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Mrs Sabrina Edwards
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Edwards

Short inspection of Bourne Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 September 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 February 2012.

This school continues to be good.

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

You took up the post of headteacher in September 2016. You have quickly established yourself in this role. You have identified the many strengths that already exist in the school and are looking to build on them. Equally, you have rapidly identified the areas that need improving. You have already implemented some important changes and have devised credible plans to drive forward further improvements.

Members of staff are right behind you. They highlighted how much they appreciate your approach in consulting with them and seeking their opinions of how to move the school forward. This has generated a very positive 'can do' attitude.

Governors and members of staff spoke highly of your initiative in introducing 'values of the month'. They say that this has had a really positive impact on the ethos of the school. Pupils are currently talking a lot about respect. Parents, too, have welcomed your arrival and the changes that you are making. As one parent said, 'I am thoroughly excited about where this school is going and its overall approach to learning. The new headteacher is very approachable and understanding of the multitude of issues that arise from schooling children from such a diverse community. We have had nothing but positive responses from all other parents we speak to as well.'

The previous inspection report recommended that leaders increase the proportion of good and better lessons and that the governing body develop the capacity to challenge the school by improving its independent monitoring. It also recommended that the school provides a more stimulating outdoor environment in the early years.

Leaders have secured overall good and improving teaching at the school, which has impacted positively on better pupil outcomes, especially at the end of key stage 2. Provisional test information from 2016 indicates that the proportion of pupils reaching the new, more challenging expectations was 19% above that found nationally. The proportion reaching the high score was slightly above average. You are well aware of where teaching needs further improvements and have already taken steps to bring this about.

Since the previous inspection, a new early years provision has been built. Leaders have ensured that the new outdoor area provides a similarly stimulating environment to that found indoors. Children have lots of exciting resources to keep them actively engaged and learning well.

Governors have increased the visits that they make to the school. These are focused on checking on health and safety issues on the one hand and on the other, to join in celebratory events or observing staff training sessions. However, governors have not focused nearly enough on monitoring key aspects, such as the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes, to enable them to provide sufficiently rigorous challenge to school leaders over time. No governors were available to come in to the school during the inspection, although the inspector spoke to the chair of the governing body by telephone.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a good culture of safeguarding in the school. Members of staff know the pupils and their families well. They have a good understanding of the school community and the potential safeguarding issues to which pupils may be vulnerable.

On arrival at the school, you swiftly attended designated safeguarding lead training as you were determined to ensure that a senior trained leader is always available to deal with any issues that might arise. You and the other designated safeguarding lead delivered effective training to all members of staff at the start of the term to ensure that all are up to date with the very latest guidance. In order to raise awareness further, you have put up posters around the school to remind all who the designated leads are. The posters also include a reminder of exactly what staff should do in the event of a disclosure.

The curriculum is effective in helping pupils understand danger and how to keep themselves safe. This includes workshops on e-safety, dangers of drugs and about having positive relationships. You have commissioned a visit during assembly time from members of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

(NSPCC) to explain to pupils how to stay safe from abuse.

Leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are appropriately detailed.

Inspection findings

- Senior leaders say that since your arrival they feel more empowered to seize the initiative and take decisive action to accelerate improvements. They fully support your clear vision of raising standards for all pupils through setting higher expectations of what teachers and pupils can achieve. They are beginning to aspire to excellence in all aspects of the school's work.
- The current leader of the early years took up her post in January 2015. She has an acute knowledge and understanding of the needs of each of the children in the setting. She has ensured that new resources provide many and varied opportunities for children to explore and find out new things, both indoors and outdoors. The online tracking system helps members of staff to measure the progress of every child and to plan effective learning for all. Members of staff work very closely with parents and encourage them to contribute to their children's learning records. The proportions of children at the end of Reception in 2016 who reached the age-related expectations in each of the 17 early learning goals was broadly similar to the 2015 published national averages. School records show that a number of children join the early years speaking little or no English. Leaders have correctly identified the need to raise standards in literacy still further by increasing the prominence of reading and writing resources. Leaders ensure that there is comprehensive support available in key stage 1 for any pupils who do not attain the expected standards at the end of Reception. This effectively helps them to catch up with their peers.
- Leaders correctly identified that pupils were not making enough progress in writing, especially boys. Last year, mainly at key stage 2, pupils were given opportunities to write at greater length than had previously been the case. Leaders sourced more 'boy-friendly' texts. Two authors were invited into the school, including one who writes on football topics, to run workshops with the pupils. These improvements led to considerable success. The proportions of pupils reaching the relative age-related expectations in the Year 6 tests rose from below average in 2015 to 9% above in 2016. These improvements, however, were not replicated in the Year 2 tests. You have identified that, at key stage 1 in particular, pupils were gaining a good understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar. However, they were not offered sufficient opportunities to apply this knowledge in extended pieces of writing. You have already put together a well-focused action plan to address these shortcomings and have planned a number of training sessions that you will be delivering to teachers.
- Pupils benefit from a curriculum that gives them access to a broad range

of subjects. Leaders are particularly proud of the achievements of the choir. Leaders have a robust system in place to track pupils' progress in all subjects and across all year groups. This information is used effectively by leaders to identify where teachers might need additional expert support or where pupils need some extra help. Pupils learn well across the range of subjects.

- You recognised immediately, when you arrived, the need to raise attendance – which had fallen to below national average for primary schools in 2015. The attendance of pupils entitled to free school meals was particularly low. Leaders worked well last year with other agencies to address some of the underlying causes. This met with some success and in 2016, absenteeism for one group of pupils reduced. The overall absence figure, however, remained above average. You are on the case. You have already instigated a range of strategies to secure better attendance. You have introduced weekly reward assemblies for the class with the best attendance. Pupils know that there will be termly prizes for their high attendance. You have sent reminders to parents in the fortnightly newsletters telling them explicitly how absence impacts on their children's achievement. You have made it clear that you will not authorise term-time holidays and you will be working closely with the local authority to tackle any persistent absence. All these are credible actions though it is too soon to judge the impact.
- Since the previous inspection, governors have been successful in securing a new building for the early years provision. Governors were successful in appointing you as the headteacher. You have already made your mark in raising expectations and leading improvements. However, although they visit the school more frequently, governors have not been nearly sharp enough in holding leaders to account and driving strategic improvements over time. Moreover, they have not ensured that the school's website meets the latest Department for Education requirements, and several of the policies published on the website are dated. You quickly noted that the website was difficult to navigate and commissioned a website review which is currently taking place.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the phonics screening check is consistently well above average. Historical information shows that all prior low attainers made expected progress across key stage 2 in reading. The proportion of the most able disadvantaged pupils in 2015 who made rapid progress to attain the higher standards in reading was well above that of other pupils nationally. You are aware that to raise standards further, teachers need to ensure that pupils are always given suitably challenging books to read at home.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they drive forward the planned improvements in writing swiftly to ensure that all pupils, especially at key stage 1, make faster progress

- governors are much sharper in ensuring that all policies and procedures are up to date and that they are more strategic in driving forward school improvement
- they build on the very recent initiatives to ensure that pupils' attendance improves.

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

Yours sincerely

David Radomsky
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspector focused on the following areas during the inspection:

- how well leaders have driven improvements in the early years provision and how underachieving pupils are supported through key stage 1
- what leaders have done to improve outcomes in writing, especially for boys at key stage 1
- attendance and the persistent absence of pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils
- how well governors carry out their statutory duties and hold leaders to account
- the rates of progress that current pupils are making across the year groups and subjects
- the school's safeguarding procedures.

In order to explore these areas, the inspector undertook visits to lessons with the headteacher, heard pupils read and looked at their books. Meetings were held with senior leaders, and members of staff. A telephone conversation was held with the chair of the governing body and another with a representative from the local authority. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including information about outcomes for groups of pupils, policy documentation and information about attendance and safeguarding.