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Mrs Melinda Amos
Headteacher
Butler's Hill Infant and Nursery School
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Dear Mrs Amos

Short inspection of Butler's Hill Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 4 July 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 November 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 is well led and managed. Leaders and governors are aspirational for pupils and committed to the continued improvement of the school. You have a precise and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. You were rightly very disappointed at the low results for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2016 and you and your leadership team immediately took action to make improvements to teaching and learning and to raise standards.

Parents hold the school and its staff in high esteem. Almost all of the parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to others. Parents commented on the welcoming atmosphere that you have created at the school. They also value how approachable and accessible they find senior leaders and teachers and say that they are quick to deal with any questions and concerns they may have.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are respectful and pay close attention in class. As one pupil said, 'The best thing about the school is the teachers because they will always help you.' Pupils value their learning and enrichment opportunities. For example, older pupils enjoyed a recent visit to Nottingham University to learn about the environment. You ensure that the school's values are reinforced through assemblies and lessons. During the inspection, one pupil very proudly showed me the sticker she had been given for showing the school value of good manners. You

also provide regular opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and religions. When we visited the Reception classes, pupils were enjoying tasting Turkish food and learning some Turkish words. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They told me that it is wrong to push, fight or be unkind to others because it will hurt their feelings.

You are helped in your work by a governing body which fulfils its strategic role effectively. As well as giving you strong support, it holds you to account for the progress that different groups of pupils make. Governors have a particular focus on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

You and your team have worked hard and been successful in addressing the areas for improvement since the last inspection. You have improved the teaching of phonics and, in 2016, the results in the screening test at the end of Year 1 were above the national average. You have looked closely at the way pupils' learning is planned and changed the way subjects are taught to ensure that there is a sharp focus for pupils on developing the skills they need. For example, when we visited classes in Year 2, pupils were developing their report-writing skills in their work on dinosaurs.

You have focused on improving outcomes at the end of Year 2 as a priority. You and your team took swift action to identify and address weaknesses in teaching and learning. You worked with local schools to identify strategies that worked well and then adapted them to use in your school. You ensured that teachers received training on the standards that pupils are expected to reach at the end of Years 1 and 2 and improved the way you identified barriers to learning. You have made sure that the additional support given to pupils falling behind more accurately meets their needs.

We also talked about how you have worked on improving pupils' attendance. Published data indicates that, for some groups of pupils, attendance was not as high as it should have been last year. However, you can explain convincingly why their attendance was low. A small number of pupils had extended absence due to complex health problems. You gave these pupils support to help them keep up with their work while they were absent. You have rigorous procedures for following up absences. You work well with families in your community to support pupils to attend school regularly.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Your records are detailed and thorough. Staff and governors receive frequent and up-to-date training. They know what to do to keep pupils safe and are confident about the procedures for reporting concerns. You work actively with external agencies and refer your concerns in a timely manner. You make sure that staff are alert to any potential issues and that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The checks of staff's suitability to work with children are detailed and thorough.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. Pupils said that bullying is extremely rare but, if it does happen, they have complete confidence in staff to deal with it quickly and effectively.

Inspection findings

- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery class. They are encouraged to develop their skills in a stimulating and very supportive environment where they can explore learning both indoors and outside. During their time in the Nursery, children adapt well to school life and are prepared for the Reception class.
- Teachers and pupils have positive relationships, and pupils willingly follow teachers' instructions in lessons. Classrooms are attractive; displays celebrate pupils' work and provide them with helpful prompts and examples of how to make their work better.
- Teaching assistants give very effective support to pupils who need extra help. They work with them in small groups and, through their persistence and encouragement, make sure the pupils keep trying with their work and never give up.
- At the end of the early years in 2016, the number of children gaining a good level of development and reaching the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average, especially for boys and disadvantaged pupils. You and your team quickly identified that children entering the school needed additional help with their speaking and listening and fine motor skills. You introduced a programme of intensive support to improve these skills from the time children enter the Nursery class until they leave the Reception class. As a result, more pupils, especially boys, are reaching the expected standards and make good progress from their different starting points.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 was below the national average. We talked about the actions that you and your leadership team have taken to raise standards. You have trained staff, improved the ways you check pupils' progress and reviewed teaching strategies. School data indicates that big improvements have been made this year to both the teaching of and outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. Outcomes are now in line with the national average for 2016 and there has been an increase in the number of pupils working at greater depth, especially in mathematics.
- Across Years 1 and 2, progress in writing is still slower than that in reading and mathematics. When we visited lessons, we saw that pupils' spelling is weak and they struggle to use their knowledge of phonics when spelling new and unfamiliar words in their work.
- In 2016, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils were well below those of their peers nationally. You have spent time carrying out a careful analysis of the barriers to learning faced by each pupil and devising strategies to give them additional support. You have made good use of the pupil premium funding to ensure that these pupils get the support they need. The well-attended breakfast club, funded by the pupil premium, ensures that disadvantaged pupils who attend it have a

good start to the school day. However, although the number of disadvantaged pupils reaching expected standards is increasing, the gap between their outcomes and that of their peers nationally is not diminishing quickly enough. We agreed that teachers are not checking the impact of the additional support they are putting in place for disadvantaged pupils to ensure that it is effective.

- Attendance is improving and is now in line with the national average overall. However, attendance in 2016 for some groups of pupils was low and persistent absence high. You take effective actions to engage parents with prioritising attendance and realise that these efforts need to be sustained in order to ensure that pupils progress as well as they should.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- outcomes for disadvantaged pupils improve so that they achieve as well as other pupils nationally by continuing to precisely identify barriers to learning and checking that additional support provided is accelerating their progress
- pupils improve the accuracy of their writing by consistently applying their knowledge of phonics when spelling new words in their work.

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

Frances Le Pla
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and we agreed the lines of enquiry for the inspection. I also met with you and your senior leaders to talk about the work you have all been doing to make improvements to teaching and learning. I met with governors, including the chair and vice-chair. I spoke with parents before school and met with pupils formally to talk about their school experience. I also observed pupils' behaviour around school at the start of the day, at breaktimes and during lessons. You and I visited all classes and examined pupils' books, and talked with pupils to evaluate the quality of their learning. In addition, I scrutinised the school's safeguarding arrangements and records, including the school's record of recruitment checks on staff. I evaluated the school's documentation in relation to pupils' attainment and progress and attendance. I reviewed the school's own evaluation of its work and its improvement plans. I took account of the 45 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the 19 responses from parents to the Ofsted free-text service. I also considered the 25 responses to

Ofsted's online staff survey. There were no responses from pupils to Ofsted's online survey to take into consideration.