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Yvonne Broadbent
Low Moor C of E Primary School
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Bradford
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Dear Mrs Broadbent

No formal designation inspection of Low Moor C of E Primary School

Following my visit with Cathy Morgan, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 10 October 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This monitoring inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for inspecting schools with no formal designation. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was concerned about the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes for pupils at the school. With the aforementioned in mind, this inspection focused on the concerns highlighted and on the impact of the actions taken by leaders to address them.

Evidence

Inspectors observed teaching and learning jointly with you and other leaders in every class in the school. Meetings were held with you, senior and middle leaders, staff, governors and diocese representatives. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and listened to pupils read. School documentation was examined, including that relating to safeguarding, the school's improvement plans and self-evaluation. Inspectors spoke to pupils, both informally and formally, to gather their views about the school. Pupils' attitudes to learning in lessons, as well as their conduct around the school and at play and lunchtime, were observed. Parents' views were gathered at the start of the school day and the 280 responses to the school's own parent questionnaire were considered. Information about pupils' progress, attainment, behaviour and attendance was also scrutinised.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of education identified at the school's previous inspection.

Context

Low Moor Church of England Primary School is a larger-than-average sized primary school. It has 418 pupils aged 5 to 11 years old. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with 13 other ethnic groups represented in the school. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is just above average. Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in staffing, including in leadership positions, for example a new headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher have all taken up post.

Inspection findings

Over the last three years, pupils' outcomes in reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 indicated a possible decline in standards since the school's last inspection. However, evidence confirms that, during that period, leaders have tackled any issues with unwavering commitment. You are highly ambitious for all pupils. Your relentless focus on ensuring that pupils have the best possible education creates an atmosphere of high expectation for all members of the school community. As a result, current teaching, learning and assessment is very effective in enabling pupils to excel.

Senior and middle leaders mirror your determination in their approach to improving pupils' outcomes in their areas of responsibility. They frequently check on the difference they are making and reflect on how they can maximise their impact. They are able to demonstrate substantial improvements to the quality of teaching and learning in a range of key areas, including early years provision, reading and mathematics. Additionally, leaders are innovative in their design of the curriculum to ensure that pupils are enthused by topics and that they develop the qualities of effective learners, known as 'Low Moor Learning Values'.

At the previous inspection, you were asked to ensure that pupils joining key stage 2 without age-appropriate phonics knowledge were supported to make rapid progress to catch up. Following this, you have strengthened provision further for this group of pupils. Pupils now receive consistently high-quality additional teaching in small groups, which addresses the specific gaps in their learning. They are then given opportunities to consolidate their new knowledge independently. This approach is successful in ensuring that pupils make rapid progress in developing their word decoding skills.

Phonics teaching across all key stages is highly effective in supporting pupils to develop early reading skills efficiently. Adults are skilled in assessing pupils and ensuring that teaching is matched carefully to pupils' needs. The books pupils use to practise their reading are carefully selected so that they only contain the sounds that pupils have been taught. As a result of this strong teaching, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is consistently above average.

You recognise that Year 6 outcomes over the last three years have not represented the excellence for which you strive. However, the improvements that leaders have effected are evident, along with the impact on outcomes for pupils currently in the school. You have a detailed understanding of the characteristics and circumstances of the 2018 Year 6 cohort, as well as the steps which staff took to support individual pupils. Progress and attainment data for current pupils represents strong progress for all groups of pupils, with a significant proportion making accelerated progress. Most pupils across the school now reach the standards expected for their age, with a high number reaching a greater depth of learning.

Leaders have successfully sustained improvements in the teaching of reading. Teaching now focuses tightly on key reading comprehension skills which pupils have struggled to develop previously. For example, teaching of vocabulary and word meaning has been prioritised and is now effective in reading lessons and across curriculum subjects. This has been instrumental in improving pupils' outcomes in reading, as well as supporting their understanding in other subjects. Teaching staff are highly skilled in designing sequences of lessons which build pupils' reading skills systematically. Leaders have also ensured that pupils are exposed to a range of high-quality texts and books. This, along with strategies such as reading competitions, has been effective in increasing pupils' motivation to read.

Leaders have secured exceptionally effective teaching in mathematics. They have provided high-quality professional development for staff and have introduced a system of rigorous assessment. Teaching staff have deep subject knowledge and they use this to match activities precisely to each pupil's needs. Pupils benefit from frequent opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. Pupils, including the most able, receive work which is suitably difficult and they take satisfaction in rising to the challenges set. Teachers' explanations are clear and routines are well established. As a result, lessons demonstrate suitable urgency for learning and pupils develop mathematical knowledge, skills and a deep understanding rapidly.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Consequently, pupils are conscientious and independent in their learning. Classrooms have a purposeful, productive buzz and pupils take great pride in their work. Pupils' conduct around the school and at play and lunchtimes is exemplary. You have ensured that pupils have an extensive range of leadership opportunities. They are recruited and trained for

roles, including active leader, eco-club member, school council representative, reading leader and house captain. As a result, pupils across the school are mature, responsible and considerate of others.

Governors have an accurate, detailed understanding of the school's performance and they share your uncompromising ambition. They understand the school's priorities and their role in holding leaders rigorously to account for the school's effectiveness.

Safeguarding is effective.

You provide effective training for staff, which ensures that they are able to spot potential risks promptly and are aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe. There is a culture of vigilance and staff communicate concerns relating to vulnerable pupils swiftly. Designated staff make timely referrals to external agencies and follow these up tenaciously where necessary.

Pupils are taught well about how to stay safe in a range of contexts. They are knowledgeable about the risks that they face online and how to avoid them. Year 6 pupils benefit from taking on the role of 'digital leaders' and they share their expertise with pupils across school during e-safety workshops and assemblies.

You have ensured that pastoral support for pupils is given high priority. Parents and carers, pupils and staff alike are proud to be a part of the school. They value the 'family feel' which comes from the strong relationships which exist between staff, pupils and their parents. Members of the highly skilled pastoral team are very effective in identifying and supporting pupils with emotional or social needs.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Leeds (CE), the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bradford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Karine Hendley

Her Majesty's Inspector