

28 February 2018
Mr Richard Stephenson
Executive Headteacher
Bradworthy Primary Academy
Bradworthy
Holsworthy
Devon
EX22 7RT

Dear Mr Stephenson

Short inspection of Bradworthy Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 30 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 on 10 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. You, your staff and governors have sustained a passionate and determined commitment to continuing school improvement. You are highly aspirational for everyone associated with Bradworthy Primary Academy. You are determined that pupils will receive a good-quality education and benefit from a wide range of skills and interests that they can apply into the future. Governors know the school well and use their experience and wide breadth of skills to provide support and challenge in equally strong measure.

All pupils, including those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, benefit from consistently strong teaching and support. Consequently, they achieve well, especially in reading and mathematics.

As many pupils as possible are included in the wide range of vibrant extra-curricular activities that you provide, in and out of school. This includes the brass band, gymnastics, netball club, climbing, textile club, rock band and ukulele band. Pupils participate enthusiastically and excel in these clubs. They said, 'We love the many opportunities that are provided for us.' The impact of these experiences is clearly evident in the excellent relationships that pupils share with staff and with each other and in their very positive attitudes to learning. As one parent typically commented, 'My child always looks forward to going to school, has a thirst for learning and has matured and grown in confidence beyond my expectations.' Parents are especially appreciative of the stimulating experiences provided by the school. For example, their responses in the questionnaire included, 'My child has

been given the most amazing opportunities and experiences whilst at this school.'

At the previous inspection, leaders were asked to monitor the quality of teaching more frequently. You have strengthened this aspect by establishing clear lines of responsibility and accountability across a much-widened leadership team. This is enabling staff to share and develop their expertise and to check and improve pupils' performance effectively. You were also advised to hasten pupils' progress by teachers extending pupils' understanding of how to improve their work. This is now evident in all classes in the confident and capable way that pupils explain their ideas and work well together to check and improve their work.

Safeguarding is effective.

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and administrative staff ensure that all safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. Staff work diligently to sustain a strong culture of safeguarding. For example, they work hard to get to know the pupils and understand the signs and symptoms to look out for to keep them safe. Senior leaders ensure that all adults working with children receive up-to-date training. Staff understand the procedures to follow should they have any concerns that a pupil may be at risk. Leaders follow up on any concerns swiftly by making thorough referrals to social care and other professional services. This ensures that pupils and their families receive the support they need quickly.

Parents are appreciative of the way that staff look after their children. Parents' comments typically included, 'The staff are very caring and build a strong relationship with the pupils,' and, 'My children love going to school and feel safe in the environment.' When questioned, pupils said, 'We definitely feel safe at school.' Pupils also demonstrated a good understanding of the risks when online.

Inspection findings

- National assessments at the end of Year 6 in 2017 showed that pupils made strong progress in reading and mathematics. However, pupils' progress in writing lagged behind and led to some not attaining the higher outcomes of which they were capable. Consequently, my first line of enquiry checked the work of leaders and teachers to quicken pupils' progress and raise attainment in writing, especially across key stage 2.
- Pupils respond well to the stimulating range of learning experiences provided for them. Teachers are skilled in motivating pupils to write about interesting topics such as the Vikings and thoughtful texts such as 'the Piano'. Consequently, pupils make good progress in writing descriptively and imaginatively.
- You have rightly identified, however, that not all pupils are developing their basic handwriting and spelling skills effectively as they move through the school. For example, some pupils, including the most able, and especially through key stage 2, do not complete their writing in a legible, neat manner. This limits the reader from seeing the true quality of their expressive writing. Similarly, pupils have a rich and relevant vocabulary but, at times, either avoid using these more complex

and meaningful words in their writing or spell them incorrectly.

- This academic year, you have strengthened the focus on improving pupils' spelling. Some teachers are also more purposefully emphasising the need to write neatly and legibly. These initiatives and raised expectations are quickening pupils' progress and improving the quality of their writing. You acknowledge, though, that these improvements have not yet been sustained long enough to fully develop pupils' skills.
- Next, I examined your efforts to further enrich the development of children's skills throughout their time in Reception. Children get off to a good start in the early years. Staff have forged good links with the on-site pre-school, which help children settle quickly when they join the Reception class. Children are taught in a stimulating environment where they learn well both inside and outdoors. Children learn to get on very well together and develop strong social skills. Work in children's books shows their productive engagement in all the required areas of learning.
- Children make good progress in developing their phonics understanding in the Reception class. The consistency of good teaching across Reception and Year 1 sustains pupils' strong progress in extending their phonics and reading skills. The Reception teacher has rightly identified that children's fine motor and early mark making and writing skills are often weaker aspects when they start school. She is now collaborating more strongly with pre-school and key stage 1 colleagues to further develop these skills.
- I also considered your widened and more collegiate approach to leadership and management. Leadership teams now assist you in overseeing work across all three key phases. This positive development is evident in your effective planning of the curriculum to secure pupils' continuing good progress. For example, this is seen in the pupils' joy in learning practically and in the successful development of their basic numeracy skills. Colleagues are also working more closely together and sharing expertise and information to accurately assess pupils' developing skills. This has sharpened teachers' ability to plan relevant next steps in pupils' learning. As a result, teachers meet pupils' different needs effectively, including the disadvantaged and an increasing number who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Finally, I focused on the work of leaders and teachers in raising pupils' attendance and especially in reducing persistent absence. Teachers know the pupils well and with the support of administrative staff ensure that pupils' attendance is recorded accurately. Most pupils love school and attend well. You and your staff sustain very supportive relationships with parents, which help to promote attendance and keep pupils safe. Inspection checks show that the overall rate of pupils' attendance has risen to a broadly average level after a fall during the previous academic year, mostly due to bouts of illness. You recognise, however, that your systems for checking pupils' attendance over time lack the rigour needed to identify persistent absence quickly so that it can be reduced more effectively.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers sustain the focus on improving pupils' spelling and handwriting as pupils move through the school
- systems for checking pupils' attendance develop the rigour needed to identify persistent absence quickly so that it is reduced more effectively.

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

Yours sincerely

Alexander Baxter
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and the deputy headteacher. I also consulted with the other staff who have leadership responsibilities. I met with governors and trustees of the school and visited classrooms with you. We collected and scrutinised samples of pupils' work in books. I talked with individual pupils during visits to classrooms and listened to you hearing pupils read and talking to them about their reading. I observed lunchtime arrangements and talked with pupils and support staff. In addition, I examined a range of documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' attendance, pupils' progress and school self-evaluation and development. I took account of 87 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and 87 additional written comments from parents. I also took note of the views expressed by staff.