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Mrs M Acklam
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Acklam

Short inspection of Broadway Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 30 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 December 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. This is a result of the warm, welcoming and inclusive culture that you have created at the school. School leaders, including governors, share your high aspirations and your desire to 'open up the world for the children in your care'. Your shared commitment to provide high-quality teaching and learning and to deliver the best possible outcomes for your pupils is clear. You work tirelessly with staff, pupils and parents to make Broadway an integral and valued part of the community it serves. It is indeed a school to which 'everyone feels proud to belong'.

Broadway offers a high level of pastoral care for all pupils. Pupils are happy. They enjoy coming to school and are excited about their learning. Parents are supportive of the school and say that their children are happy to come to school. They greatly appreciate that their children are known and valued as individuals. Parents spoken to during the inspection and those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were very positive about the school. Comments included 'a fantastic school with a highly driven team of staff who have the interests of the children at the heart of everything they do'. Another parent said, 'We can really see a difference in our child since starting at Broadway... we are confident that when he is older he will look back on his junior school days positively and with fantastic memories'.

Leaders are not complacent. They understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders have a thorough understanding of the school's context. Their

self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders and staff are working collectively to raise the aspirations of all pupils. Staff are passionate about the quality of pastoral care and education that pupils receive.

At the last inspection, you were asked to accelerate pupils' progress and improve their attainment, particularly in writing. Published data shows that pupils' attainment and progress in reading and mathematics have improved. However, in writing, progress has varied since the last inspection. Leaders are aware of this and have taken steps to improve writing, especially for boys. However, leaders' actions to improve the teaching of writing have not had the desired impact on pupils' progress. Consequently, in 2018 standards in pupils' writing were lower than in previous years.

Leaders are clear with parents and pupils about the importance of good attendance. You celebrate attendance and work closely with the local authority to ensure that pupils attend regularly. However, too many pupils are persistently absent, and you accept that continued action is needed to improve attendance.

Governors share leaders' aspirations for every pupil. They recognise that the school is successful at developing pupils' well-being, self-confidence and safety. The chair of governors comes into school every day to listen to pupils read and support them in their learning. However, governors do not challenge leaders enough about teaching and pupils' achievement.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have developed a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You ensure that all staff fully understand their duty and follow procedures for recording concerns. When I arrived at the school, office staff demonstrated vigilance in checking the identity of visitors. They provided me with a brief outline of safeguarding procedures.

Staff know pupils and their families well. Leaders have a clear knowledge and understanding of the challenges and difficulties that some of your pupils face. In your role as designated safeguarding leader, you are tenacious in ensuring the most appropriate support for pupils and their families. Your record-keeping is meticulous. Leaders diligently follow up all concerns to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils. You work well with a range of external agencies to ensure that the support and care your pupils receive meet their individual needs. This personalised approach means that you can offer effective support and care to all pupils, especially the most vulnerable.

Pupils feel safe in school and know that they can report any concerns that they have to any adult. They know that if they are worried or sad you will always help them. Several pupils spoke about sitting in your office if they are sad or need help. Pupils are very confident about how they are taught to stay safe. They spoke positively about the assemblies and lessons that they receive about keeping safe

and healthy. Pupils accept that bullying can and does happen, but that this is rare. They are confident in the support they receive from their teachers.

Leaders are relentless in following up on pupil absence to ensure that each day every pupil on roll is safe. If necessary, you will collect pupils from home to ensure that they attend. However, despite these actions the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school is well above the national average.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have a clear vision for learning, both in and beyond the classroom. They work hard to encourage parents to play an active role in the education of their children. The family-learning programme that you have been running for a number of years is positively received by parents. As a result of this opportunity, parents feel more confident in helping their children with their reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), have a detailed understanding of pupils' individual needs. Teachers and leaders carry out regular checks to ensure that the help that pupils receive is appropriate and meets their needs. Leaders ensure that the communication between home and school is strong. Pupils spoke positively about their learning and how adults help them. There is a clear and collective understanding across the school that the progress of all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is everyone's responsibility. As a result, pupils are making good progress towards their personal targets.
- The proportions of boys attaining the higher standard at key stage 2 in reading and writing have, historically, been smaller than girls. Also, the proportion of boys achieving the expected standard in writing was lower in 2018. You have worked with staff to ensure that they select appropriate tasks and activities to promote boys' engagement. From Viking ships to bird houses, aeroplanes and visits to a local farm, teachers choose practical activities about which the boys can read and write. This modified curriculum is designed to inspire and motivate the boys. However, boys still do not make as much progress as girls in reading and writing.
- Leaders have established an open and welcoming culture. Parents feel welcome in school. They are confident that you will listen and respond to any concerns or questions they have. Leaders' willingness to support parents through home visits is indicative of the clear commitment that you have to working in partnership with families.
- The vast majority of pupils currently in the school are making good progress in reading and mathematics because of the good and improving quality of teaching. However, the expectations regarding pupils' writing across all subjects and year groups is not high enough. The accuracy of pupils' written work is often of a higher standard in their English books or writing portfolios than in other subjects. Writing tasks across subjects do not consistently challenge pupils to develop the structure of their work or to apply their knowledge of grammar, punctuation and

spelling to a high standard.

- Pupils take pride in their work and their school. They enjoy their learning and the many educational visits offered to them, especially their visits to Derwent Hill outdoor education centre. Pupils also told me that they value the range of after-school clubs. In particular, they were looking forward to the Halloween disco after school on the day of the inspection.
- Governors are committed to the success of the school. However, they have not ensured that they have the right information to accurately understand the quality of education the school provides. In the past, they have been too reliant on what they are told by leaders, without having first-hand knowledge of the impact of agreed actions. They are rightly confident in the leadership of the school. However, they are equally determined to improve the effectiveness of their work.
- Leaders rigorously monitor the attendance and persistent absence of individual pupils. They work well with pupils and their families to promote regular attendance. You have sought ways to overcome identified barriers to good attendance. With the support of your governors, you provide escort taxis to collect those children who would otherwise not come to school. Consequently, attendance is improving, but it remains a high priority for the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the variability in progress between groups of pupils, especially between boys and girls, is reduced
- persistent absenteeism is reduced
- pupils in every class have a wide, varied and challenging diet of writing opportunities from a range of subjects that develop their skills and confidence as accurate writers
- governors stringently hold leaders to account for the impact of school improvement initiatives, so they can measure how well previous weaknesses are rectified and plan for next steps.

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

Yours sincerely

Daniel Murray
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, your deputy headteacher and three governors, including the chair of the governing body. I also met with your SENCo and your leaders of mathematics and English. Together, you and I visited classrooms to observe teaching and to look at pupils' work. I also looked in depth at pupils' books and other work, including pupils' writing portfolios. I met with a representative of the local authority. I met with a group of pupils from Years 3 to 6. I listened to eight pupils read. I also listened informally to pupils read during my visits to lessons. Consideration was given to the 10 free text responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the seven questionnaire responses from staff. Consideration was also given to the 21 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire. I spoke to several parents at the start of the school day. I evaluated recent information in relation to pupils' progress throughout the school, the school's self-evaluation document and the school improvement plan. I also met with you as designated safeguarding leader and reviewed documentation and records about how you keep your pupils safe.