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23 May 2018

Mrs Angela Pomfret and Mrs Joanne Wiseman
Co-headteachers
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Dear Mrs Pomfret and Mrs Wiseman

Short inspection of Bursar Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 9 May 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 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. Your leadership team has changed since the last inspection. Over the past two years, governors have appointed another headteacher. As a result, you both work collaboratively as co-headteachers. We agreed that we would explore the impact of the change in leadership arrangements.

Together as headteachers, along with your leadership team, you have a clear and ambitious vision for the school where pupils are at the heart of the school. You have successfully raised expectations among staff for what pupils can achieve. As a result, teachers join you in your uncompromising pursuit of excellence. You are committed to ensuring that every pupil achieves highly and develops a love of learning. Together, you have clarity of what is working well in the school and what needs to improve. You and your staff have taken effective steps to ensure that pupils learn through a developing but an engaging curriculum. As a result, pupils are effusive and their very positive attitudes are evident in their learning. Pupils work hard and try their best in all that they do.

The previous inspection challenged leaders to increase opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum. You have had success in this area. In 2016 and 2017 at the end of key stages 1 and 2, the proportion of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, reaching the expected standard in writing was broadly in line with national figures. At the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2016, no pupils achieved the higher standard. You quickly recognised this and swiftly addressed issues to ensure that pupils write at a higher standard. As a result, in 2017, the

proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2 has improved to be in line with other pupils nationally.

Governors are highly ambitious for pupils at the school. Through meetings and regular visits into school, they know the school and community very well. Governors volunteer to work with pupils in class. This helps them to extend their knowledge of the school and the progress that pupils make. Governors are well informed by the transparent information provided by senior leaders. They use this information smartly to question pupils' progress and the effectiveness of initiatives. As a result, they know how well pupils in the school are performing and where improvements are needed, particularly in reading and improving pupils' overall attendance. Governors take their role seriously and seize opportunities to attend training which helps them to provide a healthy balance of challenge and support.

The vast majority of parents are highly supportive of the school and hold leaders, teachers and pastoral staff in high regard. Parents value the happy, welcoming and caring ethos you provide. 'My children love coming to school,' sums up a typical comment from parents.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You and your governors have ensured that pupils' safety has had the highest priority in anticipation of an exciting but challenging time ahead of a move to a new school building. You have ensured that there are smooth arrangements in place and there is no hint of disruption to pupils' learning during this time.

Leaders ensure that the arrangements for checking the suitability of adults working with children are stringent and coherent. The business manager keeps an accurate and comprehensive record of these checks. The school's meticulous policies and procedures ensure that pupils feel safe and are safe. Leaders give a high priority to ensuring that all staff and governors are well trained to protect pupils from harm and keep themselves safe in a range of situations. Pupils spoke with confidence of how to stay safe both inside and outside of school.

The pastoral leader and safeguarding leaders are highly valued by parents and pupils alike. Pupils say that bullying is very rare and they have absolute confidence in adults to resolve a problem should it arise. Parents also agree that pupils feel safe in the school.

Inspection findings

- You quickly realised that pupils' progress in 2015 at the end of key stage 2 was not good enough, particularly in reading and mathematics. Together with senior leaders, you have taken decisive action to overhaul and sharpen the school's curriculum and assessment system. This has helped to raise teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. You have provided effective support and guidance to staff. All staff buy into your raised expectations for pupils to achieve

highly regardless of their starting point. Although children often start the school with skills that are below those typical for their age, increasing proportions of pupils are now achieving the higher standards at the end of each key stage. Historically, there have been very few high prior-attaining pupils in the school. More pupils across the school are now making good progress and achieving more highly. You acknowledge these positive improvements need to be built on and sustained.

- You have been swift to turn your attention to help more pupils reach higher standards in reading. In 2016 and 2017, a lower than average number of pupils achieved the higher standard in reading at the end of key stage 2. You have engaged the whole-school community in developing a love of reading. Your initiatives to raise the profile of reading and to help support pupils to read widely and often are bearing fruit. Pupils read with gusto and enjoy reading the books you send home. Pupils said that they love the challenge of reading regularly and thrive on receiving rewards for doing so. We agreed that the positive changes to promote reading need embedding to help more pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, to reach the higher standards by the end of key stage 2.
- Work in pupils' books and on display shows that they write with great care and take great pride in all that they do. Teachers capitalise on opportunities to ensure that pupils use a wide range of vocabulary to draw in the reader. Teachers' plans incorporate opportunities, including real-life experiences, to add colour to pupils' writing. As a result, pupils have plentiful opportunities to write for different purposes and to apply their writing skills across the curriculum. You have plans to further develop pupils' writing in a revamped curriculum which will be launched in the new academic year.
- You have rightly prioritised the need to develop a rich curriculum that both excites and captures pupils' imagination. The curriculum is developing well to ensure that pupils are equipped with a wide range of knowledge and skills to succeed. Teachers join you in excitement of developing a curriculum that will further help pupils to apply their skills in English and mathematics in other subjects, including science and technology. While you have developed clear expectations for a wide range of subjects, you recognise the need to embed the revised expectations for different subjects across the curriculum. In addition, we agreed that work is needed to develop rigour in the way that subjects other than English and mathematics are assessed.
- You have rightly prioritised the need to improve overall attendance for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. The majority of pupils attend regularly and benefit from the effective teaching and varied curriculum on offer. You and your pastoral lead work tirelessly to promote good attendance. You have raised parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance. Pupils understand the importance of school and enjoy receiving rewards for regular attendance. You are sensitive but tenacious in your approach in offering support to parents of pupils who miss school regularly. You are changing the dates of the summer term to support families and to even the number of weeks per term to maximise pupils' learning. Despite leaders' best efforts, a minority of pupils miss too much school because some parents take family holidays during term time. As a result, attendance has shown modest improvements and has been below

average over time.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the recently introduced systems to promote reading become embedded so that a greater proportion of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, reach the higher standards in reading by the end of key stage 2
- subject expectations across the curriculum are firmly embedded and assessed with same rigour as English and mathematics
- work with parents continues in making sure that overall attendance improves to at least average.

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

Yours sincerely

Brian Stillings
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met jointly with you as co-headteachers and other senior leaders. You and I jointly observed teaching, learning and assessment in classes and across key stages. I also met with six members of the governing body. I also met informally with parents at the start of the school day. I talked with pupils, both during visits to lessons with you and during the school day. I evaluated a sample of pupils' books from across the curriculum. I also listened to some pupils read.

A range of documentary evidence was considered, which included the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan. Additionally, I scrutinised information relating to pupils' progress and attendance. Furthermore, I scrutinised various safeguarding records, including those relating to the suitability of staff to work with children.

I analysed the 27 responses to Parent View, and considered 22 free-text comments by parents. I also took account of 20 members of staff who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire.