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Mrs Jane Nunez
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Nunez

Short inspection of Bentinck Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 4 October 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 September 2011.

This school continues to be good.

You and other members of the leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You ensure staff have high expectations of all pupils and that overall teaching is good. You know your school's strengths very well, having been headteacher at Bentinck for a number of years. You set these out clearly in your self-evaluation document, and you have correctly judged the school to be a good one. Nevertheless, neither you nor members of the senior leadership team are complacent. You want to improve provision further, and set out the priorities for this effectively in the school development plan.

You are well supported by both the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. Together, you sustain a school culture where every pupil is welcomed, regardless of his or her circumstances, ethnic group or needs. Pupils I met during my visit were very keen to explain to me how the many pupils who join the school at different times during the school year settle in very quickly because everyone is so friendly.

Staff work well together and share their strengths. During my visit, it was clear that both teachers and teaching assistants collaborate effectively. As a result, teaching is good and pupils make effective progress.

You and the staff work effectively to maintain good relationships with parents. Those parents I met at the end of the school day told me staff are very approachable and their children are making good progress as a result of good teaching. As one parent explained, 'Bentinck is a well-run school with good teachers. All my children have attended and have progressed very well.'

You work closely with the governing body, which nevertheless challenges you effectively to improve outcomes, such as pupils' progress in writing, where they are not yet fast enough. Governors are, like you, deeply committed to the school and use the reports they receive from subject leaders to monitor improvements in different subjects. Governors are keen to continue to improve their skills, and explained to me how the high-quality training they access through the local authority helps them greatly to fulfil their strategic role increasingly well.

You have dealt appropriately with the areas for improvement that inspectors identified at the last inspection. The systems for monitoring and evaluating the day-to-day work of the school are highly effective. Staff have a morning briefing at the start of each day, in which any new issues are discussed. Senior leaders visit each class on a daily basis, and any aspects needing attention are addressed promptly. Pupils feel staff also listen closely to their opinions and thoughts. Those I met told how, for example, the school council had suggested a box of resources and activities for their peers to use at breaktimes. You had responded by making one available, which pupils were very happy to use. You also give pupils more opportunities to use their skills creatively, and in different subjects. For instance, you have ensured that topic work allows pupils to use their imagination when, for example, undertaking drama work. Pupils role-played scenes from Ted Hughes' 'The Iron Man', with other pupils reimagining it through artwork.

You are aware that the school website, though attractive and informative in many respects, does not currently meet all statutory requirements. Although you spend the pupil premium well, and the differences in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally are diminishing over time, the details on the website are brief and do not explain this impact well. They also do not show clearly enough how you will be spending this year's allocation. In addition, you have not published the school's accessibility plan, nor given sufficient information for parents on the spending of, and the impact of, the primary physical education (PE) and sport funding.

Pupils enter the school with very low overall starting points. A far higher-than-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language, with many pupils entering with minimal skills in speaking English. In addition, many pupils leave the school after a short period, or are admitted to the school at times other than at the beginning of the Reception Year. For this reason, overall attainment at the end of the early years, and in key stage 1, has been below national averages over time. Attainment by the end of key stage 2 has been broadly in line with national averages. However, as a result of good teaching, the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year has risen consistently over the past four years. This year, early and provisional information shows that the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard at the end of Year 6 is above the overall national average.

Pupils' progress is particularly strong, and has been significantly above the national average overall, over the past three years of published data. This year, early and provisional information shows that the proportions of pupils meeting the expected standard in, for example, mathematics were in the top 25% of all schools nationally,

and in the top 5% of all schools nationally for reading. However, you are aware that pupils' progress in writing was in the lowest 25% of all schools nationally this year. As a result, improving pupils' progress in writing remains your priority. You have begun a series of useful staff meetings to help those teachers who are less effective in promoting pupils' writing skills, to improve their practice. Although teaching is improving, and this is accelerating pupils' progress as a result, you are aware that not all teachers are yet consistently showing pupils how to use a wide range of ambitious vocabulary when they write. In addition, they are not giving pupils sufficient opportunities to write in a wide variety of ways, nor showing pupils how to edit their work effectively so that they demonstrate their skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Safeguarding is effective.

Your staff are vigilant for any sign that could indicate that a pupil might be being harmed. You have ensured that they have all been appropriately trained in safeguarding, including in areas of recent national attention, such as radicalisation. As a result, staff know about the different forms of abuse and fully understand their need to report to you any concerns they may have. You and your senior leadership team have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. You make prompt referrals to external agencies and work closely with them to ensure that pupils are protected as far as is possible.

Pupils I met told me that that they feel very safe in school. They say that both bullying and name-calling are very rare and, if they do happen, a member of staff will deal with the matter quickly. They say that they can approach any member of staff if they are worried about anything. Pupils are also taught well how to protect themselves against a range of risks to their safety, including when using technology. They receive good guidance on appropriate and positive relationships.

You are aware that the school's current policy for safeguarding does not give the required information set out in the latest update to 'Keeping children safe in education'. You are working with governors to ensure that a new version, which meets statutory requirements, is agreed and made available on your website.

Inspection findings

- You have sustained your school as a good one which continues to improve. You and your senior leadership team model high expectations and insist that pupils receive good teaching. You are helping teachers to improve where pupils' outcomes are less strong.
- Governors, like you, have a good knowledge of what the school does well, and also help to ensure that the quality of teaching improves. For example, they are unafraid to take tough decisions to withhold salary increases for teachers who do not meet their appraisal targets or whose classroom performance does not justify it.
- Your school's intake is very diverse, with more than four in five pupils coming from a minority ethnic group. Around 38 languages are spoken by pupils overall, with around two thirds of pupils speaking English as an additional language. Around four in 10 pupils have special educational needs and/or

disabilities, which is much higher than the national average. Pupils' mobility is far greater than average.

- Children enter the early years with much lower levels of skills than those found typically in children of the same age. Children make good progress due to good teaching. The proportion of children who are attaining a good level of development has risen consistently over time and is now much closer to the national average than it has been in previous years.
- A much lower proportion of pupils pass the Year 1 phonics screening check compared to pupils nationally. This year, the percentage of pupils who passed was 35%. However, most of those who did not pass were in the early stages of learning English.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 remains below the national average. This year, around half of the pupils met the expected standards.
- Overall attainment at the end of key stage 2 is rising, and is now above the national average. This shows that pupils make very good progress in key stage 2 and are well prepared for secondary school. Their good progress was also confirmed in pupils' work that I looked at during my visit. However, pupils' attainment in writing is lower than that in mathematics and in reading.
- Published information shows that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, also make good progress.
- The most able pupils make good overall progress from their starting points because staff give them work that challenges them and makes them think deeply.
- Leaders spend the pupil premium funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, they are making stronger progress than other pupils nationally.
- Last year, girls in Year 6 made significantly less progress in writing compared to boys. This was because many of the girls in this cohort arrived late during key stage 2 and spoke little English upon arrival. The issue was specific to this year group only. Pupils' current work confirms that there is no discernible difference between the rates of progress of boys and girls.
- Staff teach pupils to read well from an early age, and to talk about what they are reading. As a result, pupils make the fastest progress in reading. This year, 70% of pupils in Year 6 met the higher standard in this subject, around three times the proportion nationally. Pupils I heard read during my visit told me how much they enjoyed reading for pleasure, and showed good strategies to pronounce words they did not know.
- Pupils make good progress in other subjects, such as science. Teachers ensure that they develop a good level of understanding, using their skills to plan how to investigate things, make sensible predictions and record their results.
- You ensure that teachers promote fundamental British values effectively through the curriculum. Pupils enjoy giving their views and taking part in the many discussions in class. They follow the school rules and are very respectful of each other, polite to visitors and, through initiatives such as the 'Be the Best' group, help each other to behave well both in class and around the school. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Parents express strong approval of the school and its leadership. The school's most recent questionnaire to parents shows that, of those who expressed an

opinion, a very large majority believed that the school was well led and managed, and would recommend it to others. These parents also believe that their children are well taught, kept safe and make good progress.

- The school does not meet all requirements on the publication of specified information on its website. Leaders are ensuring that they attend to this issue quickly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils make better progress in writing so that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard and the higher standard at the end of Year 6 broadly matches those of other subjects
- the school website meets requirements with respect to the information regarding the spending of the pupil premium, the primary PE and sport premium and the information regarding the accessibility of the school for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the policy for safeguarding is updated quickly to reflect new national requirements.

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

Yours sincerely

Roary Pownall
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

My inspection focused on a number of key lines of enquiry. These included whether:

- the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection had been addressed effectively
- pupils, and particularly girls, are making good progress in writing from their starting points
- pupils are making good progress and achieving well in other areas of the curriculum, such as science
- the quality of leadership remains effective
- staff are doing all they can to ensure that pupils remain safe.

During the inspection, I met with you, the representatives of the governing body and the subject leaders for English and the early years. We visited a range of classes in all key stages to observe teaching and learning. I looked at pupils' work across the school. I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and met with groups of them at breaktime. I received a small number of letters from parents and met with one parent during my visit. At the time of the inspection, there were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, for statistics to be analysed. However, I considered the views of 89 parents who had replied to the school's recent questionnaire. I read a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, your school development plan and information on outcomes for pupils currently in the school. I visited the breakfast club, which is maintained by the governing body, to check that pupils were safe. I examined safeguarding records and policies. I looked at the school's website to check that it meets requirements on the publication of specified information. I also analysed the range of views expressed by staff through Ofsted's questionnaire about the school and its leadership.