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Ms Lowry
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Lowry

Short inspection of Raddlebarn Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 17 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 October 2104.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You became headteacher in September 2017 and together with the governors and other school leaders you have strengthened the school by building on the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils' learning well by asking probing questions in lessons, which build on prior learning. As a result, more pupils are reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

You provide strong leadership, evidenced in the school development plan and the actions you have already taken to improve teaching and learning. You support staff to observe best practice in other schools and empower them to implement changes. For example, you identified that the environment and the approach to teaching in the early years needed to improve. You arranged for the leader to visit other early years settings and learn from external guidance and support. The early years classrooms and outdoor spaces are now developing into rich, exciting places where pupils are confident to explore and learn.

You and the staff have identified the importance of developing reading skills across the school. Pupils are provided with interesting and age-appropriate fiction books in the classroom. Pupils use the non-fiction school library to improve their research skills. Good resources, staff monitoring and high expectations and support ensure that pupils read regularly at home and at school.

You have successfully addressed the areas for improvement since the last inspection. Through highly focused professional development and training, teachers are increasingly confident in helping pupils learn together and learn from one another. Pupils' books demonstrate that they are given tasks which match their needs and help them to improve their work. Pupils work confidently in small, mixed-ability groups and more children are achieving a greater depth in their learning. However, further training of teachers needs to be undertaken so that all pupils are challenged more.

Pupils regularly take part in visits outside of school. You and the staff organise visitors to attend assemblies and classes to share their experience and skills. For example, you recently hosted a 'one world week' in which 17 countries represented by parents and members of your community came to share their experiences with the pupils. Pupils learned about the different countries and among many other activities they enjoyed taking part in meditation and yoga sessions as well as the 'chop stick challenge'.

The majority of parents and carers spoken to, or who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were positive about the work of the school. They commented on the good progress their children make and that their concerns are listened to. However, views are divided and a minority of parents expressed concerns that the school does not listen well enough to parents' views and that their children are not happy in school. During the inspection, I did not find evidence that pupils are unhappy or felt unsafe in school. Pupils spoken to during the inspection are confident that they like school and that the teachers care for them well. You and the governors are aware of the need to take further steps to engage parents in the education of their children.

During the inspection I observed good behaviour at the start of the day, in lessons and at playtime. Pupils spoken to during the inspection, or who responded to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire, were mostly positive about the behaviour of other pupils in school. However, some of the pupils who responded felt teachers are not always effective at resolving incidents of bullying. Pupils told me how they are taught about different types of bullying and how the behaviour zone system in classes encourages pupils to behave well. A few members of staff, who responded to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire, expressed concerns about the behaviour of a small number of pupils. Inspection evidence shows that leaders need to provide further training and support to staff so that they are equipped to manage the behaviour of a few pupils with specific needs.

You and the staff support the importance of attendance and celebrate good attendance through awards and displays in school. However, there is a small number of pupils who need to improve their attendance further.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You rightly invest time and resources to ensure that staff and governors know their role in keeping children safe. A safeguarding culture is central to your approach and as part of ensuring this you recently commissioned a safeguarding audit. The person responsible for safeguarding attends regular training and updates provided by the local authority, which are shared regularly with staff to ensure that they know how to report concerns.

Pupils spoken to during the inspection and through the responses of Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire stated that there is an adult in school they can talk to if something is worrying them. Pupils spoke confidently about how they are taught to keep safe both online and at school. For example, they told me about fire drills and 'lock down' practices.

Parents spoken to during the inspection and through the responses of Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, mostly believe pupils are kept safe at school. The person responsible for safeguarding has responded to parents' concerns related to the entrances to the school. There are now bright 'no parking' signs on the entrances and senior staff monitor pupils' safety at the start and end of the school day.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection I wanted to make sure pupils are being challenged, so that they are making the best possible progress in key stage 2. You have implemented a new tracking system this year, which identifies those pupils who are at risk of not achieving the expected standards. Each half term you and the leaders review this information with teachers. You use this information to discuss and plan effective interventions to support pupils who are not on track to meet the expected standards. As a result, more pupils reach the expected standards at the end of key stage 2. However, it is clear, according to the school's analysis of pupils' progress information and the monitoring and reviewing of teaching and learning, that pupils of all ages could be challenged further.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve the pupils' mathematical skills. Pupils' books and lessons observed during the inspection illustrate that teachers regularly provide tasks for pupils to apply their mathematical skills and explain and prove their answers. Pupils are confident to answer questions and enjoy mathematics at school.
- Teachers plan regular opportunities for pupils to use and apply their writing knowledge and skills in different subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 studying Victorian times wrote a play script, a description of life in a workhouse and a letter to the owner of a workhouse to complain about the unacceptable conditions.
- Displays in both the key stage 1 and key stage 2 buildings celebrate pupils'

achievements, different cultures, faiths and religions in an age-appropriate way. Well-planned displays in classrooms provide information to help pupils with their learning. This helps pupils to become more independent and resilient in their approach to learning. For example, in the early years classrooms key words are in all learning areas and pupils use them to help in their writing.

- Pupils and adults have positive relationships and behaviour in lessons is good. Support plans are in place to help the few pupils with specific needs to manage their behaviour. These strategies need to be developed further so that these few pupils improve their attitudes to learning and their progress.
- While the majority of pupils have good attendance there are a small number of pupils who are persistently absent and should be in school. You track attendance rigorously and have employed an additional member of staff to help you support and challenge parents where pupils are persistently absent. As a result, pupils' attendance overall has improved this year. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is improving but needs to improve even further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all pupils are provided with sufficient and appropriate challenge so that standards continue to rise further throughout the school
- they further improve the staff's confidence, understanding and skills in managing the behaviour of a minority of pupils with specific needs
- they increase opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's education so that:
 - parents' confidence in the school's leaders and teachers continues to improve
 - the attendance of a few pupils who are persistently absent improves.

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

Yours sincerely

Amanda Clugston
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, the deputy headteacher, leaders and members of the governing body. I spoke with your school improvement adviser. I visited classes with senior leaders to observe teaching and learning.

I met with parents at the beginning and end of the school day. I took account of the 65 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 60 free-text comments and the 31 responses from staff to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

I spoke to pupils during and outside of lessons and looked at their work both in and outside of lessons. I took account of the 56 responses from pupils to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.

I reviewed a range of other documents including your self-evaluation, school development plan, assessment and progress information, as well as documents relating to safeguarding, staff recruitment checks and child protection procedures.