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Miss Carole Harris  
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Dear Miss Harris

### **Short inspection of Bordesley Green Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 6 July 2017 with Jeremy Bird, Ofsted Inspector, 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 May 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 have clear and unswerving commitment and resolve to ensure that pupils at the school develop as well-rounded individuals, who succeed in all aspects of school life. You have made sure that the school is a lively, bright and inviting place that promotes and celebrates pupils' learning and achievements. The school's ethos of 'We care, we create, we champion' is understood and adhered to by pupils and staff. This has resulted in a happy and nurturing environment that enables pupils to flourish academically and socially. This is a school that is very much at the heart of the community.

You have a strong and detailed knowledge of the pupils as individuals. You recognise that many of the pupils face significant challenges when they start at the school. The overwhelming majority of pupils speak English as an additional language. A large number of pupils are newly arrived in this country and speak no English. As a result of strong leadership, effective teaching and well-planned induction arrangements, all pupils settle quickly into school life and make good progress. However, during the inspection, we identified that teachers do not make consistently good use of questioning to promote pupils' spoken language.

There is a strong culture of improvement in the school. Collaboration with other local schools is used well as a means of allowing staff to share and learn from good

and outstanding practice. Where teaching is identified as not fully meeting the needs of pupils, you ensure that individual support plans are put in place and teachers and other staff are provided with bespoke professional development opportunities.

Since the previous inspection, there has been a rapid increase in pupil numbers. Two additional classes were introduced in September 2016. To meet the needs of the growing school population, you have successfully overseen a major building programme during the past two years. This has included the remodelling of the inside of the school to create two new classrooms and new office and administration spaces, the building of a sports hall and an on-site kitchen and servery. All of this has been accomplished without disruption to pupils' learning.

You have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Achievement in the school is improving. You have ensured that the approach to the promotion of communication skills has been revised, with adults modelling good examples of spoken language. There are now more opportunities for pupils to discuss their work. This said, teacher questioning could be better to further improve pupils' speaking skills. You have further strengthened teaching in school through the appointment of a considerable number of teachers, with a good balance of experienced teachers and those who are relatively new to the profession. Teachers benefit from the opportunities to observe and work alongside colleagues, both in school and at other schools. This means that outstanding practice is shared and developed. You are not complacent and recognise that there is further work to do to ensure that all teachers provide pupils with appropriate opportunities to use reasoning when problem solving in mathematics.

The high expectations that all staff have of pupils is reflected in the good behaviour that is evident around the school. Pupils are well behaved and polite and show consideration and care for each other. They have a good understanding of core British values, such as tolerance, respect and the rule of law. The school supports this development through encouraging pupils to become involved in fund-raising for a range of charities. For example, each year pupils raise money during Ramadan, for the 'Penny Appeal', to provide clean water for people in countries such as Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Each year, older pupils visit the Houses of Parliament to learn more about the democratic processes in this country.

A number of governors have left the governing body since the last inspection and new governors have joined. A new chair of governors took up the role this year. Governors have rightly identified that they will benefit from the appointment of other individuals who will assist them further with offering even greater levels of challenge and support to hold you and others to account for school outcomes.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. The headteacher and other leaders recognise the vulnerability of many of the pupils at Bordesley Green Primary School and have ensured that child protection policies, systems and procedures are

robust and well understood and implemented by all members of staff. As a result, pupils are kept safe and protected from harm. All statutory safeguarding requirements are met. There is shared leadership responsibility for safeguarding and a clear understanding that safeguarding is a fundamental responsibility of everyone in the school. Checks on visitors are thorough and help to ensure that pupils are not at risk within the school environment. All staff receive regular training to ensure that they fulfil their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Systems for recording and reporting safeguarding concerns are rigorous and are understood by staff. All of the necessary recruitment and staff vetting procedures are carried out diligently on staff employed by the school.

Leaders ensure that pupils understand the threat that extremism can pose and have ensured that staff are fully trained in the 'Prevent' duty.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders have developed and implemented a strong and effective system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning. This draws on a wide range of monitoring activities and the information gained is used to provide a detailed profile of the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Outcomes are used to inform school improvement planning. Strong leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that these pupils are supported extremely well. A range of suitable interventions that closely match individuals' specific needs are in place. Progress for these pupils is monitored assiduously and, as a result, gaps in learning are identified quickly, and effective strategies that ensure that pupils make good progress are implemented.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide additional specialist staffing and interventions to improve learning. Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work. The headteacher has very high expectations for all pupils and ensures that the additional funding is used to diminish differences in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and to provide them with a strong range of social and cultural experiences. For example, trips to the Birmingham City library and opportunities for pupils to perform as part of a choir at Symphony Hall widen pupils' horizons and help them to have high aspirations for their future lives.
- Leaders have improved the assessment system used in school. This now provides them with detailed information on the progress and attainment of all pupils. Leaders use this information well to track the progress of different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. As a result of the interventions, disadvantaged pupils are now making better progress, and differences in attainment from that of other pupils nationally are diminishing.
- A number of governors have left the governing body during the past 18 months, and this has hampered governors' ability to stringently monitor and evaluate the school's work. The recent appointment of a very experienced chair of governors has strengthened governance. Governors have a realistic and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, they are aware that to offer even greater levels of challenge they need to appoint additional governors with

the appropriate levels of expertise and knowledge.

- Leaders have a very clear understanding of pupils' specific needs and have consequently developed a language-rich curriculum with stimulating and well-planned topics, such as 'Everyday heroes' and 'Meet the Flintstones' that interest and engage pupils and further develop their communication skills. Strong links are in place between subjects, and pupils are encouraged to apply their reading and writing and mathematical skills in other subjects. However, opportunities for pupils to undertake problem solving using reasoning are not consistently embedded across all classes. This affects pupils' ability to use and apply mathematical skills as well as they could.
- Leaders' recent focus on improving the teaching of phonics has had a positive impact on improving pupils' early reading skills. Staff have been provided with relevant professional development, and there is a whole-school systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. As a result, outcomes in phonics and reading are continuing to improve.
- Current school assessment information and evidence gathered during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils in school are making good progress, and attainment rates in school are rising. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Teachers ensure that pupils are secure in the use of spelling, punctuation and grammar when writing and insist on high standards of presentation. There is still some inconsistency in the quality of questioning from teachers and other staff, and this limits opportunities for pupils to further develop their spoken language.
- Children enter school with skills and knowledge that are well below those typical for their age. Many children speak no English and have extremely limited communication skills. As a result of strong and effective leadership, good teaching and provision that is very well matched to children's needs, they make good progress, and by the time they leave the Reception classes the majority are well prepared for Year 1. Leaders have a very good understanding of the needs of the community. The early years provision provides an oasis of calm and security for children.
- The school supports extremely well the needs of the very large number of pupils who arrive at the school speaking little or no English and often having had no formal education. The initial induction arrangements mean that pupils are supported socially and emotionally when they first arrive at school. All newly arrived pupils are provided with a 'buddy' who helps to ensure that pupils quickly understand the routines in school and become settled and ready to learn. There is a good balance of support from specialist language support assistants and outside agencies. Newly arrived pupils are quickly settled into their classes and are able to make rapid gains in speaking and understanding English and, consequently, learning across all subjects.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- opportunities for pupils to apply and use their mathematical knowledge in problem-solving activities using reasoning are fully embedded by all teachers
- teachers and other staff further develop their use of questioning so that pupils are provided with more opportunities to extend their spoken language skills
- governance is further enhanced and strengthened by the appointment of additional governors who have the necessary skills and expertise to further improve the quality of education provided.

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

Yours sincerely

Adam Hewett  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, Jeremy Bird, Ofsted Inspector, and I met with you, the deputy headteacher, an assistant headteacher and the special needs coordinator. I met with the chair of the governing body. There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, for the results to be considered. However, I looked at free-text comments from parents. The inspection team, together with you, the deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher, visited 19 classes to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. Inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons and at lunchtime, and met with a representative group of pupils, to seek their views about school life. We observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime on the playground.

We scrutinised information about pupils' progress during last academic year. We considered other documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and the school improvement plan. We scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures, including policies and checks on staff employed in the school, and checked that the school's website contained all the information that it should. I also analysed the range of views expressed by staff through Ofsted's questionnaire about the school and its leadership.