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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



24 July 2017

Mr Darren Stanley
Headteacher
Manorbrook Primary School
Park Road
Thornbury
Bristol
BS35 1JW

Dear Mr Stanley

Short inspection of Manorbrook Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 29 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 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 previous inspection. Your accurate and honest evaluation of the school's current performance has enabled you and your leadership team to identify actions to secure improvements. These actions are successfully improving the quality of teaching and pupil outcomes. For example, you identified that pupils' progress in writing was not as strong in 2016 as for other pupils nationally. As a result, you supported teachers to make the necessary changes. Writing standards have risen across the school and current work indicates further improvement.

Following a decline in performance in 2016 at key stage 1 and key stage 2, you immediately provided highly effective training for staff to develop their practice. Teachers are now more aware of the new, higher expectations of the national tests. Staff provide good levels of challenge for pupils, and this is leading to improved rates of progress. Leaders, including governors, monitor pupils' learning very effectively and support pupils who fall behind so they can catch up quickly.

Since you arrived in September 2016, you have wasted no time in sharing your vision among the whole school community. Middle leaders support your ambition for the school and ensure that actions are implemented effectively. Governors are passionate and ambitious about the school and offer the right balance of challenge and support to enable school leaders to do their jobs well.

The school's core values of respect, resilience and responsibility are well known by

leaders, teachers and pupils alike. Pupils typically commented that they like to be challenged and one pupil said, 'It makes learning fun when it's hard.' Pupils are rightly proud of their school and their books show work that is of a good standard. Behaviour in and around school is very good, and pupils are respectful and polite towards each other and towards adults. Lunchtimes are calm and pupils enjoy sitting and eating together. Pupils appreciate the range of additional activities at lunchtimes and extra sporting opportunities on offer after school.

Teaching challenges pupils to think hard and reflect on improving their work. As a result, pupils work hard and try their best. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work. Comments and results from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, show that 100% of parents would recommend the school. They appreciate the extra mile that staff go to for their children.

Safeguarding is effective.

Everyone in school places the highest importance on keeping pupils safe. The culture of safeguarding is strong and is threaded from policies and procedures through to how the school supports its most vulnerable pupils. However, the school website does not yet fully reflect these effective procedures.

Staff and governors are appropriately trained in child protection and first aid. When child protection issues arise, staff take swift action and work closely with outside agencies. The checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children are complete and up to date. Leaders regularly check these records. Recruitment checks are carried out, and those staff and governors who are responsible for recruitment are appropriately trained to ensure that new staff joining the school meet suitability requirements. Risk assessments are carried out to ensure that safety is a priority for everyone in the school.

Pupils' attendance is a high priority in the school, and procedures to follow up unexpected absences on the first day are clear and thorough. You regularly monitor persistent absence and are not afraid to tackle poor attendance. Pupils like the rewards in place to celebrate good attendance. As a result of the school's actions, absence rates are now declining for all groups of pupils.

Pupils feel safe in school and appreciate the ways in which they can share their worries or concerns with an adult. Pupils are very clear about how to keep safe when using new technologies and talk confidently about what the school has done to ensure that they are safe online. Pupils said that bullying is rare and they know how to get it solved if it does happen.

Inspection findings

At the start of the inspection, I met with you to discuss the key lines of enquiry I would follow to ensure that the school remains a good school. We decided to focus on how well leaders responded to the decline in outcomes in 2016. We also explored whether pupils, including the most able, make good progress across key

stage 1. Finally, we examined how well pupils' outcomes in writing are improving across the school.

- In September 2016, you quickly identified the improvements that were needed to reverse the decline in pupils' outcomes. In consultation with other leaders and governors, you analysed pupils' results and used this information to plan improvements to teaching and learning. Leaders used their skills to monitor standards and improve teachers' practice. They raised teachers' expectations and challenged weaker teaching.
- All leaders are able to talk about the school's rapid journey of improvement and are aware of the need to focus on groups of learners, such as previously lower-attaining pupils. Governors have supported you in this process and have monitored improvements closely across the year. As a result, outcomes for current pupils continue to rise.
- You quickly realised that teaching across key stage 1 was not providing the right level of challenge for pupils and put in place actions to turn this around. You also realised that the teaching of phonics was not enabling pupils to acquire the skills to be confident readers. Your leadership team worked quickly on changing the way in which phonics was taught and helped pupils who had fallen behind to catch up. I listened to pupils read and looked at outcomes for 2017; standards in phonics have clearly improved. Outcomes at the end of Year 2 have also risen and more pupils are now achieving the higher standards than in 2016. The most able pupils are being challenged because teachers are offering them more opportunities to develop their writing using the skills that they have been taught.
- Although not a focus at the outset of the inspection, a review of key stage 1 pupils' mathematics books led me to look more closely at mathematics across the school. While it is evident that the most able pupils are able to apply their mathematical skills through a rich variety of challenges, this is not so well developed across other groups of pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- During the autumn term of 2016, you rapidly put in place measures to improve the teaching of writing. This raised teachers' expectations and enabled them to challenge pupils more effectively. Teachers now encourage pupils to identify the improvements needed in their work and guide them in making the necessary changes. Middle leaders spoke positively of the support you provide and described the actions they take to monitor writing progress across the year.
- Writing outcomes have improved throughout the school, and more pupils are now meeting the expected standards at the end of Year 6. However, pupils in key stage 2 are not consistent in using the punctuation expected for their age, because punctuation has not been taught well enough over time. In addition, pupils in key stage 1 are not using their good knowledge of phonics to spell words accurately when writing independently.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are given opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning skills to enable them to solve a rich variety of problems from across all aspects of mathematics
- teachers support pupils' spelling at key stage 1 and punctuation skills at key stage 2 so that more pupils reach the expected standards
- the school's website better reflects the safeguarding practices and procedures that the school has in place.

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

Yours sincerely

Richard Lucas
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, your senior and middle leaders, governors, staff and pupils. We visited classes jointly to observe learning. We looked at pupils' workbooks together, and I listened to a group of Year 1 pupils read. We considered documentary evidence relating to the impact of the school's work, including safeguarding, attendance, the use of additional funding and reports to governors. I took into account 48 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. There were no pupil or staff survey responses.