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Mrs Michele Bramble
Headteacher
Bugbrooke Community Primary School
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Dear Mrs Bramble

Short inspection of Bugbrooke Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 13 October 2015 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 November 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

While progress of pupils overall in 2014 was broadly average or above in all subjects, it was significantly below in reading for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs. Progress was also significantly below average for boys in writing.

Since your arrival in September 2014, you have significantly improved the school by raising expectations for both teachers and pupils. With close and effective support from your deputy headteacher, you have made it clear that every pupil must succeed and only teaching which is good, or better, is acceptable. You have not been afraid to take tough decisions in the interests of improving outcomes for pupils.

As a result, inadequate teaching has been eliminated. You have successfully improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Teaching is improving across the school and is, in almost all cases, good or better. Staff are a united team who are motivated because they see that their new ways of teaching are resulting in faster progress from pupils. Pupils, in turn, are enjoying the greater challenge in lessons and, for example, boys have now joined girls in writing enthusiastically in their lessons. On our visit to classrooms I saw all pupils working hard on the tasks

they had been given and achieving well. I met a number of boys in different classes who were keen to show me their exercise books and demonstrate what they have improved on. They also wanted to tell me how they had been enthused to write by the recent visit of an author to the school, which had made them realise that they could create exciting stories from their own imagination. Pupils told me very enthusiastically that they are extremely proud to be a pupil at the school. As one pupil said, teachers 'make learning fun!'

As a result of the improvements being made to teaching, pupils are making faster progress overall. Unconfirmed information for 2015 indicates that expected levels of progress for pupils in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 improved and is above the previous year's national averages. Reading and writing results improved slightly and remain broadly at the national averages. The majority of disadvantaged pupils made at least the progress expected of them, or exceeded this, in all subjects. However, you recognise that not every pupil at Bugbrooke is yet making the progress they are capable of, and the most-able pupils are not yet reaching the highest measures of attainment in writing. In addition, you do not regularly check that all teachers are setting the correct level of challenge for all pupils.

Governors are effective and highly committed to further improvement. They have undertaken training to ensure that they can analyse information about pupils' performance. While warmly supportive of the improvements you have made, they are not afraid to challenge you and other leaders where necessary. They are helping to ensure that progress continues to accelerate for all groups of pupils. However, the school improvement plan is not as effective as it should be, because the arrangements to check that actions have taken place are unclear.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your staff take your responsibilities to safeguard pupils with the utmost seriousness. The school's procedures to ensure that pupils are protected are robust. All staff are trained annually about a wide range of risks to pupils. New staff are given training immediately as part of their induction package.

Staff know that they must report concerns, however minor, without delay. There is an effective system in place to ensure that those concerns are recorded properly and brought to the attention of the deputy headteacher, who is the designated lead teacher for safeguarding, or yourself.

Records I examined during my visit, and samples of referrals to external agencies, are of high quality. You are not afraid to contact agencies repeatedly if you are not satisfied that their response is sufficient or quick enough.

As a result, leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Pupils who I met with during my visit also told me, without exception, that they feel very safe at Bugbrooke. They say that teachers are helping them to know

about the sorts of risks they will face as they get older and how to protect themselves from the dangers of, for example, the internet, strangers, roads and rivers.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and managers are creating a culture of success at the school, due to clear expectations that all teaching must be of a high quality in order that every pupil will reach their potential. A considerable number of new staff have arrived this term and already feel part of the school team. Leaders have made it clear to them, and to all staff, what is expected of them. Staff say, in turn, that they want to do their best for the school and its pupils. As one member of the school's senior leadership said, 'The improvement is clear. The head has motivated staff to do what they know is quality teaching. They are passionate about it.' Staff also say that, as a result of your work and the work of the deputy headteacher, pupils are also 'so much more positive'.
- Teaching is, in almost all cases, now at least good or better. Staff who need advice to improve how they teach are receiving this and are well supported. Leaders ensure that groups of pupils make good progress by tracking outcomes at key points through the year. However, leaders do not always check on a sufficiently regular basis that the learning that teachers provide is being adjusted effectively to result in rapid progress for every pupil.
- All but a few pupils are now making at least the progress expected of them, and many are making more than this. Progress for disadvantaged pupils has increased considerably. In all year groups, most disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are now making progress that is similar to, or better than, the progress made by others in the school.
- In 2014, the progress of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs was not fast enough. Leaders explain that this was because the support those pupils were receiving was not properly monitored to ensure that it was effective. As a result, pupils often continued to receive the same support even though they were not making good progress. Because of changes leaders have made to the monitoring and effectiveness of the support pupils now receive, the overall progress for pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is now good.
- Although pupils are now more motivated to write, and pupils' skills in both spelling and handwriting have improved, leaders recognise that improvements in these areas need to continue. This is because the impact of these improvements is not yet as great, or as widespread, as leaders want it to be. A small minority of pupils still are not yet confident writers, and need to extend their skills in this subject. Leaders also know that the improvements made in teaching have not yet resulted in the most-able pupils achieving the highest measures of attainment by the time they leave the school. Some pupils say that the work they receive could be more challenging at times.
- Parents and carers who the inspector met during the visit were unreservedly positive about the school and its staff. They confirmed that their children felt

very safe there, that learning was good and that their children were making good progress as a result of this. They told the inspector that communication was good and had particular praise for the school's system of emailing them regular information. They felt listened to and their views taken account of. They told the inspector that any issues are always quickly dealt with by staff, and that the new headteacher 'is changing things for the better'. The positive views heard were largely reflected in those parents who responded both to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and to the school's own recent questionnaire. These showed that a very large majority believe that the school is well led and managed and that their child makes good progress. An overwhelming majority say that their child is safe at the school.

- Pupils the inspector talked with during his visit said that they learn well at Bugbrooke, and most lessons are exciting. They said that, if they do not understand, teachers will happily explain something again to them, or give them support in a small group if they need it. They also said that the school's system of targets is good because it supports them to improve. However, when asked how lessons could be improved further, they said that they learn best when they are actively involved rather than when they are 'sitting about' for too long.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate, and leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, although the school development plan is focused on the correct areas for improvement, and the actions planned are broadly good, it is not sufficiently effective. This is because it is unclear when many actions are due to start, or who will check that they are being done. It is also not clear precisely how the actions will be monitored for effectiveness. This risks some actions not occurring, or being allowed to continue even if they are not resulting in the changes needed.
- Governors are effective and are becoming increasingly skilled at understanding information about pupil performance. They have recently undertaken two rounds of monitoring to check that pupils are writing sufficient amounts and that their skills are improving over time. They confirm that pupils' attitudes to writing have improved considerably over the past year, and they are keen to ensure that leaders continue the widespread improvements they have made. They monitor how the pupil premium is being spent to support disadvantaged pupils, along with the performance management of teachers. As a result, they know that teaching is improving across the school and that outcomes are rising for particular groups of pupils.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements are secure because staff are well trained and know that they must report any concerns quickly, as well as how they should do this. Leaders keep records locked securely and ensure that these are maintained to a high standard. Those looked at by the inspector during the visit showed clear and logical progression of actions taken, with evidence that the school makes appropriate referrals to external agencies. These include making further referrals if those agencies do not respond in a sufficiently brisk or a satisfactory manner. The curriculum, and work in assemblies, helps pupils to understand a wide range of risks to their safety. Those pupils the inspector

spoke to were very clear that, for example, they should never give their personal details when online and that they should tell their parents immediately if they ever receive a message on a mobile phone that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- leaders check regularly that every pupil is making as much progress as possible by ensuring that teachers are adjusting effectively the work and support they give to pupils' different needs, including for the most-able pupils in writing
- the effectiveness of the school development plan is improved by making it clear precisely when actions will begin, when they will be monitored and who will check that they have been done. The plan should also state how success against each action will be measured.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Northamptonshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Roary Pownall
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met you, the deputy headteacher, members of your senior leadership team, those who have responsibility for leading the teaching of English and mathematics, the leader of the early years, and the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body. I reviewed your school's self-evaluation document and your current school improvement plans and discussed these with you. We visited classrooms and learning areas across the school to observe teaching and to look at pupils' work. I evaluated your recent information about pupils' progress and examined attendance records, behaviour logs and minutes of meetings of the governing body. I observed, and talked with, pupils at breaktime and met with others at lunchtime. I reviewed samples of documentation for, and referrals made in respect of, safeguarding and met with the designated lead teacher for this area. I examined anonymised samples of performance management documentation. I undertook a scrutiny of work from a sample of disadvantaged pupils. I met with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day and considered their views alongside responses from both Parent View and your school's own questionnaire for parents.