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Mrs Lindsey Evans
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Evans

Short inspection of Badby School

Following my visit to the school on 27 June 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 predecessor school was judged to be good in January 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Over recent years, the number of pupils on roll has increased considerably. Consequently, you have restructured the classes so that there is one class per year group throughout the school. At the start of this academic year, you also restructured the leadership team of the school, appointing a deputy headteacher and a family support worker for the first time.

In July 2014, the school converted to academy status as part of the Innovate Multi Academy Trust (iMAT), which is a trust of four Northamptonshire schools. The trust has provided useful support to Badby School through joint training days and opportunities for staff to develop their expertise by working together and learning from best practice, for example. You are currently acting as the interim executive headteacher across Badby School and Kilsby Church of England Primary School. This is a temporary arrangement while a new headteacher for Kilsby is appointed. It is enabling you, and the leaders in your school, to develop your leadership skills as you all take on additional responsibilities during this time.

Staff and pupils alike are proud to be part of Badby School. Staff appreciate that you listen to their views and take the time to thank them for the work they do. Pupils excitedly told me that they represent their school at sporting events with great pride. On the day of the inspection, several pupils were taking part in the 'iMAT Olympics', a competitive sporting event across the four schools in the trust. Pupils also have the chance to take part in a whole raft of sporting events, such as

golf, cricket and archery. They are rightly proud of the successes they achieve.

You strive to provide pupils with a range of experiences to enhance their education beyond the classroom. Pupils visit the theatre and take a trip to the seaside, for example. They raise money for charities such as MacMillan Cancer Support and a charity that supports people who have Down's syndrome. Pupils understand that it is important to learn about the world beyond their local area and to understand that 'not everyone is as fortunate as we are'. This reflects your drive to provide as broad an education as you can for the pupils of Badby School.

Pupils made me feel very welcome during the inspection. They happily spoke to me about their work and life at Badby School, demonstrating their good manners. They move around school quietly and sensibly. During lessons, pupils are fully on task because teachers plan learning that is interesting and challenging for them.

Almost every parent who responded to the online survey, Parent View, and those who spoke to me during the inspection were very positive about the school. One parent described their child's experience at Badby School as 'nurtured, challenging and safe'. Another described the school as having a 'fantastic community spirit'.

You welcome the views of parents. Following a recent survey, you have created a parents' forum. The forum is still in its infancy, but you have already acted upon feedback from the parents who have attended. They told you that they would appreciate even more information about how well their children are doing at school. As a result, plans are afoot for parents to receive a written mini-report next year in addition to the already-established parents' evenings and end-of-year report.

Following the last inspection, you were asked to ensure that teachers move pupils' learning on, checking that pupils act on their advice, and to ensure that pupils have opportunities to learn from each other. During our tour of the school, we saw teachers and teaching assistants using their effective questioning skills to challenge pupils' thinking and move their learning on. In the Reception class, for example, the teacher ensured that children were improving their language skills as she checked carefully that they understood the vocabulary that was being used. In other lessons, we saw pupils cooperating well and learning from each other. Some pupils were undertaking complex mathematical problems which required them to use their recently acquired understanding of time to plan an imaginary school trip to Paris. Other pupils were using their understanding of volume, measurement and multiplication to create 'mocktails' for the class, ensuring that there would be enough drinks to go round.

Governors ensure that they understand how well the school is doing by working alongside staff every term to discuss the progress of improvements outlined in the school's development plan. Leaders' evaluation of the work of the school is accurate. This enables them to identify the areas that can be improved with clarity. The school's improvement plan focuses on these current priorities but it does not contain sufficiently detailed information for leaders and governors to be able to check with precision that improvements are on track and are having a positive

impact. This inhibits the governing body's ability to hold leaders to account.

Similarly, leaders' allocation of the pupil premium funding has not taken into account all the barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged pupils. This has been recognised by the school's new special educational needs coordinator, who has already begun work to ensure that this funding is more precisely targeted to ensure that pupils gain maximum benefit.

Safeguarding is effective.

You ensure that all the necessary vetting checks take place before an adult starts working or volunteering at the school. You make sure that staff have up-to-date training. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item for staff meetings and important information is displayed in the staffroom. All this helps to keep safeguarding to the front of everyone's mind. Staff know how to raise a concern about a pupils' welfare should one arise.

You keep safeguarding records in an orderly and secure manner. You and your recently appointed family support worker offer useful support and advice to parents and families, making effective use of external agencies when they might be helpful.

Pupils told me that they learn about how to keep themselves safe. They are aware of the importance of online safety. They are also taught about how to keep themselves safe in other circumstances, such as when they cycle on the roads. Pupils told me that bullying is rare at the school and if it ever does happen it is dealt with by an adult quickly and successfully. Pupils were confident that there was a trusted adult they could speak to in school if they ever had any worries.

Inspection findings

- You and other leaders responded quickly when you noticed that pupils' progress in writing and mathematics fell below national averages at the end of key stage 2 in 2016. You and other leaders looked carefully to identify the reasons for this dip and where improvements were needed to reverse this decline. You have introduced a new approach to the teaching of writing. During our tour of classrooms, and as we examined pupils' books, we saw that the new method is being successfully implemented across the school and pupils are making faster progress.
- Similarly, you identified which aspects of mathematics needed to be taught differently or with greater precision. Alongside colleagues from iMAT, you ensured that teachers have benefited from training to develop pupils' mathematical reasoning skills. As we toured the school together, we saw teachers asking pupils to explain their reasoning during mathematics lessons. Pupils gave well thought-out answers to explain their thinking, demonstrating that their skills in this aspect of mathematics are improving.
- You noticed that boys did not make as much progress as girls from their starting points in 2016. Teachers are now mindful of planning learning that will engage the interests of boys as well as girls, including topics themes such as 'Pirates'.

Teachers also provide pupils with opportunities to learn outdoors and make links between subjects so that learning makes sense for all pupils. For example, the teacher had made links for pupils in Year 6, who were studying the circulatory system. A useful comprehension exercise as part of an English lesson reinforced pupils' factual understanding of this topic. The scientific learning was further reinforced as pupils measured their resting heart rates in a mathematics lessons, undertook some exercise and calculated how long it took for their hearts to return to the resting rate. Pupils finally compared their results and used the data they had collected to draw graphs.

- The school's assessment information shows that the new approaches to writing and mathematics are paying dividends. Most pupils in most year groups are making at least the expected progress this year. There is no disparity between the progress of boys and girls overall this year. However, you readily acknowledge that not all pupils are making the progress of which they are capable, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to take responsibility around school. They can be House Captains or 'Yellow Traffic Troopers', helping to make sure that everyone comes back into class sensibly after playtime. Pupils in Year 6 act as buddies for new children starting in the Reception class. They welcome them to school each day, taking them safely into class and helping them at lunchtime. These opportunities help to foster the family atmosphere you are keen to promote in the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they include sufficient detail in plans for whole-school improvement and for the use of the pupil premium funding to enable governors to hold leaders to account with rigour
- teachers in all year groups apply the new approaches to teaching mathematics fully so that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make faster progress and achieve the standards of which they are capable.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Northamptonshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Di Mullan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and the chief executive officer of iMAT. I also met with three members of the governing body, including the chair, four directors of iMAT and iMAT's chief finance officer. I spoke with a group of five staff and a group of six pupils. You and I toured the school together to visit the breakfast club at the beginning of the day and to observe the learning that was taking place in classes during the morning. I paid a visit to the after-school club.

Together, we scrutinised a selection of pupils' books. I examined a range of the school's documentation, including its self-evaluation document, its improvement plan and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. I considered published and internal information about pupils' attainment and progress.

I considered the views of parents by speaking with them before school and taking account of their views expressed through the analysis of the school's own recent parental survey. I also considered the 54 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. There were no responses to the online surveys for staff or pupils.