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31 October 2018

James Shawley
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Shawley

Short inspection of St Bartholomew's CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 3 October 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 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Leaders and governors have acted effectively on the areas for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection. Staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' work and their attitudes to learning. For example, every classroom has display work that sets expectations and provides support for pupils. Pupils' work is well presented. All the pupils I spoke with during the inspection talked about how they enjoyed learning at this school. Additional adults ensure that pupils engage fully with each activity, asking each pupil precise questions to check that their learning is effective. Because of this focused guidance, pupils are well prepared for their next learning steps. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects. Many pupils use these occasions to improve their writing skills. However, not all pupils use their skills of grammar and punctuation as well as they should.

School leaders have made good use of the school site and local resources to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, for example by developing unused spaces into learning environments. School leaders use the 'mini police' initiative to help develop pupils' understanding of British values. This contributes to pupils' understanding of the rule of law and the role of the police. Pupils elected playground monitors who check and encourage positive behaviour during break times. Pupils who carry out these roles have a good understanding of how they help prevent problems arising,

and are well supported by school staff. Pupils conduct themselves well in class and around the school.

You and the staff have a good knowledge and understanding of every pupil and the community that the school serves. You know the barriers to learning that pupils face. The actions you have taken to remove these barriers have helped pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities to make good progress.

The overwhelming majority of parents like the fact that the school knows their children really well. Many who responded to Ofsted's Parent View free-text service expressed their gratitude for the school's work. Comments such as, 'The environment is nurturing and supportive, yet focused on the child's progress' and 'I can't thank them enough' are typical of the feedback.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are well maintained and managed. You review concerns regularly to identify risks to pupils and take appropriate actions to reduce these risks. You ensure that all staff and governors have appropriate safeguarding training.

Attendance is currently in line with the national average. You and the staff act diligently to identify and challenge unauthorised absence. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is well below the national average.

The parents I spoke with, and the overwhelming majority of those who responded to Parent View, stated that pupils feel safe at school. Pupils I talked with during the inspection said that they are happy, enjoy school and feel safe there.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have taken effective action to improve the progress that key stage 2 disadvantaged pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics. The extra support for these pupils is well directed and enables them to make good progress. Leaders track the progress of these pupils closely and provide them with additional emotional and social support. Disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2 are on track to achieve age-related expectations in English and mathematics.
- Leaders have taken action to promote reading. Pupils who are underachieving regularly receive targeted support with their reading. Additional adults ask them focused questions to deepen their understanding and to clarify any misconceptions.
- Teachers provide pupils with more frequent opportunities to practise their writing in a range of different contexts. Pupils regularly use complex techniques in their writing. However, some pupils in Years 4 and 5 do not use grammar and punctuation as well as they should.
- Teachers use pupils' written work to model good examples to others and raise all pupils' expectations. However, teachers do not ensure that pupils incorporate a

wide range of vocabulary into their work. Year 4 pupils' attainment in reading and writing remains too low.

- The early years is well organised, allowing children to engage in a wide range of activities. Children make good progress in Reception. The teaching of phonics is strong. Adults make effective use of questions to help pupils learn different letters and sounds. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 is higher than the national average and all pupils do so by the end of Year 2.
- Teachers work successfully with pupils in key stage 1 to improve pupils' number recognition skills. Pupils who find mathematics more challenging learn about new mathematical ideas before they are introduced to the whole class, developing their understanding and giving them more confidence. These pupils are making good progress and catching up with their peers.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils in Year 4 reach at least the standards expected for their age in reading and writing
- pupils use grammar and punctuation in their writing with accuracy and confidence and include a wide range of vocabulary to improve the quality of their written work.

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

Yours sincerely

Clive Worrall
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I held meetings with you, the chair and vice-chair of governors and two more governors. I spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I listened to pupils from key stages 1 and 2 read. You and I observed learning taking place during the morning and afternoon, including in English and mathematics, and in the early years.

I scrutinised a selection of pupils' workbooks. I examined a range of the school's documentation, including its self-evaluation document, its development plan, assessment information and documents relating to safeguarding. I considered the views of parents by speaking with some of them before and after school. I also

analysed the 23 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and nine responses to Ofsted's survey of staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.