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Miss Charlotte Harper
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Dear Miss Harper

Short inspection of Bainbridge Church of England Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 1 February 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 March 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your determined leadership has brought about improvements to teaching and learning. Well supported by the governing body, you have rigorously addressed any issues of underperformance, and have brought together a skilled and enthusiastic teaching team. You have identified the strengths and current priorities for the school accurately. You detail further actions to address these priorities in the school development plan, and you recognise that some of these initiatives are not consistently implemented across the school. You also acknowledge that the impact of these recent actions on outcomes for pupils is in its early stages, especially in mathematics.

You have raised your expectations for pupils' outcomes, and improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through good-quality professional development for staff and sharing in good practice at other schools. These improvements are now accelerating the rates of progress pupils make in their learning. Leaders keep a close eye on the quality of teaching, and their feedback to teachers links directly into focused school improvement planning and teacher appraisal. You acknowledge that teachers do not always pitch work appropriately, and so some activities do not fully challenge and stretch pupils, especially in mathematics.

Pupils' personal development and excellent attitudes to learning remain key strengths of your harmonious and inclusive school. Pupils are proud to attend, with rates of attendance above average. Pupils develop good citizenship skills, and are keen to take on responsibilities through 'class monitor' roles, or through groups such as the school council, the 'eco group' or as a house captain. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They have a thorough understanding of British values, and benefit from purposeful and meaningful links to two inner-city schools that are very different from their own. Pupils feel safe and grow in confidence. They respect and listen attentively to each other and to adults in school. The school buildings used by pupils are well ordered, bright and tidy. Displays in classrooms and shared spaces celebrate pupils' work but also play a key role in supporting their learning.

You have largely tackled the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The leader of mathematics monitors the subject effectively and has had a positive impact on the quality of teachers' planned mathematics lessons. The use of mathematical support packages, including online programmes, is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' learning. However, there are currently few opportunities planned for pupils to use mathematical skills in other subjects. Because teaching is better, the quality of pupils' work in mathematics has improved, with most pupils on track to reach standards expected for their age. Pupils regularly use reasoning and problem solving in mathematics. Class timetables have been amended to guarantee daily mental and oral mathematical activities which consolidate pupils' understanding of number and calculation.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have undertaken the role of designated safeguarding lead effectively, ensuring that all policies, procedures and records are of high quality and are up to date. A comprehensive annual report produced in November 2016 for governors on safeguarding lists a range of recent safeguarding initiatives, including staff training and governor induction.

Summary records of incidents of concern are meticulously kept. Any incident of poor behaviour is taken seriously and each is recorded and acted upon. There are no records of any incidents of bullying, and pupils categorically state that no bullying happens at Bainbridge. All staff are appropriately trained, including all non-teaching staff, and have access to well-written policies and guidance. As a result, their understanding of their responsibilities for safeguarding is very secure.

Pupils say that they feel safe. They have regular teaching on good behaviour, bullying and e-safety, and as a result are very knowledgeable in these areas. Pupils know how to stay safe and free from worries while in school, and understand how to avoid situations that may prove dangerous when not at school.

Almost all parents state that their children are safe in school. The culture of keeping pupils safe and putting them at the heart of the inclusive, friendly school community is very evident. The school promotes pupils' personal, social and emotional development very well, and pupils show high levels of respect for each other, their school and their local community.

Inspection findings

- You have been steadfast in your determination to improve the progress pupils make in their learning and the standards they reach across the federation, including in mathematics. You have taken swift and effective action, ably supported by the governing body, to rigorously address any underperformance and eradicate underachievement.
- Leaders' ambition to continually improve provision leads to a perceptible drive and urgency from all staff to provide the very best learning experiences possible for pupils. The part played by middle leaders is proving increasingly significant. They are instrumental in introducing, overseeing and monitoring actions designed to accelerate pupils' progress in their learning in a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics.
- Governors know the school very well. They bring a diverse set of transferable professional skills that provide expertise and support to their strategic role. Governors are very well informed and they question, support and challenge school leaders effectively. This is because they visit the school often, and participate with you in key monitoring activities. Governors are fully engaged in putting into place key actions to rapidly move the school forward.
- Children get off to a fast start in their learning in early years. Nursery and Reception children play and learn happily alongside each other, sticking at tasks and maintaining their concentration. Adults support children's learning well. They use effective questioning and provide a range of activities to support children's writing and understanding of number indoors, although opportunities to explore number in the outdoor environment are limited. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception is now well above average.
- Pupils get off to a good start in their reading. The systematic teaching of phonics starts in Reception, and continues into key stage 1. Some pupils read fluently to the inspector during visits to classes. Pupils read widely and often, and are developing a love of reading. Pupils in key stage 2 are beginning to develop skills of inference and deduction when reading. However, you acknowledge that effective strategies to teach reading in key stage 2, although in place, are in their infancy.

- Teachers' ongoing assessments and monitoring of pupils' successes or misunderstandings in their work allow planned activities to be amended or changed, or extra support deployed. Teachers' feedback consolidates pupils' understanding effectively. Ensuring that pupils, especially the most able, are always sufficiently challenged is an area you are continuing to address. Teaching seen during the inspection and analysis of work in books suggest that all pupils are usually given appropriately challenging work, but a focus on this aspect is still needed.
- Pupils are attentive in lessons and have largely excellent attitudes to learning. Relationships are strong. Pupils know how well they have done in their learning and the next steps they need to take to do even better. Pupils value the feedback they get from teachers.
- Work in pupils' books is presented well, and handwriting is mostly neat and legible. There are detailed plans in place to improve pupils' spelling. Pupils are regularly given opportunities to write at length, often linked to the class topic, such as 'Dungeons and Dragons'.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that there continues to be a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning by:

- checking that agreed whole-school initiatives and actions relating to improving teaching are implemented consistently across every class to accelerate their impact on outcomes for pupils
- ensuring that teachers' expectations of all pupils remain consistently high, and that work sets challenges and stretches their thinking and understanding, especially in mathematics
- planning more opportunities for pupils to use and practise their mathematical skills across the wider curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Philip Scott
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, one of your base leaders and some of your teaching team. You and I visited lessons in each key stage class and visited early years. I met with three members of the governing body and spoke to the chair of the governing body by telephone. I spoke to pupils about their work and their views of the school both in lessons and in meetings. I listened to some pupils read. I considered the views of parents from the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and your school survey from last term. I scrutinised pupils' work in books. A range of documents was considered relating to safeguarding, governing body meetings, external evaluations of the school, performance management, the school's development plan and self-evaluation, the curriculum and pupils' achievement.