new staff. Governors are mindful of their responsibilities regarding safeguarding and publish school policies on the website that are compliant with government guidance. Staff training is up to date and comprehensive.

School staff work extremely hard with families to support those pupils who need to improve their punctuality and attendance. The attendance of some pupils has increased significantly because of this close communication.

The very caring relationships that have been established between staff and pupils mean that pupils feel safe. Pupils have confidence that adults in school will help them if they have a problem and they know that it will be dealt with quickly. There

have been few recorded incidents of bullying. Pupils have a general understanding of bullying and say that occurrences in school are rare. Some pupils, however, were less clear about different types of bullying, including homophobic and sexist bullying. Staff have covered these issues but there is still work to do to ensure that pupils fully understand them and are well prepared to deal with any incidents.

Inspection findings

- In this inspection, I focused my time on four different aspects of the school's work. I wanted to find out whether pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive enough support to help them improve their learning and attendance. Leaders recognised that provision for this group of pupils needed to improve. A new special educational needs coordinator was recently appointed. A good start has been made in a short space of time and the coordinator has a clear view of what needs to be done. It is still early days, but recent changes have rightly focused on making sure that the support that pupils receive matches their needs. Leaders are aware that further work is needed to make sure that plans focus sharply on changes identified and that the progress and attendance of this group of pupils is carefully monitored.
- The second focus for the inspection was whether the level of development that children reached at the end of Reception is improving. Typically, children arrive in the Nursery with knowledge and skills that are below those typical for their age. Children's work and the school's assessments show that children make good progress by the time they leave Reception and are ready for the challenges of Year 1. The new leader for early years has introduced interesting ideas to help children become more independent. She has improved planning for the outdoor area to make sure that the activities excite pupils. Inside the classroom, there are ample resources and tasks that are designed to encourage children to think carefully. Staff give great attention to how the environment helps children to learn, regardless of how it may look to adults. This helps children feel secure and safe to explore and enjoy learning. These changes are bringing about improvements and by the end of early years, children are reaching the standards expected of them.
- The third area I investigated was progress in reading. Data suggests pupils make better progress in writing than in reading. In 2016, the standard pupils achieved in reading were below average. You took swift action to remedy this. Changes included more opportunities for pupils to discuss texts and to understand new vocabulary. These actions helped pupils develop their reading skills. Disadvantaged pupils who needed to catch up were given extra help and time to read in school. Pupils told me that they appreciate the wide range of books the school has to offer and they enjoy reading. The school's own assessments show that in July 2017 across the whole school a higher proportion of pupils met the standards expected of them. Standards reached by Year 6 pupils were similar to other pupils nationally.
- A further line of enquiry was to investigate the curriculum and pupils' progress across a range of subjects. Together, you and your staff have developed a well-considered curriculum. Pupils are excited by the interesting topics you have

chosen. For example, the Year 5 teacher has ignited his pupils' curiosity about the rainforest. This teacher has skilfully planned the topic so that pupils develop their skills and knowledge across the curriculum, including science, English and geography. There are also opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in these areas.

- The school's approach to sport is a real strength and the additional government funding received to promote physical education is used well. Through the Atherton and Tyldesley Sports Association a high proportion of pupils access non-traditional and inclusive sports including curling and short-mat bowling. This contributes to improved health and well-being for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school's strong moral and spiritual ethos features throughout the curriculum and help pupils develop empathy, respect and understanding of others. Pupils participate widely in the community and learn about how to make a positive contribution to society. Pupils' work shows that the school's curriculum generally contributes well to their progress across a range of subjects.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the progress and attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is carefully checked so that they do not fall behind
- the leadership of special educational needs continues to bring about the improvements that are needed
- pupils have a better understanding of different types of bullying, including homophobic and sexist bullying.

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

Yours sincerely

Catherine Parkinson
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I carried out observations of learning across all key stages. Two of these were joint observations with the headteacher. Along with subject leaders, I also looked at pupils' work in books. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation summary, action plans for school improvement, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, minutes of meetings of the governing body, behaviour logs and records connected with the safeguarding of pupils. I held discussions with members of staff, governors and a representative

from the local authority. I listened to pupils read. I evaluated 57 responses received through Parent View (Ofsted's online survey) and 21 responses received through the online staff survey. Eighteen pupils responded to Ofsted's online survey and I also took account of the views of pupils I spoke to in school.