

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



21 March 2016

Mr John Walsh
Headteacher
Percy Main Primary School
Nelson Terrace
Percy Main
North Shields
Tyne and Wear
NE29 6JA

Dear Mr John Walsh

Short inspection of Percy Main Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 8 March 2016, 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 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, senior leaders and governors have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. You know each individual pupil well and work hard to ensure that they achieve their full potential. Pupils' views are greatly valued, as shown by the way they are involved in checking on the work of the school themselves, through conducting learning walks. Staff morale is high and staff work effectively as a team, supporting one another. Governance is a strength. Governors have a good understanding of the work of the school because they visit regularly to see for themselves how well pupils are learning.

The previous inspection identified the need to improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. This has been addressed effectively and, as a result, pupils are making better progress and their attainment has risen at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils are interested and motivated in their learning because of the rich curriculum they receive. They are helped to improve their writing through having visits to interesting places, which stimulates their imaginations, and opportunities to discuss their learning. Marking and verbal feedback are effective in helping pupils improve their work, in line with the school's own policy. Teachers provide work for pupils which challenges their thinking, such as solving problems or being involved in investigative activities in mathematics or science. Staff work effectively together to share good practice.

Leaders acknowledge that there is further work to be done to improve the quality of writing across the school. Evidence in pupils' books shows that handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work could be better, although the content of their writing is of good quality. This good-quality writing in English is not always reflected in other subjects such as topic or science work. A few younger pupils do not always have a correct pencil grip and do not always form letters and numbers correctly. These issues are not always addressed promptly.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, your staff and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of high quality. The single central record is kept diligently and meets requirements. All staff have attended child protection training at the appropriate level, including the four designated safeguarding officers. The headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body have attended training to ensure that all staff appointed are considered safe to work with children. Leaders and the school business manager carry out thorough and detailed risk assessments on all aspects of the school, in addition to those in relation to educational visits.

Pupils who spoke to me during the inspection confirmed that they feel safe. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using computers and social media and know to inform an adult if they have any concerns. Older pupils attend a workshop where they learn about a wide range of safety hazards and how to deal with them to keep themselves safe. Very few parents responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, but those who did commented positively on the way in which staff deal promptly with any concerns they may have. The care, guidance and support officer works closely with pupils and their families to provide valuable advice and support to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Inspection findings

- You, and other leaders, clearly know the strengths of the school and the areas to be improved. This leads to accurate self-evaluation of the performance of the school. School improvement plans identify the right priorities, although these plans could be refined further by ensuring that there are targets by which success can be measured more accurately. Subject and other leaders are regularly involved in checking the work in their areas of responsibility and they support staff to improve. Leaders have an accurate understanding of how well every pupil is doing and challenge staff to make sure any underachievement is tackled promptly.
- Governors play a strategic role in the work of the school. They are working collaboratively with leaders and governors in other schools to secure the long-term future of the school. They are passionate about supporting the work of the school, becoming actively involved in activities and seeing for themselves how well pupils are learning. They have no hesitation in challenging leaders and staff to improve, if required. Systems to manage the performance of staff are effective and staff know they will be unable to progress up the pay scale unless challenging targets are met.

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Teachers plan a range of topics over the year that really engage pupils in their learning. Pupils relish opportunities to gain first-hand experiences through educational visits and visitors into school. For example, during the inspection Year 2 pupils were producing high-quality 'animations' using computer technology, with the support of an adviser from the local authority.
- Children in the early years make a good start to their education. They make good progress in most areas of learning, although their skills in writing are weaker. Adults are addressing this by ensuring that children have many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills so they can formulate their ideas before writing them down. Some children do not have a correct pencil grip and errors in the formation of letters and numbers are not always tackled promptly. Children are rapidly learning new words and love 'feeding' them to the hungry 'Tricky Monster' when they read them accurately.
- Pupils in Year 1 are learning their phonics sounds (letters and the sounds they make) well to help them tackle unfamiliar words. By the end of Year 2, the vast majority of pupils have achieved the phonics screening check, although there was a dip in the Year 1 results last year. Pupils in Year 1 were keen to read their sentences about 'castles' and used some good vocabulary to express their ideas. Attainment is rising year on year in Key Stage 1, with pupils reaching the national standards expected of their age in 2014 and 2015. This is because of the good-quality teaching they receive.
- Pupils make good progress across Key Stage 2 over time, although there was a dip in reading and writing in 2015. Leaders are aware of the reasons for this and did much to support pupils who did not achieve as well in the tests, due to unforeseen circumstances. A high proportion of pupils made more than expected progress in mathematics, attaining standards well above those expected for their age. Disadvantaged pupils made more progress than their peers and gaps are rapidly closing. Lower-attaining pupils, those children looked after and those with special educational needs made outstanding progress. This is because of the exceptional, care, guidance and targeted support they receive from staff.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and to one another. Their behaviour is good and pupils report that any rare incidents of challenging behaviour are managed effectively by staff. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying and know they can approach any adult if they have a concern. Pupils are developing a good understanding of modern British values through learning about those from faiths and backgrounds different to their own. They learn about democracy and the rule of law and this was enhanced by Year 6 pupils visiting the Houses of Parliament on the day of the inspection.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils improve their handwriting and the presentation of their work
- pupils' good writing skills are also reflected in other subjects
- the school improvement plan contains targets by which success can be measured more precisely.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for North Tyneside Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christine Inkster
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this short one-day inspection, I met you, the deputy headteacher and subject and other leaders. I held meetings with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. You, and the deputy headteacher, conducted joint observations with me to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and we jointly looked at pupils' work. I met with a group of pupils and spoke to pupils informally in lessons. I considered a range of documents, including the school's own self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, records of your evaluations on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, local authority reports and documents relating to safeguarding (protecting children and keeping them safe). I considered the six parental responses from the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the five responses to the staff questionnaire. Pupil responses to the questionnaire were not submitted as part of this inspection.