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Mrs Jacquie Sainsbury
Headteacher
Brookhill Leys Primary and Nursery School
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Dear Mrs Sainsbury

Short inspection of Brookhill Leys Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 28 March 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 October 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 are ambitious to ensure that all pupils who attend Brookhill Leys Primary and Nursery School develop a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning. You are equally uncompromising in your drive to make sure that pupils attend school, achieve well and feel safe. You have successfully created a positive culture in which pupils learn. This culture is befitting of the school motto, 'Laugh often, dream big and reach for the stars!' One parent said that she felt privileged to have had the opportunity to send her child to such a lovely, caring school: 'They have enabled my children to have an excellent start at secondary school.' A further parent commented that 'this is a forward thinking school which has children at the core of all they do'.

Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and the areas that require further focus. Improvement planning addresses the correct areas. Regular checks take place to make sure that the actions of all staff within school are making a positive difference for pupils. You recognise that challenges remain. Although those parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were mainly positive, this was not always the case. A core group of parents do not feel that they receive regular enough communication. You have made great strides to improve the relationship with parents and have had much success. Clearly, there is still further work to do.

The school environment is bright and welcoming and supports the positive ethos that you have created. Teachers make much effort to display and celebrate pupils' achievements. There are very many helpful prompts around school to help pupils keep themselves safe. Pupils said that the display within school to remind them that their 'body belongs to them' and that they should tell an adult if they are upset or worried was 'really helpful'.

Pupils are polite, well-behaved and are smart in their uniform. They settle quickly to their learning and move around the school in a calm and orderly manner. Pupils said that they enjoyed learning and that the work they received was just right for them. Pupils can select additional challenge and said that they valued the opportunity to do so. Many pupils receive individualised help if they need it. Very many pupils within the school make good progress from their starting points.

At the time of the previous inspection, inspectors identified that an area for improvement was for leaders to ensure that the work set for pupils is appropriately challenging. Leaders have developed the curriculum in all phases to ensure that pupils receive appropriate challenge. For example, in mathematics, pupils have many opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills and apply their mathematical knowledge. They write for a range of purposes and audiences and explore the writing of a variety of authors. They develop their knowledge and skills in a range of subjects, including science, history and art. In 2016, pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 showed that greater proportions of pupils than the national averages achieved at greater depth in reading and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving at greater depth within writing at the end of key stage 2 was close to the national average. This represents good progress in relation to pupils' starting points.

You are aware that the most able disadvantaged pupils still do not achieve as well as others, particularly in writing. Leaders regularly review the progress of this group of pupils and increasingly effective support is in place to address their underachievement. Gaps are diminishing but not at a fast enough pace. You have identified this as a key school improvement focus.

Many children enter the early years with skills below those expected for their age. A large proportion of these, boys in particular, require a lot of specialist help in order to develop their speech, language and communication and their physical development. Much fruitful work takes place within the early years. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of 2016 was above the national average. However, although some children make good progress, disadvantaged pupils in particular require a great deal of support in order to achieve well. In 2016, although very many pupils made good progress at the end of key stage 1, particularly in reading and mathematics, some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, did not meet age-related expectations. Some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, did not achieve the appropriate standard in the phonics screening check. Current school assessment information shows that outcomes are improving. More pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are on track to achieve the appropriate standard in the phonics screening check and at the end of key stage 1.

The good work taking place in the early years is preparing more children, including boys and disadvantaged children, for the next stage in their education.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding is of the highest priority to you and to your staff. It is a standard agenda item for meetings with staff and with governors in order to make sure they are well-informed and regularly reminded of how to safeguard pupils' welfare. You and your staff know the children and their families well and much work happens to address any problems that may arise. Work with outside agencies is good. All staff undertake appropriate training relevant to child protection and safeguarding issues, such as sexual exploitation of children, domestic violence and drug and alcohol misuse. Pupils told the inspector that they felt safe in school. One pupil said that she 'would trust the teachers, the teaching assistants, the dinner ladies – everybody, to protect us!' Pupils said that there were many ways to share a problem or concern, including tucking their written concern into the tummy of the 'worry bear'. Roo, the school therapy dog, is a popular and much loved friend for the pupils.

Inspection findings

- You have dealt effectively with many of the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. The achievement of the most able disadvantaged pupils is improving but remains a key school improvement priority.
- The proportion of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, who are regularly absent from school is reducing. The recently appointed attendance and safeguarding lead is making a positive difference and more pupils are attending school and arriving to school on time. Much constructive work takes place within the community and links with parents are improving quickly. There is insufficient strategic overview of this aspect of senior leaders' work. You recognise that this needs to improve immediately.
- There has been a dramatic reduction in the proportion of pupils excluded for a fixed period of time. The vast majority of pupils are extremely well behaved.
- As you check on the progress pupils are making, you and your deputy headteacher hold regular meetings with classroom teachers to check that pupils and groups of pupils achieve as they should. If pupils are falling behind, you ensure that appropriate help is in place to address this. Your records show that pupils are making good progress this year.
- Governors know the school well. They have made sure that the committee structure is appropriate to the needs of the school. They have maintained good oversight of the school's finances. Members of the governing body have the skills required in order to offer appropriate challenge and support to leaders.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the strategic leadership of pupils' attendance quickly improves and the number of pupils who fail to attend school regularly continues to reduce
- the improvement in pupils' outcomes at key stage 1 and in the phonics screening check continues
- the most able disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as others do with the same starting points
- communication with parents, particularly about their child's progress, continues to improve.

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

Yours sincerely

Jayne Ashman
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and we discussed and then agreed the lines of enquiry. I spoke, by telephone, with the person who provides school improvement advice to the school. I met with all staff during the morning briefing meeting. I spoke with 10 parents at the start of the school day and considered the views of a further 31 parents posted on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I viewed a range of documents, including an evaluation of the school's performance, information regarding pupils' achievement and attendance and a number of school policies. I reviewed the pupils' safeguarding and welfare arrangements and documentation. I met with the attendance and safeguarding lead, the behaviour lead, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher. Together, you and I reviewed a sample of pupils' work. I met formally with Year 6 pupils. I observed pupils' behaviour and the safeguarding lead conducting a safeguarding referral to the local authority and completing the follow-up actions.