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30 January 2018

Miss Amanda Hall  
Headteacher  
West Park Primary School  
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Dear Miss Hall

### **Short inspection of West Park Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 9 January 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 June 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence available during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Leadership is the responsibility of all of your staff. You have maintained and enhanced a skilful and highly effective school team in which morale remains high. There is a tangible drive and sense of urgency to provide high-quality learning opportunities which allow pupils to thrive. Improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are accelerating quickly the rates of progress of current pupils across the school. The whole school team has diligently addressed issues raised at the last inspection. The role of subject leaders, especially for English and mathematics, has been crucial in driving up standards in pupils' attainment across school.

Teachers routinely establish high expectations. They accept no excuses for failure and they work collaboratively to address issues that arise. You, governors and other school leaders keep a close eye on the quality of teaching, undertaking monitoring of teaching in lessons and analysing work in pupils' books. The work of the school has been strengthened and enhanced by the support received from the multi-academy trust, as well as collaborative work with other trust schools.

Systems and procedures to rigorously monitor the impact of teaching on pupils' progress in learning are sharp and incisive, and you know the school inside out. As a result, you acknowledge that pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics in both key stages 1 and 2 is not as strong as that found in reading and writing. This is the case even though the proportion reaching expected levels in mathematics at the end of Year 6 exceeds that found nationally. You have made this a key priority and already there are substantial improvements in pupils' achievement in most year groups. Similarly, you acknowledge that changes in early years have slowed the progress of some children in the past, although recent innovations are quickly taking effect to address this and are raising standards.

Pupils respond well to the high expectations of staff and this is seen in their excellent attitudes to learning in lessons. They work hard and are always keen to produce their best work. Pupils develop excellent citizenship skills, being keen to take on responsibilities through roles such as being a member of the school council, taking on a monitor's role in each class or as part of the eco-council. Pupils take pride in the well-ordered and extremely tidy school environment, benefiting from quality displays in classes and shared areas, dotted with inspirational quotes. Pupils' behaviour in class and around school is exemplary.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The long-established culture of keeping pupils safe remains very evident in your school. Leaders ensure that a culture of safeguarding is embedded among all staff and they leave no stone unturned in their duty to keep pupils safe. The school has a tangible ethos that is positive and caring, putting the welfare and well-being of each pupil at the heart of all that it does. This is clearly seen in the friendly and confident manner of the pupils in school, who report feeling safe at all times. They have full trust in the adults who look after them. The curriculum supports pupils well in maintaining their own safety, including keeping themselves safe online.

Policies, procedures and records are of extremely high quality, enhanced by the meticulous and detailed records on the school's online system. Staff training is thorough, including training to ensure that pupils are kept safe from the risk of extremism and online dangers. Registers of staff training are completed diligently, showing that all employed staff's training is up to date. Staff have access to well-written policies and guidance and, as a result, have a very secure understanding of their individual responsibilities for safeguarding pupils.

### **Inspection findings**

- Based on detailed and accurate newly introduced tracking systems, it is clear that current pupils are making very strong progress in their learning in every year group in reading, writing, and now too in mathematics. By the end of Year 6, the proportion who reach the expected standard in all subjects is well above that found nationally. The most able pupils also make strong progress in their learning so that the proportion who are working at a greater depth exceeds that found nationally in reading and writing, and is in line in mathematics. Work seen in

pupils' books in visits to classes during the inspection was of high quality, with excellent standards of handwriting and presentation. You acknowledge that a small gap still exists between achievement in mathematics and that in reading and writing, but that this is closing quickly, including for the most able pupils.

- Children in the early years are getting off to a fast start in their learning. Children start West Park with varying skills and abilities appropriate for their age. The majority travel from other areas within the locality to join the school. You acknowledge that there has been instability in staffing in early years which has slowed the pace of learning for some. New systems and approaches to teaching, led by the skilled early years leader, are clearly accelerating the pace of learning for all children. In summer 2017, the proportion of children that reached a good level of development was just above that found nationally. Currently, a much greater proportion than this are on track to reach a good level of development at the end of this year.
- You have ensured that the school continues to work tirelessly to ensure that all pupils are safe and well cared for. The strong relationships in school and high levels of trust between adults and pupils ensure that pupils' conduct in lessons and around school is exemplary. Pupils are polite, caring, considerate and friendly to each other and to visitors. Playtimes are harmonious occasions where pupils play happily together, often led by playground friends and playground leaders. Safeguarding is highly effective and the school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is excellent.
- Teaching is of a consistently high quality and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Leaders' monitoring of teaching is rigorous, detailed and links very closely with the impact that teaching makes on the rates of progress pupils make in their learning. High-quality staff training, sharing of good practice within the school and with partner schools in the trust and a tangible energy to succeed underpin an ethos to 'be the best' for the benefit of the pupils.
- Staff are skilled at supporting, prompting and challenging pupils to produce their best work. Teachers are increasingly adept in the promotion of reasoning in mathematical problem-solving, such as finding missing quantities in a table of perimeter and area measurements in a Year 5/6 lesson. Pupils in Year 2 were asked to prove whether three odd numbers added together resulted in an even number always, sometimes or never. Pupils who read to me used expression and were able to use their phonic knowledge to read unknown words.
- Staff and leaders at all levels share the same ambition to eradicate underperformance. They work tirelessly to solve problems and make continuous improvements, teamwork being the catalyst for change. Morale within the school community is buoyant. Leaders, staff and governors share the same drive that places the all-round development of each pupil at the heart of the school's purpose, so that every pupil grows academically, socially and emotionally. Pupils are very well prepared to begin the next stage of their education.
- The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils have the highest rates of attendance possible. Valuable work is undertaken by the attendance officer and the parental support adviser. Pupils' rates of attendance match those found nationally but could be even higher if the number of unauthorised holidays in

term time was reduced. The persistent absence of the very small number of disadvantaged pupils is slowly declining as their rate of attendance improves.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- children in the early years continue to make rapid progress in their learning so that an even greater proportion reach a good level of development
- pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics continue to improve so that they match the high levels found in reading and writing, including the proportion of pupils working at a greater depth in their learning.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Hartlepool. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Phil Scott  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and members of the senior leadership team. You and I visited lessons in each key stage. I met with six members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and the chief executive officer of AdAstra Academy Trust. I spoke to pupils about their work and their views of the school. I listened to pupils read and looked in pupils' workbooks when in lessons. A range of documents was considered relating to safeguarding and external evaluations of the school. I examined the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, the school's monitoring of its own performance and its assessment and tracking of current pupils' progress. I also scrutinised pupils' recent achievement in the 2017 statutory assessments, responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View, and the school's website.