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Mr David Bryant
Headteacher
Southbury Primary School
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Dear Mr Bryant

Short inspection of Southbury Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 March 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 last inspection.

You, together with your senior leaders and the governing body, have high expectations for the school and its pupils, and you are determined that pupils get the best possible education. Your ambition for pupils is set out in the school's vision statement, and your focus on embedding a new value each half term promotes this well. For example, you and your staff team model the current value of trust and what it means effectively. This approach creates an atmosphere of calm and purpose throughout the school. Survey responses from pupils and staff are positive about all aspects of the school's work, and, on Parent View, one parent commented that the school provides, 'excellent teaching in a caring environment'.

Since the school's last inspection, you have successfully tackled previously identified areas for improvement. In lessons, most pupils are now less dependent on receiving a high level of support from adults. Instead, they are encouraged to take greater control of their learning. They do this, for example, by working with others or using available classroom resources to support their learning and progress. Pupils are, therefore, increasingly independent and resilient, particularly when faced with more challenging work.

You and your leaders have worked hard to improve outcomes in mathematics. Pupils are now provided with effective guidance from teachers about how to improve their

work, and this is helping to move pupils' learning on. As a result, mathematics outcomes are consistently and significantly higher than the national average by the end of key stage 2.

Notwithstanding the improvements made since the last inspection, you and your leaders have a clear understanding of the work that now needs to be done to improve the school further. For example, you recognise the need to improve reading outcomes in key stages 1 and 2 so that outcomes achieved in reading match the progress in mathematics and writing. You also recognise the need to improve the learning experiences for children in early years so that outcomes reached by the end of Reception are closer to the national average.

Governors demonstrate that they have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They visit the school regularly and are kept well informed by you and your leaders about the progress that the school is making. Governors provide effective challenge to you and your leaders, and hold you to account well. For example, they ask incisive questions relating to the impact of the pupil premium funding on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Governors are fully aware of their statutory responsibilities as a governing board, and fulfil these well.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your governors have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. All safeguarding arrangements are robust; records are securely stored and checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school are in line with statutory guidance. Your staff and governors receive regular training, and annual updates about current safeguarding practice are provided. Consequently, staff and governors have the relevant knowledge and skills to safeguard pupils effectively. This includes, for example, staff knowing what action to take if they are concerned that pupils may be at risk of harm. You work well with external agencies, including the local authority, which provides more specialist support to pupils when needed.

Pupil survey results show that they feel safe in school and that they know whom to go to if they are worried about anything. They understand the importance of treating everyone equally and with respect, and this was demonstrated through the pupils' very good conduct throughout the inspection. You ensure that pupils have a secure understanding of how to stay safe online, and you provide a range of resources on your school's website to support parents and carers and pupils to use the internet safely when at home.

Governors demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles in promoting effective safeguarding practice and protecting pupils from harm. The safeguarding link governor visits the school regularly to ensure that key processes and checks are compliant with statutory requirements.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was to determine how far the quality of pupils' reading is leading to better rates of progress in key stages 1 and 2. This is because in 2016 and 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected and higher standards in reading was lower than national averages. Over time, however, this has not been the case in writing and mathematics.
- You and your leaders are taking effective steps to improve pupils' outcomes in reading. You have implemented a new approach to the teaching of reading skills, and actions are focused on improving teachers' subject knowledge. In key stages 1 and 2, pupils were observed using and applying these new reading strategies. For example, in one class, pupils confidently explained the difference between the reading skills of inference and deduction. School performance information shows that this is leading to substantial progress being made in some classes.
- In other classes, the teaching and learning of reading skills are not yet clearly sequenced, and this is leading to some pupils lacking an understanding of the skills being taught. Leaders are aware of these issues and are committed to improving and extending the new approach to the teaching of reading skills so that sequences of learning are structured consistently well.
- My second line of enquiry was focused on the use of the school's pupil premium funding and the impact that this is having on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils by the end of key stage 1. This is because published data in 2016 and 2017 shows that gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are significant in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's current pupil premium strategy shows high levels of targeted support for disadvantaged pupils in some classes, and little support for pupils in other classes.
- You and your leaders are providing additional and bespoke teaching and learning support for disadvantaged pupils and others who need it. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is robustly tracked, analysed and reported upon at regular intervals. This information feeds into subsequent meetings with school leaders, where pupils' progress is discussed and further actions are planned to improve outcomes as required.
- In classes, teachers demonstrate a good understanding of their disadvantaged pupils and were observed providing them with effective levels of support. This included, for example, the use of targeted teacher questioning and the deployment of additional adults to support individual pupils. As a result, rates of progress are improving and school performance information shows that current differentials in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils and others are now minimal.
- My next line of enquiry related to the work that you and your leaders are doing to improve outcomes in early years. Over time, the proportion of Reception children who have reached a good level of development has been lower than the national average. This is particularly the case in the prime areas of communication and language, and in the specific areas of literacy and mathematics.
- In early years, teachers target individual children and provide them with additional support focused on developing their basic skills in early reading, writing,

mathematics, and speaking and listening skills. During these sessions, skilled input from teachers supports children to engage with their learning and make progress. In a small reading group, for example, the effective use of questioning to develop language skills supported children to respond in full sentences.

- However, the quality of some learning experiences for children needs improving. The limited range of indoor and outdoor activities restricts the development of some children's basic reading, writing and number skills. The new early years leader understands the work that needs to be done to improve the quality of provision and outcomes in these areas, and actions are now being implemented.
- My final line of enquiry related to actions being taken by leaders to reduce persistent absence. Over time, this has been higher than national figures.
- Your strategy for tackling persistent absence has been very effective. You engage well with parents by providing them with newsletters and information on the school's website, which promote the importance of good attendance. You have good systems in place for rewarding pupils and celebrating high attendance in assemblies, such as the 'Gold Book' and 'Eddy the Teddy'. You have comprehensive case studies to show how pupils who have medical needs are supported to attend school regularly.
- Close and robust tracking of attendance and punctuality enables the school to target families where pupils are persistently absent. When required, and in conjunction with support from the local authority, you have issued fixed-penalty notices. These actions have resulted in significant improvements in absence rates. Compared to the same period last year, current data shows that there has been a 7% decline in rates of persistent absenteeism.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- current actions to improve the teaching of reading are extended so that more pupils achieve outcomes that are in line with the high outcomes achieved in writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2
- a wider range of activities to develop children's basic literacy and number skills is provided in early years so that children are supported to make better rates of progress and reach outcomes at the end of Reception that are closer to national averages.

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

Yours sincerely

Calvin Henry
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, the inspector held meetings with you, your deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers, middle leaders and the school office manager. The inspector met with all staff at the beginning of the day, with school governors and a local authority school improvement adviser.

The inspector visited classes with you and your deputy headteacher across early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2.

The inspector had conversations with pupils during their lessons and listened to pupils in key stages 1 and 2 read. The inspector did a joint work scrutiny with you and your deputy headteacher.

The inspector viewed five free-text responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Too few Parent View survey questionnaires were submitted to be meaningfully analysed. The inspector viewed the responses of 44 staff surveys and 17 pupil survey responses.

The inspector scrutinised a range of school documentation, including those relating to school self-evaluation and development planning, the school's assessment information and safeguarding policies and procedures.