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Mrs Nicola Faulkner
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Faulkner

Short inspection of Bede Burn Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 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 the school was judged to be good in February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

Following your appointment in September 2016, you acted quickly and decisively to bring about real improvement to aspects of the school that had declined. You have ensured that pupil premium funding is used to good effect and enables disadvantaged pupils to make swift progress. Leaders have transformed the teaching of mathematics throughout the school and have convincingly improved pupils' progress in each year group. You tackled the areas identified as requiring improvement at the last inspection robustly and as a result, the quality of education in the school remains good.

You have built a strong, new, highly skilled team of senior leaders who share both your passion for education and your determination to bring about further improvement. You are now strengthening and deepening leadership capacity by training and developing new middle leaders.

You have shared your vision of excellence with staff. This is quickly becoming reality in every classroom throughout the school. Lessons are characterised by high expectations and excellent attitudes to learning.

Leaders' love of learning is contagious and pupils' interest and excitement in their learning is a tangible feature of the school. Pupils are keen to contribute and to listen carefully to their teacher and their peers. They show real pride in their work and thoughtfully act on guidance given by their teachers to improve.

Pupils love to read and talk enthusiastically about the characters in the books they

have read. They are not concerned if they struggle a little with a text because they know a whole range of strategies to work out unfamiliar words. They also know that other pupils are ready to lend a helping hand. They value the number and range of books in their library.

Parents appreciate that you make yourself available to talk to them and pupils clearly look forward to your greeting each morning at the gate. Pupils are friendly, welcoming and polite. They are confident and thrive in this warm, safe and secure environment. Pupils say that their teachers always tell them to try and 'have a go'. One pupil stated clearly, 'Mistakes are ok here, as this is how we all learn.' As a result, pupils are fearless in their learning and relish the challenges presented to them by their teachers.

Governors are delighted with the changes that are taking place. They have reviewed thoroughly their own knowledge and skills and have undertaken significant training to improve these. They know how important it is to check things out for themselves such as safeguarding and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They have done so carefully and thoroughly. You value their whole-hearted support and challenge.

Local authority professionals have provided leaders and governors with valued and effective support and advice through the recent period of significant change.

Your evaluation of the school's effectiveness is incisive and accurate. You know precisely what still needs to be done. Development of writing is a significant focus. Your work to embed strategies for handwriting, spelling and grammar are beginning to shine through and well-structured, high-quality writing is increasingly evident in pupils' work.

Leaders have a deep understanding of effective teaching and learning and work closely with teachers to help them constantly improve. During the inspection, you recognised clearly that sometimes pupils move too quickly from one area of learning to another and that not enough time is always given to consolidate and practise new skills.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. A strong culture of safeguarding and care permeates the school. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe through weekly lessons. These include how to stay safe when using the internet and playing online games. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying in the school although from time to time they do fall out. They say their teachers will always help them to resolve any difficulties or disputes. Pupils know how harmful bullying is and some of the different forms of bullying.

Staff are well trained and know what to do if they are concerned that a pupil may be at risk of harm. You make referrals to the local authority where appropriate and work effectively with multi-agency teams to support pupils and their families in times of need.

Leaders carefully monitor all aspects of pupils' behaviour so that they can see any emerging patterns or trends. Your thoughtful approach to the management of behaviour develops pupils' personal responsibility and is highly effective. No incidents of poor behaviour were seen during the inspection and attitudes to learning were exemplary.

The school is vigilant regarding attendance. Pupils' attendance is higher than average and the school works closely with the small minority of pupils and their families who are persistently absent.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have worked successfully with teachers to improve to the quality of teaching and learning. High-quality coaching, sharing excellent practice clearly evident in school and opportunities for teachers to attend external training have reaped rewards. In all classes, high-quality teaching and expectations are the norm.
- Teachers are skilled in using questioning to probe and deepen pupils understanding. Pupils say that they are always challenged and work is never too easy. Nevertheless, you are aware that sometimes learning has taken place too quickly and important skills need more practise and consolidation.
- Mathematics was one of your first targets for improvement. You quickly embedded a new curriculum and mathematics is now an intensely practical subject, full of rich learning opportunities. The last cohort of Year 6 pupils made strong, above-average progress from their starting points into Year 3. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' progress in mathematics is now good in all year groups. Pupils are able to both think for themselves and apply their skills to solving problems successfully. Teachers use time wisely and if a pupil struggles with a concept during a lesson the pupil is given additional support the same day, so that they do not fall behind.
- The work of leaders and staff is shining through in the high quality of reading skills clearly evident throughout the school. Pupils enjoy recording summaries of books they have read. Pupils' workbooks show real pride in their work, which is neatly presented. There is careful attention to detail and the quality of handwriting, appropriate to pupils' stages of development, is high.
- You have recently implemented a curriculum where many subject disciplines are taught, linked to an imaginative, creative theme. This is inspiring interest and engagement in learning and pupils are now benefiting from a broad, balanced and imaginative curriculum. Teachers are using the curriculum to provide rich opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their writing skills in a range of contexts. Work in pupils' books shows accelerating progress in writing.
- You have ensured that teaching assistants are highly skilled through bespoke training. They make a strong contribution to pupils' learning and know just the right time to support and when to hold back, so that pupils learn to work independently and make good progress. You focus their work carefully to support pupils who need extra help.

- Disadvantaged pupils are extremely well cared for. Most are working confidently and make greater progress than expected.
- In this very safe, nurturing environment, all pupils, especially those who are vulnerable, flourish. Some pupils who struggle to work in a large classroom environment thrive in a very small group, learning under the watchful eye of their teachers.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the achievement of pupils in writing improves by providing further high-quality opportunities for pupils to practise writing for a variety of purposes and range of audiences
- pupils have good opportunities to develop, improve and refine their writing skills within the context of the now-rich curriculum within subjects other than English
- enough time is provided to strengthen the impact of teaching and to ensure that pupils learn and master new skills before moving onto their next challenge.

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 Tyneside. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janice Gorch
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this one-day inspection, I met with you, one of your assistant headteachers and a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. I held a telephone conversation with a local authority representative. Together, you and I visited lessons to observe learning. We also examined pupils' books in a range of subjects. I talked to pupils during lessons and met formally with a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils. I listened to pupils from Years 2 and 6 read. I scrutinised a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation, development plan, information about pupils' current progress, external evaluations of the school's work, minutes of meetings of the governing body and documents related to safeguarding. I also examined the 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the nine written comments from parents. I took account of the 10 responses to the staff survey. No pupils responded to Ofsted's pupil survey.