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3 May 2017

Mr N Edensor  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Edensor

### **Short inspection of Beeston Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 28 March 2017 with Ofsted Inspector Mary Lanovy-Taylor, 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 2012.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

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

The school has had significant changes in leadership since then, including a new headteacher, chair of governors and several new members of teaching staff. You have worked closely with your leadership team, governors and the local authority to increase the pace of school improvement. Since your appointment in September 2015, you have provided highly effective leadership, galvanising staff and pupils to achieve higher standards. Teaching standards are high across the school and pupils thrive on producing their best work.

You have been explicit about the high standards of teaching and learning that you expect. To deal with this and issues around the quality of teaching, you have not been afraid to make difficult decisions to eradicate weaknesses. As a result, current pupils are making more rapid progress. In addition, more pupils get the opportunity to apply their skills and make good progress, most notably in reading and writing. You understand that there is more work needed in order to make sure that teaching assistants are well deployed to support and challenge pupils in their learning more consistently. We agreed that teaching assistants could be used to better effect to improve the rate of pupils' learning. For example, they do not always model language or question pupils appropriately.

Middle leaders have had a pivotal role in driving up standards. You ensure that these leaders are highly valued and given the necessary skills and ownership to lead their subjects effectively. They have helped to ensure that pupils make good progress in a range of subjects. Consequently, they feel empowered and benefit from the strong challenge and support provided by your senior leadership team.

Governance is strong because governors take their roles seriously and are uncompromising in their pursuit of excellence. They ensure that they are able to hold the school to account systematically. For example, governors carried out a skills audit to make sure that they have the right breadth of skills, knowledge and experience to meet their responsibilities. Governors ensure that new members complement the existing skills of the governing body. Governors are not complacent. They rigorously challenge leaders about key aspects of the school's work, including safeguarding, finances and the performance of disadvantaged pupils.

The personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils are a strength of the school. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school, which are reflected in their work and all that they do. Pupils' behaviour makes a strong contribution to their learning. For example, pupils collaborate and work harmoniously with each other. Pupils learn about respect and different cultures. As a result, pupils are respectful and celebrate differences in each other. 'We all have something special inside of us, even if we are different' was a typical pupil comment.

Parents and staff are effusive about the quality of education provided. You have won the full support of the staff. As a result, morale is high and reflects a happy and ambitious school. 'My child is happy and safe' was a typical comment from parents.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are robust. Designated safeguarding leaders record and check thoroughly that staff, governors and volunteers have the necessary clearance and qualifications to work with pupils. Staff responsible for these checks understand and carry out their roles diligently. You have ensured that staff and governors have been appropriately trained to protect pupils. As a consequence, pupils are safe and free from harm, including from the risks from radicalisation. Safeguarding records are rigorous and swift action is taken to deal with any concerns that arise.

Pupils told inspectors that they feel happy, safe and settled in school. Teaching ensures that pupils are aware of the risks they may face. For example, pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using computers. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that they know how to seek help if the need arises. For example, older pupils enjoy and take their role of anti-bullying ambassadors seriously. As a result, these pupils keep up the school's commitment to ensure that pupils feel safe and secure.

## Inspection findings

- One of my key lines of enquiry checked whether children in the early years are well supported to develop literacy skills, specifically their reading and writing skills. Previous assessments suggested that boys and disadvantaged children were making slower progress over time.
- As a result of the changes you have made to the layout of the early years, coupled with higher expectations, children now work in a calmer and more purposeful environment. Consequently, all groups of children have regular opportunities to practise and improve their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Lessons and assessment information indicate that a higher proportion of children are on track to achieve highly than in previous years. However, we agreed that some activities do not always engage all groups of children and that language skills could be further developed indoors and outdoors.
- The second line of enquiry focused on reading, writing and mathematics. This was because 2016 results showed that not enough pupils met the expected standard at the end of Year 2. You and your leaders took immediate action to improve matters. Pupils' work in books and the school's own information confirm that pupils are making more rapid progress this year. You have ensured that activities stretch and challenge pupils more effectively. Pupils are motivated and have the stamina to produce longer and sustained pieces of writing. An increasing number of pupils take pride in their handwriting and form and join their letters accurately.
- Last year, a below-average proportion of middle-ability pupils and disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard in writing by the end of Year 6. You and your leadership team have worked effectively to ensure that the teaching of writing is stronger. Teachers plan lessons and use accurate assessment information to ensure that pupils of all abilities write to a higher standard. For example, pupils now produce well-crafted sentences in a variety of work which hooks the reader through suspense and tension. As a result, pupils relish the opportunity to produce better-quality writing and more pupils are on track to achieve higher standards. We agreed that handwriting and spelling could be improved further for pupils in key stage 2.
- The previous inspection report identified the need to challenge the most able pupils in mathematics. During observations of learning and reviews of pupils' workbooks, we found that pupils are now receiving a richer diet of 'knotty' problems that require deep thinking and explanation. You acknowledge that this is not yet fully embedded in all classes. You also recognise that action should be taken so that pupils of different abilities, including the least able, get the opportunity to apply their skills to solve mathematical problems.
- My final line of enquiry was about attendance. The most recent published information showed that particular groups of pupils were more persistently absent than is the case nationally. Leaders' high expectations have ensured that this trend has now been addressed and pupils benefit from more regular attendance.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- children in the early years are given further opportunities to develop early language skills, both indoors and outdoors
- the focus on improving handwriting and spelling throughout the school is maintained
- teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support teachers in improving the rate at which pupils learn
- reasoning and problem-solving activities are embedded for all abilities of pupils, especially the least able, which results in increased attainment and progress by the end of key stage 2 in mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Brian Stillings  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you, your deputy headteachers, middle leaders and the designated safeguarding lead to discuss key aspects of the school's work. I also met with representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I considered a range of evidence, including the school's latest assessment information, the school improvement plan and leaders' self-evaluation. The team inspector met the leader responsible for the early years and pupil premium. The team inspector also scrutinised pupils' books, performance management information, attendance records and behaviour logs.

Inspectors observed a range of lessons with the headteacher and senior and middle leaders with a particular focus on the early years, phonics, writing and mathematics. We also listened to pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6. Inspectors talked to pupils in these year groups about their learning. I also considered 25 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View, including 24 written responses. I also considered the 22 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.