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Mr Andrew Simms
Headteacher
Bidford-on-Avon CofE Primary School
Bramley Way
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Warwickshire
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Dear Mr Simms

Short inspection of Bidford-on-Avon CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 2 February 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.

- This is a warm and welcoming church school, where pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is at the heart of everything it does. Staff are very supportive of the leaders, are proud to be part of the school and agree that pupils' behaviour is good. Leaders have made changes to move the school forward and are aware that some improvements are still needed. There are a number of clear strengths in this school, such as a detailed knowledge of pupils' needs. To further improve teaching and pupils' outcomes, leaders now need to use and develop the consistency of these strengths across the school.
- Pupils receive a good education at this school. They are rightly proud of their school and enjoy the exciting range of lessons, extra-curricular activities and trips which the staff organise. Pupils have the opportunity to join a range of clubs run by the school and take on a number of exciting leadership opportunities. These include the science committee, 'playtime pals' and school managers. Pupils involved in these roles are very enthusiastic, attending science meetings, helping others at playtimes and delivering the registers to and from the school office, for example. As part of its work to teach a broad curriculum and work with external organisations, the school has achieved a number of national awards, such as the Food for Life Partnership silver award and the Primary Science Quality Mark gold award.

- At the previous inspection, it was recommended that leaders and managers should ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good or better across the school. Five new teachers have joined the school in recent years, mostly in Key Stage 2. School records show that the quality of teaching has improved recently, as a result of training and higher expectations of teachers and pupils. However, records regarding the quality of teaching do not match pupils' progress information closely enough. A recent move towards a cross-curricular approach to writing is improving progress, especially that of boys. The headteacher works closely with a local consortium of schools to evaluate and improve the provision in each of the schools involved.
- Key stage leaders now have greater access to assessment information and are involved in pupil progress meetings. Teachers have a better knowledge of the national standards and regularly compare pupils' workbooks to check teachers' judgements are accurate. Leaders have introduced more comprehension and challenge into the teaching of reading, which is regularly observed by the assistant headteacher. Teaching assistants have received training to help develop pupils' inference skills. There is now a better range of books in the library and staff now check pupils' reading books more regularly. Leaders are aware that more work is needed to further improve pupils' outcomes in reading.
- The proportion of vulnerable pupils at the school is slightly lower than the national average. This includes disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, Gypsy and Traveller pupils and pupils with special educational needs or disability. Case studies show that the needs of some of these pupils have been met successfully and they are progressing well. Some pupils in these groups have complex needs and their progress has been slower. The 'well-being' team of adults in the school has expanded to meet pupils' increasing needs and parents are very appreciative of the school's efforts to support their children. Overall, the school nurtures and caters for vulnerable pupils well, while recognising that there is more work that can be done to improve their progress by the time they leave the school in Year 6.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that there are effective systems in place to keep pupils safe. There is a good awareness of safeguarding around the school, as staff are trained in child protection and the prevention of extremism. They keep up to date with current requirements and report any concerns that arise. Pupils say they feel safe, because staff resolve issues they have and the pupils who are 'e-safety ambassadors' support other pupils well. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, records are of high quality and productive relationships with parents are maintained.

Behaviour is good, because pupils are respectful of each other and all members of staff. Pupils say that there are very few problems at playtimes because adults help to resolve quickly the rare disagreements that occur. Staff manage behaviour well through the strong social, moral, spiritual and cultural curriculum, and teaching pupils to respect others.

Inspection findings

- The culture of this school is one of inclusion and improvement. Leaders have continued to develop teaching, the curriculum and the physical environment of the school since the previous inspection. Pupils' outcomes have been above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 for the last three years. By the time they leave the school, most pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points. In 2015, some groups of Year 6 pupils made less progress by the time they left the school, such as girls in mathematics and boys in writing. Leaders are aware of this and now need to ensure that teaching is adapted to meet the needs of all learners.
- Teaching and pupils' outcomes are stronger in early years provision and Key Stage 1, where pupils' attainment continues to improve. In 2015, the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standard by the end of Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 continued to increase and were above the national average. An increasing number of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieved the higher standard (level 3) at the end of Year 2 last year.
- Teachers improve their skills through training and working closely with staff in other schools. Leaders have enabled teachers to be involved in research projects, to develop the way assessment is used to improve pupils' learning. Owing to pupils' increasing speech and language needs, the school's approach to learning has been amended. An example of this is the teaching of reading, which now has a greater focus on language and comprehension.
- Pupils were observed engaging in purposeful learning activities across the school. In Reception, children were enthusiastically creating their own version of the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff' story. Pupils in Year 2 were subtracting money from amounts such as £20 and £50, and were keen to get onto the harder problems. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were completing reading activities. Their reading journals showed progress as a result of higher expectations and completed corrections, for example. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were observed learning mathematics in ability groups. Some pupils were improving their multiplication skills and others were calculating the angles inside shapes. Pupils in all classes were keen to learn in quiet, purposeful environments. However, the most-able pupils were not challenged enough in lessons to progress more quickly and not all teachers had the same expectations of pupils.
- The classrooms are bright, colourful and engaging places to learn. The walls and corridors are decorated with interesting displays related to current cross-curricular topics. Pupils were observed enjoying the spacious grounds and appreciating the new climbing frame. Pupils pointed out to me that the Lord's Prayer has been etched into the new horseshoe-shaped bench. Pupils were keen to tell me how good their school is and how well staff support their learning and preparation for the next stage of their education.

- Nearly all parents are very supportive of the school and appreciative of the extra effort made by staff to ensure their children are settled and progressing well. The parents who spoke to me said that their children love coming to school and the homework set is appropriate. Parents say they are kept well informed of both whole-school events and of any concerns that arise. One parent who spoke to me was very impressed that the school had identified their child's needs in Reception, which led to the child receiving early help, support and understanding throughout primary school.
- Governors support and challenge the school effectively. They are experienced and skilled, and hold leaders to account for their responsibilities. Some governors work closely with the school leaders, the local community and the church to develop the work of the school and its place within the village. Governors visit the school regularly, talk to pupils about their learning and monitor the progress of the actions leaders are taking to further improve the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- teaching is adapted to effectively meet the needs of all pupils, including the most able, to enable them to make the progress of which they are capable
- assessment and monitoring information is used effectively to target teaching and improve the consistency of provision between classes
- leaders' feedback to teachers matches pupils' progress information more closely.

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

Yours sincerely

Stuart Bellworthy
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the assistant headteacher, a group of pupils and a group of governors. You and I observed teaching in six classes across the school, checked how well adults are used and looked at work in pupils' workbooks. I spoke to a representative from the local authority. I looked at pupils' workbooks from across the school in a range of subjects to establish the progress and quality of pupils' work over time. Informal discussions were held with parents to gauge their views on the school, and 60 recent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including any free-text comments, were considered. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes were observed around the school and at playtimes. A wide range of documentation was also scrutinised, including the school's plans for improvement, external monitoring reports, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, records of checks made by leaders, and information on pupils' current progress and most recent outcomes.