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Mrs Marie Tomlinson

Brinsworth Manor Infant School
Brinsworth Lane
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Dear Mrs Tomlinson

Short inspection of Brinsworth Manor Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 13 November 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 March 2015.

This school continues to be good.

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

Since your appointment in September 2018, you have taken effective action to move the school forward. You have carried out thorough self-evaluation. Consequently, you have put detailed plans in place to address the issues that were identified during the previous inspection and, in addition, others that you have identified. Your monitoring of teaching and learning across the school has enabled you to identify areas of expertise in your staff. You have used this knowledge to create a new senior leadership team which is supporting you to make improvements.

Senior and middle leaders now have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. You are supporting them, so that as their expertise and confidence grows, they will have a greater influence on teaching and learning across the school. However, it is too early to judge the impact that this will have on pupil outcomes.

You have made many improvements to the learning environment over the last term. Some changes have been structural, such as removing a wall to make the hall bigger and removing a fence to give all early years children access to the same outdoor space. Resources have been sorted and organised and new displays have been created. These changes have been welcomed by staff and pupils and have

already had a positive impact on attitudes to learning.

You recognise that outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are below those for their peers, both across the school and nationally, and recently commissioned a pupil premium review. You are eagerly awaiting the report and are keen to use the recommendations of this review to put plans in place to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Leaders are acting quickly to address issues in the early years which were identified from analysis of 2018 outcomes. Changes have been made to increase the engagement of boys in writing and to increase opportunities for all children to develop communication and language skills. Objective-led activities allow children to gain knowledge, skills and understanding by exploring their own interests.

Pupils are well behaved and well mannered in lessons and around school. They talk with enthusiasm about the different subjects and topics that they have studied. Year 1 and 2 pupils were keen to tell me about their cinema trip to see 'Peter Rabbit'. Pupils value the help and support that they are given by adults in school. They also told me that three pupils in Year 2 act as E-safety Power Cadets and help others to stay safe online.

Parents and carers speak positively about the work of the school. They are happy with the changes that you are making. They especially appreciate the improvements that you have made to the school building. All the parents and carers that responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and those whom I met informally at the start of the school day, believe that their children are well taught and make good progress. They say that they receive lots of information from school and find the recently introduced message system useful.

Governors know the school well. They could explain how they gain knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses in different areas of the school from published data, reports from school leaders and from visits to school. They went on to explain how they use this knowledge to provide leaders with appropriate support and challenge. For example, they challenged the school to improve its curriculum coverage when the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 was below the national average in 2016.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are fit for purpose. The culture of safeguarding is strong. Staff and governors are well trained, receive regular updates and fully understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Although incidents are rare, all concerns are logged and, where appropriate, actions are taken in a timely manner.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that their school does not have bullies. They are confident that, if they have any concerns, adults will listen to them and offer support. Pupils talked positively about times when they have made worries

disappear by writing them down and feeding them to the 'Worry Monster'.

Parents say that they know their children are safe and well cared for in school. Although concerns about behaviour are very rare, parents are confident that the school will take appropriate action if it was necessary. Many parents praise the work the school does to support pupils. One parent wrote that their daughter was 'a rabbit in headlights' when she started school but is now 'a very chatty, confident little girl'.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The most able pupils are sufficiently challenged by being given demanding tasks and bespoke questions. This has resulted in the proportion of pupils achieving greater depth at the end of key stage 1 being above the national average in 2018. Since the last inspection, staff have continually developed their skills and classroom practice. This has resulted in improved pupil attainment. For example, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was above the national average in 2018.
- Work on strengthening pupils' understanding about how to stay safe when using the internet has been thorough. Each year group has a bespoke set of internet rules and all pupils are expected to follow the whole-school code of conduct. Pupils can confidently talk about work they have done on internet safety in class and in assemblies and now know how to keep themselves safe online.
- Leaders are taking effective action to support disadvantaged pupils. The school has acted to raise the profile of disadvantaged pupils and has changed the way that teaching assistants are deployed across the school. These actions have resulted in pupils receiving appropriate support. However, although outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are improving, their attainment still lags behind that of their peers in school and nationally.
- Attainment over time, by the end of key stage 1, has improved. The proportions of pupils in Year 2 reaching the expected standards and the greater-depth standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been at, or above, the national averages for two years. Although the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check fell below the national average in 2017, it was above in 2016 and 2018. The proportions of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception fell below the national average in 2018.
- The topic-based curriculum engages pupils effectively in their learning. Pupils are involved in planning their learning by creating questions which they then seek to answer. This approach is contributing to the development of resilient, independent learners who make progress in every subject area. Nevertheless, pupils would benefit from more opportunities to apply basic skills across the curriculum to support the development of problem-solving and vocabulary development.
- Leaders are taking appropriate actions to reduce absence and persistent absence.

They use a wide range of strategies, including rewards for good individual and whole-class attendance. However, the impact that this has on some pupils and families is minimal. Some families are still choosing to take holidays during term time. Comparison of attendance, over this term and for the same period last year, shows improved attendance for all pupils. However, absence and persistent absence remain above the national average.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school continues to strengthen support for disadvantaged pupils so that a higher proportion reach age-related expectations at the end of each key stage
- pupils have more opportunities to develop and apply their basic skills across the curriculum in order to support the development of their problem-solving and vocabulary development
- there is further work with families to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence
- there are more opportunities for senior and middle leaders to develop their skills so that they have a greater influence across the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Cook
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I made visits to all classes with you. I looked at work in books with the English, mathematics and early years leaders. I met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. I met with the headteacher's mentor and held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.

I talked to several parents as they dropped their children off at the start of the school day and took account of the 16 responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I met with a group of staff and took account of the six responses to the Ofsted staff survey. I talked informally with pupils in lessons and met formally with a group of pupils from Years 1 and 2. I also listened to pupils read from Years 1 and 2.

I scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation document, governing body minutes, records of the checks on teaching and learning, school assessment information, attendance documentation and safeguarding documentation.