

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Carley Holliman
Executive Headteacher
Bushey Manor Junior School
Grange Road
Bushey
Hertfordshire
WD23 2QL

Dear Mrs Holliman

Short inspection of Bushey Manor Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 4 May 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 March 2011.

This school continues to be good.

Since your appointment in January 2016, you have raised expectations among the staff team regarding what all pupils can achieve at this school. You have worked closely with governors and other school leaders to accurately evaluate the school's strengths and priorities for areas for improvement. You have established an effective team where middle leaders play an important role in school improvement.

In close partnership with the head of school, you quickly introduced a rigorous programme for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in all classes. As a result, teachers plan lessons that ensure that the needs of all pupils are fully considered, leading to good progress in English and mathematics. Gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils are narrowing as part of an overall trend of improvement in performance. The issues identified at the previous inspection related to the quality of teaching, feedback to pupils, involvement of governors and partnership with parents are now growing strengths. However, the high standards seen in English and mathematics are yet to be mirrored by similar outcomes for pupils in other subjects.

Your effective leadership is enhancing the positive climate for learning that exists at this school. The wealth of extra activities and school events, such as the 'bedtime story event' and 'book week', stimulates a love of literature. Pupils are keen to be at this school. Attendance is in line with the national average and continues to improve. There are no pupils persistently absent from school. Furthermore, well-planned residential trips enrich the pupils' learning experiences in all year groups.

These trips provide opportunities for pupils to live and work with each other while learning about other places. Many parents see these trips as a significant strength of the school.

In partnership with the head of school, you set high expectations of pupils through a code of conduct understood by all. As a result, behaviour is very good, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils respond very well to opportunities to work in pairs and small groups. Relationships between pupils and adults and pupils themselves are very positive. Pupils are keen to answer questions and listen attentively to others. They demonstrate an understanding about the needs of others, such as when pupils in Year 5 discussed the issues of apartheid as part of a study related to South Africa.

The head of school and you ensure that the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively promoted through assemblies and well-planned curriculum experiences. This provision fully emphasises the importance of British values such as tolerance, democracy and respect for others. Good use is made of visitors to the school to provide opportunities for pupils to learn and reflect on the culture of others, for example, village life in India.

Pupils feel safe in this school because all staff provide high levels of care and support. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are very rare and inspection evidence agrees with this. They know how to use the internet safely and know who to go to if they are worried about anything.

Safeguarding is effective.

Statutory requirements for all safeguarding arrangements are met. School leaders and governors ensure that robust procedures for the well-being and safety of all pupils are rigorously applied. Training for all staff and governors in safeguarding is regular and fully up to date. This ensures that all staff are fully conversant with the latest government guidance, including the 'Prevent' duty to counter radicalisation.

Senior leaders with specific responsibility for child protection work closely with staff from other agencies when any safeguarding concerns arise. Records related to child protection and care are of high quality. The progress of the most vulnerable pupils is monitored closely to ensure that needs of these pupils are fully met.

Inspection findings

- Senior leaders make effective use of progress information to track pupils' achievements and eliminate weaker teaching. As a result, outcomes for all pupils, and especially those who are most able, are improving but they are not yet outstanding. This is because the high standards of writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 are not fully mirrored in similarly high-quality work in all other subjects. Scrutiny of pupils' books in Year 6 confirms some good development of writing in other subjects, such as in geography and religious education. However, there is very little evidence of these pupils making good use of their mathematical skills in other subjects such as science.

- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils continue to improve. As a result, the progress of these pupils in receipt of the pupil premium funding (the additional government funding for those eligible for free school meals) is better than that of similar pupils nationally. This is especially so in English, where all of these pupils are making good progress in their writing.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall across the school. Inspection evidence confirms that the weaknesses noted at the previous inspection have been turned into strengths. These include:
 - the detailed lesson planning that caters for the needs of individual pupils and specific groups effectively
 - the effective use of resources to involve pupils actively in their learning
 - the many opportunities for pupils to work in pairs or small groups
 - the good use of time in lessons to maximise opportunities for effective learning
 - teachers' effective use of marking and feedback to accelerate pupil progress.
- Teachers plan an exciting and varied curriculum for the pupils. Older pupils can talk enthusiastically about the many things they have learned in lessons. Residential trips provide a significant element in the pupils' overall development in a wide range of knowledge and skills, such as during the Year 5 trip to Snowdonia, where they learned about slate and how it was quarried and used to make roofing slates during Victorian times.
- Governors work in close partnership with the executive headteacher and head of school to identify areas of underperformance. They monitor the school's work regularly through a planned schedule of visits and activities. They are well trained for their role. The governing body makes good use of information about governor expertise to effectively prepare for a proposed federation with a nearby infant school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the high standards seen in English and mathematics are reflected in all other areas of the curriculum
- greater opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects, such as science.

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

Yours sincerely

Philip Mann
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspector reviewed a wide range of documentation and jointly observed teaching and learning in all classes with the executive headteacher and head of school. Meetings were held with the executive headteacher and head of school. Further meetings were held with teachers with middle leadership responsibility, the chair of the governing body and one other governor, and a representative from the local authority. The school's safeguarding arrangements were examined closely. Discussions were also held with a group of pupils from Year 5 and Year 6 about their work. The inspector met with a number of parents at the school gate. The inspector reviewed 45 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 24 free text messages. There were 32 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and 129 responses to the online pupil survey.