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Mr Alex Bell
Headteacher
Colston's Primary School
18 Cotham Grove
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Dear Mr Bell

Short inspection of Colston's 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 June 2014.

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 has continued to improve because leaders know the school's strengths and areas to improve. They are always striving to make the school a better place for its pupils. Since you arrived in 2016, you have wasted no time in bringing about improvements despite changes to staff, governors and the opening of a new school site. You have managed to maintain pupils' standards. For example, following a dip in performance in 2016 in key stage 1, you and your leadership team identified aspects of teaching that needed improving. You set about doing just that. As a result, the decline was quickly reversed and outcomes are now back on track.

The school's motto of 'Celebrating Diversity, Learning Together' threads through all aspects of school life. Working together is a key part of the fabric of the school and all members of the school community live up to this ideal. Colston's Primary is an inclusive school where pupils' cultural diversity is a strength of the school's distinctive character. One pupil said that the best thing about Colston's Primary is that 'everyone is different and unique in their own way'. Pupils particularly like the art they do in school. The arts curriculum is important to leaders in school, reflecting the artistic aspirations and interests of parents. Pupils also appreciate the effort that teachers make to be creative in lessons to make their learning fun.

Since the previous inspection, the school has managed to maintain standards by focusing on improving the quality of teaching. Teachers set high expectations and pupils live up to these in and around school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school community places the utmost importance on keeping pupils safe. The culture of safeguarding is strong. Policies and procedures are embedded in the school's daily practice. Risk assessments are in place to ensure that the school is a safe place for pupils. Staff are thorough in making sure that it is.

Staff are well trained in child protection procedures and know what to do if they have a concern. Staff are trained well in how to keep pupils safe from abuse, sexual exploitation and the influence of radicalisation and extremism. Records on the suitability of adults working in school are regularly monitored by leaders. Checks on staff recruitment are stringent. Leaders responsible for safeguarding are diligent in making timely referrals to outside agencies. The school shares tips on safety with parents through regular updates in the school's newsletters. Regular coffee mornings for parents and carers are used to discuss aspects of safeguarding.

Pupils feel safe in and around school, in the classrooms and playground. Almost all parents who responded to Parent View agreed that their children feel safe in school. Pupils say that bullying is rare and they know what to do if it does occur. Older pupils stated that they would not be a 'bystander with bullying' and would report it to a teacher if they saw it happening to someone.

Pupils were very clear about how to stay safe online. Older pupils knew about cyber bullying and what to do if it happened to them. The school updates parents through regular e-safety news in newsletters.

Most pupils attend school regularly. Leaders work effectively to improve attendance.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, I met with you and your senior leadership team to discuss key lines of enquiry to ensure that the school remains a good school. We decided to focus on what actions leaders take to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well. We also explored how leaders in school responded to the weaker outcomes in 2016 at key stage 1, including in phonics. Finally, we looked at the actions leaders have taken to ensure that pupils from certain key groups are making the progress of which they are capable.
- You and the leadership team check on the performance of pupils' outcomes regularly. Leaders are aware that the progress and standards reached by disadvantaged pupils have not been high. Disadvantaged pupils are given additional pastoral and/or academic support. Evidence collected during the inspection showed that the additional support is improving outcomes. Many disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are doing well and making good progress. Results in 2017 show improvements in the tests at the end of the year in key stages 1 and 2. However, you are determined to continue with this work and improve standards further. You recognise that the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is a particular concern. You have begun to address this and are taking steps to support parents of these pupils. You have employed a

learning mentor for this purpose. However, it is too early to see the impact of this.

- Leaders at all levels are ambitious for the pupils and are highly effective at improving outcomes. In response to the dip in outcomes at key stage 1 and phonics in 2016, you acted swiftly. You realised that school assessments were not accurate. Teachers are now supported with additional training and resources that make learning more focused on pupils' needs. Your phonics leader is passionate that all pupils have a good grounding in the basics of reading. She has improved the teaching of phonics. The leadership team ensures that lessons are well matched to pupils' needs. In addition, well-trained and highly skilled teaching assistants teach small groups of pupils. As a result, outcomes in 2017 in the phonics screening check and the tests at the end of the year at key stage 1 improved and are now in line with the national average.
- You have focused on improving outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do well as a result of well-organised support. However, in 2016 and 2017, pupils with lower starting points made slower progress compared with other pupils in school. Middle leaders have introduced assessment tasks that provide teachers with the information needed to match learning closely to pupils' ability. Where teachers use this information well, pupils make better progress. For example, Year 6 teachers identified gaps in pupils' writing and addressed them before moving pupils on to more complex aspects of writing. Where teachers do not use this information well, some pupils struggle to complete the tasks set. You know that this is an area that needs further work.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders continue to improve outcomes and attendance for disadvantaged pupils
- teachers use assessment information when teaching key skills, knowledge and understanding to accelerate the progress of pupils from lower starting points.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bristol City. 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 lessons jointly to observe learning. We looked at pupils' workbooks together. 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 75 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. There were no pupil or staff survey responses.