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Mrs Heather Shelley  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Shelley

### **Short inspection of Broomfield Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 23 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 October 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You and your leaders have maintained a very positive and warm atmosphere within which pupils feel safe and happy. They enjoy school and all it has to offer. The school's key values, encapsulated in the 6 Rs: Ready; Reflective; Resilient; Resourceful; Respectful and Responsible, provide an effective framework for driving pupils' skills as learners as well as supporting their personal development. Pupils know the 6Rs and consciously try to apply them.

Staff are proud to work here and most parents responding to the Ofsted survey, Parent View, are happy with the quality of education the school provides. These parents are also very positive in their written comments about the school, saying, for example, that, 'Both my children are nurtured in a positive way both in their academic progress and emotional well-being.'

Since your previous inspection, you have focused well on the areas for improvement identified in the report. Teachers are now better at asking probing questions and pupils are getting more practice writing in English, though opportunities for extended writing are not as well developed in other subjects in key stage 2. Pupils' behaviour remains a strength.

Children in the early years are thriving and have been achieving consistently well over the last three years. As we walked around the Reception classes, the strong development of children's writing was very evident.

Pupils do well in key stage 1 and results in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 usually compare favourably with those of pupils nationally, especially in relation to the proportion of pupils achieving the greater depth standard. Performance across key stage 2 has been a bit more mixed over the last three years. You and your leaders have analysed results carefully and, consequently, have an accurate and detailed understanding of pupils' progress and learning. This has informed your actions and ensured that you are focusing on the right things in order to raise achievement further. Under your leadership, the work being undertaken to improve pupils' performance across key stage 2 in writing and mathematics is having a positive impact and the large majority of pupils are making good progress. However, you are aware that there is more to do to ensure that even more pupils make consistently good progress as they move through key stage 2. To help your school to improve, you have welcomed the good support provided by the local authority and your senior leaders have worked alongside an independent leadership consultant to strengthen their own leadership skills. In addition, you make good use of local partnerships to learn from best practice elsewhere and promote effective professional dialogue for your staff with fellow professionals in other schools.

Governors provide good levels of challenge and support. They have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing and are ambitious for it to do even better.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Pupils feel safe in school, and nearly all parents who responded to Parent View agree that they are well looked after. The school places a high emphasis on pupils' well-being and staff notice even small changes in pupils which might suggest that they are not happy or in need of support. This means that the school takes swift action to resolve any concerns or issues relating to pupils' safety or welfare.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The school carries out effective checks on all adults working in the school to ensure they are safe to work with children. Visitors are vetted appropriately. Effective training means that staff are well prepared to deal with any issues or concerns. Pupils are also taught how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet.

### **Inspection findings**

- Following last year's tests for the end of key stage 2, you and your literacy leader, who is also the deputy headteacher, identified weaknesses in pupils' spelling and use of punctuation and grammar. Much work has been done to improve this and it is clear that pupils are becoming more accurate in their spelling when writing and more consistent in their use of grammar and punctuation. This is especially noticeable in Years 5 and 6, and for the most able pupils. However, using correct spelling remains an issue for many pupils still and

we agreed the school needs to continue its focus on this area.

- When we looked together at the writing opportunities in other subjects, you agreed that pupils were not being given time in all classes to develop their writing through topic work, including widening the range of audiences and purposes for their written work, especially to support the most able pupils to achieve more highly. We saw good examples of writing in topic books in some classes and especially in pupils' science work.
- I did ask you about the achievement of boys in writing because the most recent results at the end of key stage 2 indicate that they do significantly less well than girls. However, there is no established pattern of boys doing less well than girls across the school. In some year groups, this is the case but it depends on the prior attainment and ability of the boys rather than any specific issue of how boys are taught.
- Pupils' books in mathematics show that they are developing their ability to solve routine problems and that they have plenty of practice. Sometimes, the most able in particular are not moved on quickly enough and a number of the most able pupils said they found work too easy at times. Nonetheless, I could see the work you have been doing to improve pupils' ability to explain their thinking in mathematics. It was evident both in pupils' books and in lessons that teachers and teaching assistants are more consciously asking pupils to share their reasoning. Pupils are becoming more confident to do this but do not always have the language they need to put together coherent explanations. We agreed that the school needs to continue to focus on the development of pupils' reasoning skills so doing so becomes second nature to them.
- You have made a good investment in practical equipment for mathematics in key stage 2. Staff and pupils are making good use of this and more visual methods to help pupils understand more complex or abstract mathematical ideas. The school is also taking a more methodical approach in getting pupils to learn their tables. However, some pupils are still too slow to recall these when doing multiplication or division sums so it takes them longer to solve a problem.
- In key stage 1, phonics results have fluctuated between being in line or above average and being below by the end of Year 1, though by the end of Year 2 most pupils meet the national phonic standard. To obtain more consistent results by the end of Year 1, you and your leaders have strengthened the way you teach phonics. You have also improved your approach to transition so that younger and less able children coming into Year 1 from Reception are able to continue to learn through practical activities, as they do in Reception. Consequently, pupils are on track to achieve well in phonics by the end of Year 1. They are becoming confident readers and use their phonic knowledge effectively to help them with their spelling too.
- While many disadvantaged pupils are making good progress, there is still a gap in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others in the school and nationally. You provide good, targeted support to disadvantaged pupils and especially so in relation to their social and emotional needs. However, the school is not evaluating the impact of the work it is doing comprehensively enough in order to help it to identify more sharply what more it needs to do to further narrow gaps

in learning. The school's website does not have up-to-date information on the use of pupil premium funding as required.

- You have used additional funding well to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and, as a result, far fewer are persistently absent. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are also attending more regularly. These improvements in attendance are supporting pupils' learning and progress.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they further improve performance in mathematics in key stage 2 so pupils have a secure grasp of the language they need to explain their reasoning, the most able are consistently challenged and all pupils know their tables well
- they continue work on improving pupils' spelling, and all teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to practise writing in subjects other than English
- they analyse the impact of the use of pupil premium funding more comprehensively and publish the information on the use of this funding on the school's website.

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

Yours sincerely

Gulshanbir Kayembe  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other school leaders, three governors, including the chair, and pupils. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority and with the school's independent leadership consultant. We visited most classrooms across all key stages and looked at pupils' work in their books. I examined a range of documents, policies and assessment information. I took account of the Ofsted online questionnaire responses from 54 parents, as well as 34 written responses from parents. In addition, I considered 14 staff responses and 28 pupil responses to Ofsted surveys.