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Mr Rick Stuart-Sheppard
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Stuart-Sheppard

Short inspection of Brundall Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 September 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 December 2012.

This school continues to be good.

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

Brundall Primary is a school where pupils are encouraged to be the very best that they can be, academically and as citizens, and to fulfil the school's motto 'Be extraordinary'. Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics and have done so since the previous inspection. Alongside their academic learning, you and your team are determined to ensure that pupils learn how to be responsible young people. For example, you give a high priority in your curriculum to learning about the environment in lessons. Some pupils are part of the school's eco-council. They looked at how the school could reduce its use of electricity and have had remarkable success, which was shared at an eco-forum for local schools, hosted by your school. Parents value this approach to their child's education. One parent commented, 'I am really pleased with the school's focus on the whole child.'

Since the previous inspection, you, your governors and staff have continued to improve the school. You have addressed the issues from the last inspection. Writing continues to improve. Outdoor learning is now a key feature of the school's curriculum provision and the school recently achieved the silver award for 'learning outside the classroom'.

Governors are supportive but do not shy away from asking challenging questions of leaders. They look carefully at all aspects of the school's work and are not complacent about wanting to ensure that the school continues to move forward. Governors discuss

pupils' attainment information in detail, including how well different groups of pupils are doing. However, you have not given them enough information about the progress pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics alongside this attainment information. As a result, they do not know in enough detail the proportion of pupils who are currently making sufficient progress to reach or exceed the expected standards.

Teaching is good because you and your team share a passion for learning. You work together well and you set high expectations for all staff. Teachers establish very positive relationships with pupils and promote positive attitudes in assemblies and in class, such as resilience and perseverance. As a result, pupils are very willing to do their work and to take on new challenges. Teachers and other adults ask questions which extend pupils' learning and make them think hard. Additional adults make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers set tasks in contexts to interest pupils. For example, during the inspection, one class were developing their understanding of powerful verbs and how to use a thesaurus. This was made into a team competition, which motivated pupils well. However, where there are parallel classes this year, there is not enough consistency of approach to teaching the same content so that all pupils benefit from the same high-quality teaching in all classes.

Children get off to a flying start at school. Provision in the early years is a strength of the school and adults support children in the early years well. Children enjoy playing and learning in the attractive and well-resourced outside areas, as well as, for example, sharing stories with adults and playing in the healthy food cafe indoors.

Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attendance. Pupils talk warmly about the support and help they get from teachers and other adults in the school. They enjoy everything the school has to offer and say that teachers make their learning fun. They like the wide range of clubs that they attend, such as musical theatre and running club, which is so popular it has to run for different groups on alternate weeks. Pupils spoken to agreed that behaviour is good in school and pupils are friendly and welcoming.

Parents agree with their children's views of the school. A large number of parents responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire and the vast majority were very positive about all aspects of the school's work. Typical comments received included 'amazing team', 'excellent headteacher' and 'staff who care'.

Safeguarding is effective.

All adults in the school share a strong commitment to keeping pupils safe. Staff responsible for carrying out checks on staff do this in line with statutory requirements and you double-check that everything is in order. Your safeguarding governor also makes regular checks that safeguarding policies and practices are followed. Records of concern completed by staff show that this training is effective and that staff know the signs to look for that indicate a child may be at risk. You follow up any concerns with external agencies when necessary and are tenacious in ensuring that action is taken to meet pupils' needs. Pupils told me that the school is a safe place, and parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire agree with this view. Pupils were knowledgeable about what bullying is and said that it is rare at Brundall Primary School.

Staff teach pupils how to stay safe online and pupils were able to tell me what information they should and should not share online. You provide information about online safety to parents in newsletters. However, you recognise that you have not met with parents recently to provide additional information about how they can help keep their children safe at home when using technology.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection we agreed that I would look at the progress pupils make in writing. Improving writing was an area for improvement from the previous inspection. Published pupil assessment information for 2016 indicated that, in Years 2 and 6, some pupils did not do as well as they did in reading.
- You and your team have been aware of this discrepancy and have been putting in place a range of initiatives to address this. For example, you have looked at how writing can be promoted across different subjects, such as by giving greater emphasis to the quality of pupils' writing in science. You have made writing more purposeful, often linked to stories read to pupils. You have chosen themes which will have greater appeal to boys as you identified that some boys did not do as well as girls in writing.
- I spoke with subject leaders about the impact of the changes introduced to improve outcomes in writing. We discussed the Year 2 outcomes for 2017, which show an improvement on the previous year. The provisional national data indicates that standards are now above average.
- I discussed the school's assessment information for other year groups. This shows that pupils made good progress and that the achievement of boys in most year groups was improving and closer to that of girls in almost all year groups in 2017.
- I looked at examples of pupils' writing from the previous year, which was of high quality. However, in classes currently, teachers sometimes accept work which is not of the high standard that pupils are capable of. For example, pupils make basic punctuation errors which teachers do not address.
- You and other leaders are aware that, despite implementing new spelling programmes, improving spelling continues to be an area for improvement because poor spelling detracts from the quality of some pupils' writing.
- The next area that I looked at was how well pupils make progress across the broad curriculum. This was to check that, in addition to achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics, pupils enjoy a wide curriculum which is matched to their needs.
- I met with your curriculum leader. She demonstrated the broad and interesting curriculum which is in place and the good links that are made between subjects. She also explained how teachers modify plans each year to accommodate changes in class organisation. This ensures that pupils do not repeat work or have gaps in their learning. However, the curriculum does not have sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop a strong cultural understanding of people from different cultures and backgrounds.
- Pupils told me that they enjoy learning in different subjects and particularly enjoy the themed weeks. A particular favourite was the space week, which all the pupils spoken to agreed was 'awesome!' I saw evidence of the good-quality learning that takes place during these weeks, for example in the school hall, where the outcomes from an art

week were displayed. This showed the high-quality work that pupils had created by carefully studying the work of different artists. I also saw the instrumental provision that you provide for pupils in key stage 2. Those pupils who have had a year or more of tuition already demonstrate good skills, while those who are just starting are keen to learn.

- We discussed your current arrangements for checking the quality of teaching and assessing the progress pupils make in subjects other than English and mathematics. Your subject leaders sample the quality of work in each year group regularly and visit classes to check on teaching. You are aware that your systems for assessing pupils' progress are quite new. These have not yet had time to be firmly established so that subject leaders use them to identify where pupils make best progress and where pupils' progress is slower.
- The third area we agreed I would look at during the inspection was the progress made by different groups of pupils in school.
- We discussed the progress of disadvantaged pupils. You know all pupils well and were able to tell me exactly what their individual needs are and the support that you have put in place to meet these needs. We discussed a range of pupils, their barriers to learning and the support provided. For example, we discussed one pupil with emotional needs and how you have used an external provider to provide counselling. For another pupil, you identified that providing opportunities for them to represent the school on the school council would boost their self-esteem. As a result of this individualised approach, pupils who are disadvantaged make good progress and the majority achieve in line with their peers.
- I met with your leader for special educational needs who was able to demonstrate to me that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Leaders track the progress of these pupils in a variety of ways using assessment information and broader measures, such as progress against their individual targets. As a result, there is secure evidence of the good progress these pupils make across their broad range of needs.
- We discussed the needs of different groups of pupils, including the most able pupils. You explained how teachers provide different challenges for pupils and encourage pupils to select the challenge that will move their learning on. I also talked with pupils who told me that they were provided with work at different levels.
- We saw in classes that pupils are mostly given work which is challenging for them. For example, in Year 6, we saw pupils who were grappling with tricky problems which involved reasoning in mathematics. However, we agreed that occasionally teachers do not provide tasks which are challenging enough for some pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers do not accept work that is not of the standard of which pupils are capable and teaching approaches across parallel year classes draw on each teacher's strengths so that all pupils benefit from the highest-quality teaching

- plans for improving spelling are implemented swiftly so that spelling improves across the school
- curriculum plans include more opportunities for developing pupils' cultural understanding, preparing them for life in modern Britain
- new systems for checking pupils' progress are firmly established and used to identify where progress is strongest and where more needs to be done, and that pupils' progress is reported to governors in greater detail.

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

Yours sincerely

Maria Curry
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, with teachers and with six governors. I met with a group of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6. I scrutinised a range of documents, including information on pupils' progress, safeguarding, development planning and the school's self-evaluation. I visited all classes and evaluated pupils' work. I checked the school's website and found it to meet requirements on the publication of specified information.