Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted

22 March 2019

Mr N Huxley
Headteacher
Aughton Town Green Primary School
Town Green Lane
Aughton
Ormskirk
Lancashire
L39 6SF

Dear Mr Huxley

Short inspection of Aughton Town Green Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 March 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 first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in December 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Staff and governors share your high expectations and aspirations for pupils. At Aughton Town Green Primary School, pupils flourish in a safe and nurturing atmosphere embodied by the school motto: 'Only my best is good enough for me'.

Parents and carers speak very positively about the school. All those who accessed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, would recommend the school to others. Parents feel well informed about the progress that their children make. They appreciate the guidance that they receive so as to be able to help their children at home, particularly with phonics and reading. Parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) appreciate the care and support that their children receive from you and your staff. Parents commented on the extremely positive atmosphere in school. They commented confidently that should they have any concerns, they are dealt with swiftly by you and your staff. As a result, they feel valued and listened to. Parents particularly welcome the advice and guidance given following recent concerns in the media about e-safety.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They are extremely polite and well mannered. They care about each other and are proud of their school. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously as members of committees, buddy readers and role models for younger pupils. They appreciate the wide range of clubs on offer, including sports clubs and a book club. Pupils also enjoy learning to play a brass instrument. Pupils say that teachers make learning fun and interesting.

The pupils with whom I spoke commented: 'You can tell that teachers enjoy teaching because their enthusiasm is infectious', and, 'We will remember everything they have taught us when we go to secondary school.'

During the inspection, we discussed several key lines of enquiry, including the successful actions that you have taken to tackle the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. You have established a strong culture of professional dialogue, support and challenge among your staff. These support mechanisms have been particularly helpful for staff new to teaching. Middle leaders check on the quality of teaching and provide advice and support for staff when necessary. You and your leaders ensure that staff have the knowledge and understanding that they need to support pupils' learning effectively. Without doubt, the quality of teaching has continued to improve since the last inspection.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Robust systems are in place to check that all adults in school are safe to work with children. All records are detailed and securely kept. Training for staff ensures that safeguarding arrangements are understood by staff. Leaders work very effectively with other agencies to ensure that pupils and families receive guidance and support where necessary.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including road safety. Online safety is given a high priority in school. Junior e-safety champions check that pupils know what to do to keep themselves safe when they are using the internet. Pupils also understand the different forms bullying can take, including cyber bullying. They commented confidently that should any bullying occur, teachers deal with it quickly.

Inspection findings

- I was interested to know what actions you had taken to resolve the areas for improvement following the last inspection. Leaders provide opportunities for teachers to work collaboratively with colleagues, including colleagues in other schools, to share knowledge and expertise. Teachers use assessment effectively to plan learning opportunities that ignite pupils' imaginations and enthusiasm for learning. Activities meet the needs of pupils well. Pupils say that they enjoy the challenges that teachers set them. Within lessons, teachers identify pupils who are struggling and give them the help they need to catch up quickly.
- We discussed the progress that pupils make in reading at the end of key stage 2 and the specific reasons for the dip in progress in reading in 2018. Leaders' careful analysis of assessment information identified that pupils' limited vocabulary knowledge and understanding of inference were hindering the progress that they make. Training by the leader for English has improved the staff's knowledge and understanding considerably. Reading across the school is given high priority. Pupils are enthusiastic about their reading. High-quality texts engage pupils as readers. They enjoy the reading challenges that teachers set

and talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors. They are confident and competent readers. Pupils who struggle with their reading catch up quickly because of the effective help that they receive.

- The increased focus on developing pupils' vocabulary knowledge has had a direct impact on improving the progress pupils make in other subjects. Teachers use effective questions skilfully to probe pupils' understanding of key vocabulary. Comments from pupils who spoke to the inspector included: 'The questions teachers ask help us to think carefully about the things we already know, so we give more detailed answers.' Pupils routinely apply their vocabulary, spelling and grammar knowledge effectively to their own writing. Teachers have high expectations. As a result, pupils' pride in their work is reflected in their excellent presentation and the consistently high-quality written work that they produce, particularly at key stage 2. The school's assessment information for current pupils shows that the vast majority are working at the standard expected for their age, including an increasing proportion working at a higher standard.
- I was also interested to see how you are improving the outcomes for pupils in writing in key stage 1. Teachers use assessment information effectively to identify accurately the gaps in pupils' knowledge. Training for staff on the use of grammar and punctuation has had a positive impact on the quality of pupils' written work in key stages 1 and 2. Teachers plan activities that spark pupils' enthusiasm as learners. Teachers model the correct use of vocabulary and punctuation. They provide opportunities for pupils to write independently at greater length, including in other curriculum subjects. Pupils apply their vocabulary knowledge accurately in their written research, for example about the different climates in which animals live and what they do to survive. Key stage 1 pupils also made significant progress in their writing about how penguins keep themselves warm.
- Teachers encourage pupils to use ever more challenging vocabulary. For example, the vocabulary on a display of pupils' poetry about a frosty morning, beautifully described 'the delicate crystal cobwebs that the sun shines through'. Pupils know what they need to do to improve their writing further, for example by using adjectives, adverbs and correct punctuation. Support staff are deployed very effectively to help pupils who need extra support. As a result, they catch up quickly. Pupils make good progress and are rightly proud of their achievements. Nevertheless, it is too soon to evaluate the impact of these improvements on end of key stage published test data.
- We also looked at the way phonics is taught. Leaders have identified the reasons for the dip in the proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2018. They have successfully implemented changes in the organisation of how phonics is taught. Training ensures that staff have the knowledge and understanding that they need. Leaders ensure that phonics is taught consistently from the start of Reception. Teachers systematically build on pupils' prior knowledge. Pupils make strong progress from their starting points because of the good-quality support that they receive. Pupils use their phonics knowledge accurately to decode new words. The books pupils read match their needs and interests, and provide the appropriate amount of challenge. Pupils are confident and competent readers. Well-attended workshops for parents provide

them with the knowledge that they need to help their children at home. Parents commented positively about the good progress their children make, particularly in their reading.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they build on the successful strategies in place to increase further the proportion of pupils who do well for their age, particularly in writing.

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

Yours sincerely

Amanda Stringer
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, other members of the leadership team and staff. I also spoke with members of the board of governors. I visited classrooms with you, where I had the opportunity to speak with pupils and look at their work. I met with a group of pupils formally during the day, and I spoke with a number of parents at the start of the school day. I took account of the 24 responses to the staff questionnaire, and 51 responses to the pupil questionnaire. I also considered eight free-text comments and the 117 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. I scrutinised a range of documents, including the single central record.