

20 July 2018

Mrs Nicola Bridges
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Bridges

Short inspection of Robin Hood Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 4 July 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 November 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 lead with a sense of calm and purpose. You have an accurate view of what the school does well and what could be even better. Staff are proud to work at Robin Hood Primary School. They judge that it is continually improving. Key factors that are driving this improvement are:

- the contributions leaders at all levels make to improving teaching and learning
- the readiness of staff to share their skills and learn from one another
- the raised aspirations of pupils and parents and carers
- the quality of the school's curriculum and its engagement with the local and wider community
- the expertise and commitment of staff that enable the school's most vulnerable pupils to succeed.

Pupils learn and play happily together. They are friendly and show respect towards visitors, staff and one another. They speak enthusiastically about their learning across the curriculum. They highlighted the school's links with a school in China, playing a stringed musical instrument and the many educational visits as examples of how the school meets its aim of 'expanding horizons'.

The previous inspection report asked leaders to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The actions taken to improve teaching and learning have had a positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics. However, the steps taken to achieve similar gains in reading and writing have not been as successful when judged by the pupils' standards in these subjects at the end of key stage 2 in recent years.

Progress and standards in these subjects are typically average at the end of key stage 2. Leaders evaluate carefully the impact of their actions to accelerate pupils' progress in reading and writing. This ensures that they are clear about where further improvements are required. For example, in key stage 2, boys and disadvantaged pupils are attaining levels below other pupils. Raising attainment in reading and writing for these groups is a next step for the school.

Increasing the proportion of pupils who reach high standards has been a school priority this year. Teachers and phase leaders track closely the progress of the most able pupils. They share best practice to ensure that teaching consistently challenges this group of pupils. Throughout the school, more pupils are attaining skills that exceed those expected for their ages. However, disadvantaged pupils are not reaching these high standards in the same proportions as other pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

You ensure that all safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. Staff receive the necessary training on how to keep children safe in education. They know exactly what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare. The school keeps appropriate records of any issues that arise, the actions taken and the impact of these actions.

Leaders have established a skilled nurture team that focuses exclusively on the welfare of pupils. This ensures that pupils receive prompt support to keep them safe. Members of this team know the local community well. This helps them to work effectively with families and local organisations. During the current school year, reducing the level of persistent absence has been a safeguarding priority. The actions taken by your staff have reduced by half the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

Pupils are confident that the school's staff will do all that they can to keep them safe. Pupils spoke positively about the support available if they are feeling sad or anxious. They benefit from expert guidance, threaded throughout the curriculum, on how to keep themselves safe in a range of potentially harmful situations.

Inspection findings

- In 2016 and 2017, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 was below the national average. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils was lower than that of other pupils. You have had

considerable success in addressing these weaker aspects of the school's performance. Subject leaders have provided training and support to ensure high-quality teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. Where necessary, additional teaching for disadvantaged pupils has helped them to make better progress than in the past. Increased proportions of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, now have the expected skills in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1.

- The school has reviewed the way it teaches phonics. Staff make regular assessments of their pupils' phonics skills. They use the information gained through these assessments to plan lessons that match the needs of the pupils in their teaching groups. Pupils apply their phonic skills in their daily written work. Staff emphasise the importance of accurate spelling. This is improving the quality of pupils' written work as well as embedding their phonics skills. Pupils' scores in the Years 1 and 2 phonic screening checks have improved this year. For example, 83% of Year 1 pupils met the expected standard in 2018 compared to 72% the previous year.
- A particular strength of the school is the above-average progress that key stage 2 pupils make in mathematics. Current pupils are continuing this positive trend. The school's success in mathematics is the result of effective teaching that has high ambition for pupils of all abilities. Pupils' mental arithmetic skills are strong. They use these to solve challenging problems that are a regular feature of their mathematics lessons. Teaching also focuses on giving pupils a strong understanding of the concepts they cover in lessons. Teachers provide plenty of time for pupils to talk with one another about their mathematics work. They encourage the most able pupils to support their peers. Teachers and teaching assistants keep a close eye on how well pupils are achieving in lessons. They provide additional teaching, on the same day, for any pupils who have struggled in their mathematics lesson.
- The proportion of disadvantaged children reaching a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year has increased considerably in the last three years. This improvement is partly the result of better transition arrangements when children start the Nursery. These ensure that, right from the start of Nursery, staff can plan learning that is right for each individual child. Another strength is the increased involvement of parents as partners in their children's early learning. If a child is at risk of underachieving, staff take particular care to meet with parents and provide resources and ideas so that parents can help their child at home.
- Raising attainment in reading has been a school priority this year. Attractive and imaginative reading areas, such as 'snuggle up and read', highlight the steps being taken to foster a love for books. You have also made changes to the way in which reading is taught. Reading skills, such as inference, prediction and summarising, are now taught with greater frequency and effectiveness. Together, these strategies are increasing pupils' enjoyment of reading and contributing to better progress than in the past. However, in some year groups, pupils' reading skills are below where you aim for them to be.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- high-quality teaching enables a greater proportion of boys and disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2 to reach at least the expected standards in reading and writing
- teaching, supported by the effective use of the pupil premium, meets more effectively the individual needs of the most able disadvantaged pupils so that throughout the school more disadvantaged pupils are attaining standards that exceed those expected for their ages.

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

Yours sincerely

Anthony O'Malley
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you and members of your senior leadership team to discuss the school's effectiveness. I also met with the chair of governors. A group of older pupils shared their views about the school. I talked with other pupils as I met them in lessons. I looked at work in pupils' books and heard pupils read.

I considered documents, including those linked to keeping pupils safe, the school's self-evaluation document and the school's improvement plan. There were insufficient responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, for me to take the views submitted into account. I gathered the views of parents as they brought their children to school and took into account a recent school survey of parents' views. I also considered the views of 19 members of staff and 35 pupils who completed their online questionnaires.