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7 March 2016

Mr Andy Griffiths
Headteacher
Brunswick Park Primary and Nursery School
Osidge Lane
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Dear Mr Griffiths

Short inspection of Brunswick Park Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 9 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 July 2011.

This school continues to be good.

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

You, together with your deputy headteacher, have maintained rapid progress and above-average attainment in both English and mathematics in Key Stage 2. Indeed, you have made sure that all groups of learners in this key stage, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve exceptionally well, and better than the average for all pupils nationally. You are now focused on ensuring that this success is replicated in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Your work is having an impact. This is the result of your drive and ambition for the school, reflected in your exceptionally high aspirations for all staff, pupils and the community which the school serves. You are totally committed to ensuring that every pupil achieves their potential and thrives in their personal development. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the inclusive ethos of the school and the dedication and care you and your staff provide for their children. As the school grows from a one-form entry to a two-form entry school, your determination to meet every pupil's needs remains undiminished.

You have well-established policies and procedures to secure a whole-school approach to school improvement. Improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is at the heart of your work. There have been several changes to staffing, including a restructuring of middle leaders. You have appointed three newly

qualified teachers in Key Stage 1, as well as a new phase leader for Years 1, 2 and 3, and a relatively new leader for early years. You told me that teachers and leaders are almost always 'home grown'. Your deputy headteacher spearheads this to secure capacity at all levels through coaching, mentoring and tailored training to ensure that individual members of staff are exceptionally well supported in their professional development. This also includes the school-led initiative to induct new teachers to the profession through School Direct. Already, this is paying dividends in pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2. There is a culture of reflection and support among your teachers, because you encourage them to take risks and to try out new ideas. It is evident that all staff share your high aspirations and continually strive for excellence. You have improved the outdoor provision in early years and for other year groups, for example the outdoor area where pupils learn to investigate and explore scientifically. The impressive new Key Stage 1 building provides a stimulating and welcoming environment to support pupils to make good progress.

You and your staff have worked hard to address the recommendations from the last inspection. You have improved continuity between the early years and Year 1, and raised expectations so that staff are aiming much higher for all children. There is less of a dip in progress when children enter Key Stage 1 than in the past. Staff regularly work in different classes so that they develop an understanding of age-related expectations. As a result, attainment at the end of Year 2 is rising and in 2015 was just above average. Nonetheless, there is still scope for further improvements. This is particularly so in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in developing children's writing skills. Likewise, there is the potential to secure more rapid progress in Key Stage 1 through a better match between activities and pupils' levels of understanding.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have made sure that your work to safeguard pupils is given the top priority and reflects the latest government guidance. Staff have received all the required training, including 'Prevent' training. You have secured their full awareness of the wide range of possible concerns that are mentioned in the guidance. Your proactive approach to safeguarding the welfare of pupils is exemplary. The weekly professional meetings with the learning mentor, family support practitioner and special needs coordinator, and with either you or your deputy headteacher in attendance, makes sure that no pupil slips through the net. All internal referrals are closely monitored in these meetings, with the appropriate interventions put in place. You work closely with other agencies to help pupils when required and keep detailed and up-to-date records.

The governing body makes sure that its members have appropriate training, including in safer recruitment. They oversee the school's work in this area on a regular basis. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. Pupils say they feel safe at school. They know how to keep themselves safe. Although pupils say that there are very few incidents of bullying, they still have a keen sense of helping and protecting one another, including from any potential bullying, including cyber bullying. Pupils have the utmost confidence in adults listening and acting on any concerns they may have.

Inspection findings

- Leaders invest significantly in promoting the quality of teaching and learning. There is a well-established culture of professional development for all staff. Both you and your deputy headteacher are experts at ensuring that teachers and support staff are well supported, highly motivated and collaborative in their work. Your focus on developing leadership capacity at other levels, particularly in the early years and Key Stage 1, is beginning to secure better outcomes in these areas. This is a thoroughly good school from when children enter the Nursery to when pupils leave in Year 6.
- Children enter the Nursery with skills which are below those expected for their age in literacy and numeracy, and, more recently, in their physical skills. Work to accelerate progress is beginning to bear fruit and children are currently making good progress, especially in the Nursery. You have made sure that there are more opportunities for children to be taught directly how to read and write. Reception children have a wide vocabulary and good phonics knowledge as a result of having been taught phonics (letters and the sounds they make) much earlier in the Nursery. Nonetheless, there are too few opportunities for children to extend and develop their writing skills.
- Disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 2 perform very well and this has been recognised nationally when the school received a government pupil premium award. The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils in both the early years and Key Stage 1 is closing quickly. Progress for all groups of pupils is measured and carefully tracked on a regular basis. Underachieving pupils are quickly identified and work closely with learning support assistants in every class to close any gaps. The recent appointment of a pupil premium leader will bolster provision still further. Experienced governors keep a close eye on the use of pupil premium funding in termly governor achievement committee meetings.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is rising. You and your team have worked hard to improve the quality of writing, through rich texts and stories to develop pupils' compositional skills, as well as the systematic teaching of phonics. From broadly average starting points in Year 1, attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2015 was just above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good progress.
- It is clear from the lessons we visited to observe the quality of teaching and learning that you recognise key strengths and those elements which require further development. Pupils' work currently shows that progress in Year 1 is slower than in Year 2. Pupils make better progress in their writing, for example, than in mathematics in Key Stage 1. In mathematics, pupils sometimes complete the same work again, even when they have grasped a concept. As a result, learning is not moved on at a fast enough pace. There is now greater clarity as to what pupils are to learn in a lesson. However, some activities do not build on what pupils already know and can do.

- You recognised that attendance has been well below average. Current attendance is now broadly average for all groups of learners, including disadvantaged pupils. You have secured additional support from the educational welfare officer who works closely with those parents whose children are persistently absent. You have also raised the profile of good attendance and punctuality. Pupils are proud of their school. They fully appreciate the awards they collect for good attendance, being punctual and for their hard work and achievement.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- children in the Reception classes have more structured adult guidance to develop their writing skills
- assessments in mathematics are used more effectively in Key Stage 1 so that pupils do not repeat work they can already do.

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

Yours sincerely

Mary Hinds

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspector observed teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 classes and in the early years. These observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. Meetings were held with leaders, four members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and a group of school councillors. A number of documents were scrutinised, including the school's own evaluation of performance, those relating to arrangements for safeguarding, the school's plans for development and information about pupils' progress.