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Mrs Coleen Hibbard  
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Dear Mrs Hibbard

### **Short inspection of New Brighton Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 23 January 2018 with Barbara Harrold, Ofsted Inspector, 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 January 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection, despite recent staff turbulence. You have developed a strong, shared vision, underpinned by your desire to create a truly inclusive school in which everyone is welcome. The school provides a calm and purposeful atmosphere which helps to support pupils' learning. This is particularly evident in the two resource bases, where pupils make good progress as a result of their individualised learning programmes. Early recognition of speech and language problems leads to appropriate, rapid support.

Pupils confirm that they enjoy coming to school, that lessons are interesting and that they learn a great deal from the additional learning experiences you provide. The vast majority of parents are full of praise for the dedication of you and your team. They value the diverse curriculum and caring environment.

You continue to look for ways to further improve the school's work. You use the school's tracking system to provide detailed information about how well all pupils are currently doing and then plan how to make sure none fall behind. Following a dip in mathematics in 2016/17, a new planning scheme is in place and helping to develop pupils' reasoning skills so that more pupils are beginning to make more-rapid progress.

You have maintained good teaching and progress through effective monitoring and support. You have provided training and ensured consistency in practice. For example, teachers are getting better at matching learning tasks to individual pupils' learning needs. However, you are aware that the level of challenge for those who learn more quickly could be even higher, particularly in mathematics. You also recognise that

those who are persistently absent is a thorny issue for the school to address.

You have given good attention to the curriculum. You and your team have not compromised the broad and balanced curriculum in your drive to improve standards in English and mathematics. Middle leaders of English and mathematics have a firm grasp of their subjects. However, non-core subjects, such as history and geography, are not monitored with the same rigour. The additional funding to develop sport is used effectively to provide the pupils with a wide range of sporting experiences. New Brighton Primary School is developing quite a name for itself in the local sporting community.

You ensure that pupils are happy and confident in school by providing strong emotional support. Your 'tranquillity' room hosts the school mentor and 'massage in schools' facilitator to support the mental health needs of your pupils. A new school dog is adept at 'listening' to readers and provides vulnerable pupils with the reassurance they seek. Your work is recognised by the local authority and this school now helps to develop the capacity of other schools within the local authority.

Governors are effective in their role. They are knowledgeable about school priorities and progress made towards them. They provide support and challenge in equal measure to monitor the progress you are making towards development points in your school improvement plan.

At the previous inspection, inspectors asked the school to improve pupils' ability to work things out for themselves. This, they are starting to do. Pupils have developed the skills to check their own work effectively and know how to ask each other for help before speaking to the teacher.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team ensures that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and are of high quality. The records of checks on staff meet statutory requirements and are fully compliant. You and your staff recognise when pupils and their families need extra support. You keep detailed and useful records of your work in this area, showing your timely responses. You provide a channel of communication for families and signpost support from external agencies when necessary.

The school has a positive and friendly atmosphere. Parents overwhelmingly agree that the school deals effectively with bullying. Allegations of bullying or poor behaviour are rare and are recorded and investigated thoroughly. Staff know the individual pupils and their families very well. No stone is left unturned when it comes to ensuring that pupils are safe in school.

### **Inspection findings**

- The inspection focused on several key points. We looked at the role of leaders in improving teaching and outcomes. New subject teams have been established. Leaders display energy and confidence in the collaborative processes you have introduced. They share and enhance good practice through the links and work with

other local schools. Middle leaders make an effective contribution to the school leadership capacity, particularly in English and mathematics. Both these leaders provide valuable support in monitoring teaching and outcomes. As a result of this monitoring, you recognise that, at times, the most able pupils are not provided with work that makes them think more deeply, particularly in mathematics to develop their problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy skills. In addition, senior leaders recognise that more work needs to be done to support middle leaders in assessing the progress pupils make as they move through the school in subjects other than English and mathematics.

- Another focus for the inspection was pupils' attendance. Overall, attendance is in line with national expectations, but persistent absenteeism remains a problem. You recognise that this is largely due to a number of families taking holidays during term time. Leaders have a number of strategies in place to address this problem. However, despite this monitoring, your actions are not fully effective and the number of pupils who are persistently absent is too high.
- Leaders make sure that teachers match their assessment standards to those in other schools. They work collaboratively with a local cluster of schools to ensure that their judgements are accurate in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school receives additional funding to support the high number of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils make good progress. The difference between their attainment and others nationally is narrowing. Such good practice demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The early years provision is a strength of the school. Although children's ability on entry varies from year to year, children consistently achieve a good level of development that is above the national average. This has been the case for the past three years. Leaders have addressed the difference between boys' and girls' writing. As a result, boys achieve as well as girls in this aspect of their learning.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- persistent absenteeism is reduced
- most-able pupils are consistently challenged and their progress accelerates further, particularly in mathematics
- the role of the middle leaders of the non-core subjects is developed further so that they take an even greater part in teaching, learning and assessment in their subject of responsibility.

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

Yours sincerely

Maggie Parker  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, my colleague and I held meetings with you and other members of the leadership team, including the deputy headteacher, middle and subject leaders, the SENCo and early years leader. I met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. We spoke to a group of pupils. I examined the strategies introduced by the school to raise pupils' achievement in mathematics and phonics. I looked at current progress information for all groups of pupils across the school. Inspectors also met with staff responsible for behaviour and attendance. I took into account the views of 60 parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, as well as 44 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no pupil responses. Inspectors checked the school's single central record of recruitment and I looked at a range of other documents related to safeguarding. I took into account school documentation, assessment information, policies and information posted on the school's website.