

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



22 March 2018

Ms S Finch  
Headteacher  
Westminster Community Primary School  
John Street  
Ellesmere Port  
Cheshire  
CH65 2ED

Dear Ms Finch

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Westminster Primary Community School.**

Following my visit to your school on 6 March 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the monitoring inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- embed the effective practice already started so that a greater proportion of middle-attaining pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, reach the higher standards at the end of key stage 2
- embed strategies introduced to improve presentation skills across all curriculum subjects.

**Evidence**

I met with members of the governing body, the deputy and three middle leaders. I also met with a representative from the local authority. I spoke with a group of seven Year 5 and Year 6 pupils to gain their views on the school. You accompanied me on a tour of the classrooms to observe pupils' learning. I looked at pupils' books

and work displayed around the school. I evaluated the school's improvement plan, records relating to pupils' achievement and your checks on the quality of teaching. I also looked at the minutes of governing body meetings. I considered the school's most recent pupil performance data and the external review of pupil premium funding. I met with parents and carers before school and considered 11 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.

## **Main findings**

After the previous inspection, you established a very clear vision for improvement which is shared by senior leaders, middle leaders and all staff. As a result of the determination and positive attitude displayed by yourself and your senior leadership team, you were able quickly to set about making the changes needed to get the school back on track. As a consequence, much has already been achieved, including the setting of high expectations for staff and pupils. You review and fine-tune plans based on the impact of actions on pupils' outcomes and personal development. Your development plan is well structured, with suitable timescales and indications of what success will look like. You clearly understand what needs to happen to move the school forward. This means that leaders know the strengths of the school and take appropriate action to remedy weaknesses.

You have taken effective action to raise both aspirations and standards, while sustaining the personal development of pupils of which you are so proud. You rapidly introduced effective procedures to enable leaders to check the progress that the school is making towards becoming good. The implementation of your plans has been effective in bringing about swift improvements, most notably in developing a very effective middle leadership team that successfully contributes to whole-school development plans and self-evaluation.

The determination and passion with which staff discussed their subject areas with me reflect the positive morale and commitment to providing the best possible outcomes for all pupils. Capacity has improved. For example, the leadership of mathematics, English and for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities increasingly ensures that pupils' achievement continues to improve. You also ensure that middle leaders have the time, skills and opportunities they need to review the work of staff. Governance has remained strong. Governors hold leaders to account based on the impact they have on improving pupils' outcomes. Governors feel passionate about the school being central to the community they serve.

Across the school, work in lessons and books, alongside the school's data, shows that pupils are making stronger progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Effective training and support ensure that teachers have the skills and expertise to plan and deliver effective lessons. This was reflected in pupils' good behaviour, engagement and interest in the learning we observed during the inspection. Helpfully, your planning includes strategies to embed these improvements so that

more middle-ability pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, reach the higher standards by the end of key stage 2.

You have taken successful action to make sure that the sharing of good practice in the teaching of writing has been effective in improving outcomes for pupils, including through the sharing of good practice in early writing in Reception. Staff are active in supporting one another by reviewing each other's practice. This is adding greater consistency to teaching and learning across school.

A scrutiny of pupils' work during the inspection showed that pupils' understanding and use of punctuation, more adventurous vocabulary and their organisation of writing are improving. Regular opportunities to write across the curriculum allow pupils to extend their vocabulary and ideas. This also allows them to write creatively and at length. You have made effective use of good-quality reading books to inspire creative writing as well as using drama, based on class texts, to enthuse pupils before they begin writing. However, you recognise that pupils' presentation of their written work is not consistently of a high enough standard.

You were also asked to ensure that expectations for learning are high, and that teaching consistently meets the needs of pupils of different abilities, including the lower-ability children and most-able children. The expectations for high-quality teaching are clear and understood by all. Through coaching from senior leaders and from a neighbouring teaching school, teachers have quickly developed the skills to analyse pupils' work effectively and contribute to pupil progress meetings. Such training has also raised expectations and ensures that teachers have the skills and expertise to plan and deliver effective lessons. Provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well mapped out, with clear targets and success criteria. Your teachers are clear about what their pupils need to know, understand and be able to do by the end of the year. During lessons, teachers and teaching assistants assess pupils' knowledge and understanding accurately. Teachers use this information to plan lessons which move pupils' learning forward quickly.

Another area for improvement was to develop the application of pupils' mathematical skills in order to deepen their understanding. You also use the expertise from the teaching school and internal strengths to improve practice in this subject. Leaders have made helpful changes to the teaching of mathematics. These have resulted in more opportunities for pupils to use reasoning and problem-solving skills, so developing their thinking and encouraging a deeper level of understanding. Through this consistent approach to problem-solving, pupils are able to visualise problems and decide on the steps necessary to solve the problems presented to them. As a result, pupils are developing much stronger mathematical reasoning skills. Pupils I spoke to say that they enjoy using reasoning skills in mathematics because the work is interesting, challenging and fun. The subject leader works hard to make sure that there are real-life reasons for pupils to use their mathematical skills, for example creating graphs in science and using coordinates in geography.

You were also asked to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils by increasing levels of attendance and reducing persistent absence. You and your staff are clearly visible at the start and end of each day to promote good communication with parents. You know your families well and work closely with them to provide the support that they need. As a consequence, punctuality is improving and the current level of attendance now reflects that seen nationally. As a result, pupils are making better progress within school. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is also improving and the number of pupils who are persistently absent is decreasing. You work closely with other agencies to support the most vulnerable families. Leaders follow up absence rigorously and parents are held to account.

### **External support**

The local authority acted quickly by providing training and arranging support from a teaching school. This support has helped middle leaders to develop the skills they need to carry out their roles effectively. The local authority officer knows the school well and regularly reviews school improvement, offering support where necessary. You chose to commission a review of pupil premium spending. This helped leaders to identify barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils and, as a consequence, has enhanced the provision for this group. Some of these pupils are now making accelerated progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Simon Hunter  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**