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Mrs Kate Bulman
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Bulman

Short inspection of Baguley Hall Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 25 January 2017, 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 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your team welcome pupils from a wide range of backgrounds into an inclusive school community, where you provide them with a rich and stimulating curriculum. Staff place pupils' emotional well-being at the core of their work. The atmosphere in school is calm and respectful. You accomplish the school's aim of providing a 'stimulating, caring and safe environment where children strive for success'.

You and your team have taken effective action to address the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. Strong links have been established between governors and subject leaders. Governors monitor progress in all subjects effectively. Pupils' progress in learning continues to improve because of improvements you and your leadership team have made to the quality of teaching. You place as much importance on the learning of staff as you do on the learning of pupils. Consequently, newly qualified teachers and more experienced staff are constantly improving their teaching.

You have improved standards in the early years. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception has risen since 2014. This is a result of the work done in both the Nursery and Reception classes to develop pupils' language and communication skills. Children get a good start to their education and

your careful planning of the curriculum in key stage 1 ensures that they continue to flourish.

Your priorities for school improvement are sharply focused on analysis of pupils' outcomes. Following a dip in reading outcomes in 2016, you identified the need for more pupils in key stage 2 to reach the expected standard in reading. The current whole-school approach to reading is having a positive impact. However, you and I agree that reading comprehension for lower-attaining pupils should be improved.

You were concerned about outcomes in key stage 1 in 2016 and recognised a weakness in the rate of progress of the middle-ability disadvantaged pupils. You responded immediately to address this issue and, as a result of your prompt action, middle-ability pupils are now making good progress. Pupils are increasingly successful in phonics, as shown by the proportion achieving success in the Year 1 check. Most of these pupils go on to make good progress in reading. There is, however, still more work to be done to enable all pupils in key stage 1 to make faster progress in their writing. The strong focus which your teachers place on developing mathematical thinking is enabling pupils to reach higher standards.

Behaviour is good around the school in lessons and at playtimes. The few pupils with challenging behaviour are supported very well by your highly skilled staff, who ensure that learning is sustained.

Parents value the communication they receive from you by text and email. They say that they appreciate the 'consistent behaviour management' and the focus you and your staff place on 'behaving the right way'.

Safeguarding is effective.

Your staff and governors are committed to keeping pupils safe in a highly nurturing environment. Your pupils say they feel safe and they know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Your staff are ever vigilant and are trained to a high level in all aspects of safeguarding. Your safeguarding team ensures that procedures are implemented rigorously. The children and families team works closely with parents and other agencies to ensure that pupils receive the best care possible. Thorough checks are made when appointing new staff, governors and volunteers. Consequently, all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a high quality.

Inspection findings

- Governance continues to be effective. The new governing body has high expectations of both staff and pupils. Governors are ambitious for the school and rightly have confidence in you and your leadership team to continue to deliver improvements.
- Governors receive good-quality information about the work of the school and pupils' outcomes, so they clearly understand what the school does well and what it needs to do to further improve.

- Governors recognise that disadvantaged pupils, many of whom start school with skills and abilities below those typical for their age, need to make rapid progress. Governors ensure that the pupil premium funding is spent wisely. They focus on disadvantaged pupils within school, not just academically but in terms of wider support. Therefore, most disadvantaged pupils currently in school make good progress from often very low starting points. You maintain a strong focus on removing any potential barriers to pupils' learning.
- The curriculum which you provide is broad and balanced and promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are developing a strong moral compass because of the high value you and other leaders place on this. Your work on children's rights and responsibilities and your work on creating inter-faith understanding make a significant contribution to developing pupils' understanding of others. As pupils say: 'Acceptance is a huge part of this, as well as using your manners and creating friendship all around the world.'
- Pupils have a good understanding of British values, know how to keep themselves safe and are prepared well for life in modern Britain. They have opportunities to study different faiths and cultures in this country and the wider world.
- Teachers plan interesting and exciting lessons because they have good subject knowledge and know their pupils well. Your pupils are confident in the support given by teachers and say that if they were stuck with something, teachers would 'help you to figure it out'.
- Pupils are attentive in lessons and want to do well. They are proud of their work. Work is set out neatly and pupils take care of their books. However, you and I agree that poor handwriting sometimes lets pupils down.
- A key line of enquiry for this inspection was about the progress your pupils make in reading in key stage 2. The high priority you have given to reading initiatives, including staff development in this area, are already having an impact. Outcomes are improving for middle- and higher-attaining pupils in key stage 2. Work on increasing the speed of handwriting is also helping to improve pupils' confidence with assessments. This is the result of clear focus and direction from leaders. However, lower-attaining pupils do not make the same rates of progress as other groups.
- Another line of enquiry was focused on the progress pupils make in writing and mathematics in key stage 1. In mathematics, the strong focus that leaders place on developing pupils' problem-solving and ability to explain their thinking means that more pupils, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able, are making good progress. From a joint review of writing, we found that lower- and middle-attaining pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, we agreed there are too few opportunities for pupils to write in depth, both in English and in other subjects such as science and history, to enable the most able pupils to reach the higher standards of which they are capable.
- Your sensitive, robust work to support the families of pupils who are at risk of missing education through absence has resulted in the persistent absence for all

groups of pupils reducing rapidly. Attendance rates are now in line with national averages.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that the progress of pupils is accelerated further by:

- developing and deepening pupils' writing skills across a range of subjects in key stage 1
- ensuring that reading comprehension skills are improved for all groups of pupils, particularly lower-attaining pupils
- improving the teaching of handwriting so that pupils write legibly and with confidence.

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

Yours sincerely

Tanya Hughes
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this short inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders and governors, and I spoke with a representative of the local authority. You and I visited classes to observe learning and I looked at work in pupils' books with your deputy headteacher. I met with pupils throughout the day. I considered the 36 responses to the pupil questionnaire, the 15 responses to the staff questionnaire, the 30 responses on Parent View and 30 'freetext' comments made by parents on Parent View. I heard several pupils read and observed pupils on the playground and in the dining hall. I conducted a detailed review of safeguarding, including checking on the school's policies, procedures and record keeping. I talked to you, other staff, and governors about how the school ensures that children are kept safe. I also considered a range of other documentation, including school improvement planning and information about pupils' progress and attainment.