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Mrs Elizabeth Moore  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Moore

### **Short inspection of Beckingham Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 18 January 2018, 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 September 2013.

Based on the evidence available during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

As headteacher of the school, you have established a positive atmosphere for learning and you are ambitious for its pupils. You and the dedicated team of other staff have created a caring and inclusive ethos. Staff who responded to their questionnaire are proud to be part of the school and feel well supported. The pupils I spoke with told me that pupils get on well with each other at the school and all are welcome.

You have a good understanding of the school's strengths and you have accurately identified areas to focus on in the school's improvement plan. We agreed that your self-evaluation document is not precise enough. Your improvement plans also lack rigour. Currently, the improvement targets are not measurable so it is difficult to check whether the plan has had the desired effect. Governors do not routinely use the improvement plan to hold you to account.

Pupils are polite and friendly. They enjoy coming to school and their attendance is above the national average. Your small school has a strong sense of community. Pupils and staff show respect and consideration for each other and they all feel valued. Pupils whom I met with spoke confidently and appreciate the help and encouragement that they receive from their teachers.

Staff, most pupils and a majority of parents say that pupils' behaviour is good. I did not observe any poor behaviour during the inspection, either during lessons or at playtime. Pupils say that bullying does not occur very often but, when it does take place, teachers usually resolve it promptly. A small number of pupils feel that teachers are not good at resolving bullying.

Pupils enjoy learning and make good progress. Teachers have high expectations of them. Pupils take pride in their work and pay close attention to its presentation. They work well with each other, older pupils often helping out younger ones. Pupils in Year 6 like taking on more responsibility, for example as house captains.

The teaching of writing does not provide sufficient challenge to pupils. Teachers do not plan enough activities that demand longer pieces of writing, including in other subjects. This means that all pupils, particularly boys and disadvantaged pupils, are not making the progress that they should.

Since the previous inspection, the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in phonics by the end of Year 1 has risen steadily and continues to rise. You have achieved this by making phonics and the development of literacy skills key priorities for staff. In the phonics lesson that I observed, pupils engaged well with the teacher and teaching assistant to practise the 'sound of the day' and recall other similar sounds. Pupils in Year 2 whom I heard reading used their phonic skills well to sound out unfamiliar words.

A recommendation from the school's last inspection was for leaders to improve communication with parents and carers. Parents I spoke with said that communication with teachers has improved and that teachers are approachable. They value the weekly newsletter on the school's new website and know whom to contact in school if they have any concerns. A majority of parents who responded to their survey are supportive of the school. They say that their children are happy and well looked after. Some parents are still concerned, however, that they do not receive enough information from school about their children's progress.

At the previous inspection, inspectors also asked leaders to make some improvements to the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers provide pupils with regular feedback, in line with the school's policy. Pupils understand that 'bubbles' show what they have done well and 'blocks' tell them how they can improve their work. I saw many successful examples of pupils responding to the 'blocks', using a purple pen to correct and improve their work. Teachers set pupils new learning targets and pupils use them to improve the quality of their writing. Pupils listen carefully to each other during lessons. Their attitudes to learning are good. According to their survey, some pupils do not find their work challenging enough.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Pupils feel safe in school and have a good understanding of how to stay safe, including when they are online. For example, they enjoy the visits of staff from the National Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Children, who teach pupils how to

keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. The majority of pupils agreed that there is always someone at school they can trust if they have a problem. One parent said that they have 'great trust in the care and welfare that the school provides'.

All staff receive regular safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities in ensuring that pupils are safe. Processes for making referrals are clear and understood by all. Records show that you communicate effectively with outside agencies.

I found weaknesses, however, in some of your safeguarding systems and processes. While these do not put the pupils at risk, they are not as tight as they should be. You strengthened some areas of safeguarding during the inspection. You made some changes to the record of recruitment checks so that it is now clearer that you have carried out all the relevant checks on staff. You have carried out a risk assessment on the path linking the school's two buildings, where pupils say they feel less safe. You have also made sure that all staff and visitors to the school now wear a badge so that pupils can identify them.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders have a new system for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers use a variety of sources to arrive at their judgements, including work in pupils' books. Teachers regularly check their assessment of pupils' work with teachers from other schools. This helps to ensure that their assessment judgements are accurate.
- In 2017, the proportions of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 who achieved the expected standard for their age were at or above the national average for reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development in the early years was also above the national average in 2017.
- Given their starting points, too few pupils achieve the higher standard in their writing by the time they reach Year 2 and Year 6. In particular, in 2016 and 2017 no boys and no disadvantaged pupils in Year 2 or Year 6 achieved the higher standard in their writing.
- Teachers are now setting individual targets for pupils and the depth of pupils' writing is improving. For example, a boy in Year 6 showed me how he had included more adverbials in his writing to improve its complexity. A pupil in Year 5 received one-to-one support from a teaching assistant and improved the sentence structure in his writing.
- Pupils' books, including those of boys and disadvantaged pupils, show that many are making good progress in their writing from their different starting points. Pupils' punctuation and use of grammar is more accurate and they are writing sentences of increasing complexity. Teachers, however, do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing, particularly in Year 2. Your last review of pupils' progress showed that too few boys in Year 2 are on track to achieve the higher standard in their writing.

- Pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum and have a good knowledge of different world religions and cultures. They are tolerant of people who may have different lifestyles from their own. For example, some pupils in Years 5 and 6 have recently explored Iceland. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 compare their village of Beckingham to a village in Africa. Pupils respect other people's backgrounds while also celebrating Britain's culture.
- Leaders also provide a good selection of extra-curricular activities. All pupils have, for example, violin lessons in Years 3 and 4. Many take part in after-school clubs, including Lego and 'Street Beat'. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are enthusiastic about being involved in outdoor adventure activities. A parent commented that the activities help to increase the pupils' confidence and self-awareness.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide more challenging activities for all pupils in writing so that a greater proportion, particularly of boys and disadvantaged pupils, achieve the higher standard in writing at the end of key stages 1 and 2
- the school's plans for improvement are precise, measurable and based on an accurate evaluation of the school's performance
- systems and processes for making sure that pupils are safe are thorough and checked regularly to ensure that safeguarding procedures remain secure.

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

Rachel Tordoff  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and I spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I met with two governors and held a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body.

I visited four classes with you to observe pupils' learning. I spoke with a group of pupils and I observed pupils' behaviour around the school and during lessons. I scrutinised a selection of pupils' workbooks with you and one of your senior leaders.

I met a number of parents informally at the beginning of the school day. I took into account the 21 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 10 comments. I also considered the 36 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils and the 14 responses to the questionnaire for staff.

I evaluated a range of information, including the school's self-evaluation documents, the school's improvement plan, documents relating to safeguarding, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's use of pupil premium and information relating to pupils' achievement, as well as a selection of school policies.