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Mrs Leah Crawley
Headteacher
Burnt Ash Primary School
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Dear Mrs Crawley

Short inspection of Burnt Ash Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in September 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Central to the school's ethos are the positive relationships you have built with parents, carers and the local community. You have prioritised communication with parents, and you value their views. Parents value the fact that staff explain their teaching approaches to them, and they continue the learning process at home. This has led to improvements in pupils' outcomes, including in phonics where parents actively support their children's learning.

Leaders prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. Pupil outcomes at key stage 2 have been significantly above national standards across core subjects for several years. Although outcomes at key stage 1 have been variable, following a thorough review of the curriculum, leaders have turned this around, and outcomes are improving.

Governors use pupil information to challenge leaders on all aspects of their work. They are proud of the progress pupils make as they move through the school. This analysis is reflected in pupils' reading abilities in Reception and through key stage 1. Reception children use their decoding skills to pronounce simple words. As they

progress through the school, pupils take ownership of their reading, and quickly decode new words and absorb them into their vocabulary.

Teachers' professional development is an important part of your leaders' work to improve outcomes for pupils. All teachers check pupils' work with teachers from local schools. They share their expertise, and ensure that all staff have the highest expectations of their pupils.

Leaders are reflective. For example, although still in line with national outcomes at key stage 1, leaders have identified mathematics as an area for improvement, relative to other core subjects. Leaders have set a target for a greater proportion of pupils to reach the expected standard at key stage 1. To support this, you have increased the capacity of leadership in mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders have created a safeguarding culture that is at the centre of all the school's work. Statutory policies and procedures are used to protect pupils and adults. Staff training is regular, and ensures that all adults have the information they need to ensure the safety of pupils. Leaders keep themselves well informed and, consequently, pupils are protected from adverse influences. A dedicated safeguarding governor regularly audits the school's safeguarding processes and ensures that leaders receive an appropriate level of challenge. Your pastoral team works closely with local authorities to ensure that vulnerable pupils are kept safe. Leaders have recently invested in new systems to monitor all aspects of pupil well-being.

Pupils receive practical advice on staying safe, including when they access the internet. For example, they learn songs to help them remember how to stay safe online. Pupils explained to me what they would do if they felt threatened.

Inspection findings

- At our initial meeting, we agreed on three lines of enquiry. The first centred on pupils' underperformance in core subjects at key stage 1. This was agreed because recent outcomes have been variable, and below national standards.
- The most recent key stage 1 results show improvements in all core subjects. Most pupils do better than their peers nationally. Leaders have a secure grasp on the progress of pupils, and use this information to successfully challenge underperformance.
- Leaders have reflected on recent results at key stage 1. You have subsequently introduced a research-based approach to improving standards. For example, groups of adults audited successful approaches to teaching and learning across the school. They concluded that pupils require a curriculum at Reception and key stage 1 that matches pupils' interests and promotes their reading skills. Consequently, leaders have transformed the curriculum. The new key stage 1 and Reception curriculum is built on improving pupils' ability to be effective

learners.

- Pupils transferring from key stage 1 work more independently than previously. Key stage 2 teachers appreciate the significant improvement in pupils' learning, and have moved quickly to consolidate and harness these skills. For example, teachers now plan for more independent work. Leaders have reviewed the improvements in Reception and key stage 1, and age-appropriate plans are in place to consolidate this work in key stage 2. New learning spaces have been created around the school to support this initiative.
- In lessons, pupils have a positive approach to learning. Classroom activities have been improved, and pupils were observed during the inspection captivated by their learning.
- Pupils show resilience. In lessons, they are persistent when problem-solving and enjoy the satisfaction of learning topics in depth. Classroom activities typically stimulate learning and promote pupils' independence. Pupils told me that they compete to achieve their 'learning passports', which record their classwork and celebrate their achievements. Classroom activities are engaging, and always include writing activities. For example, pupils were seen redrafting and editing a story, using complex verbs and adjectives. Likewise, other pupils used their writing skills to record their progress and plan next steps in their project work.
- The second line of enquiry centred on how well key stage 2 pupils bridge long-standing gaps in their learning. This was identified because, historically, key stage 1 outcomes have been variable.
- Teachers build on pupils' prior learning. Progress in pupils' books is evident in their development of sentence structure, paragraphs and vocabulary. Pupils' work reflects teachers' high expectations, and also pupils' perseverance to improve. Governors are aware of historic underachievement in key stage 1, and have invested in reading schemes to support improving outcomes. Despite this, pupils' progress in writing is still less than in other core subjects.
- The third line of enquiry looked at attendance as recent absence rates were above national averages.
- Issues surrounding absence and persistent absence are being addressed, and current rates of attendance are in line with those found nationally. Parents and pupils have been made aware of the importance of regular attendance. Suitable rewards have been successfully used to encourage good attendance. Parents are robustly challenged and supported to improve pupils' attendance.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- gaps in the quality of writing, for pupils in key stage 2, are addressed so that outcomes in writing compare favourably with those in other core subjects.

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

published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jason Hughes
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I spoke to a number of parents at the beginning of the school day. I looked at a range of pupils' work together with middle and senior leaders. I met with governors. Leaders accompanied me on visits to lessons, where we observed teaching and learning, spoke with pupils and looked at their work. I examined a range of documentation relating to safeguarding, including the single central register and external safeguarding audits.

I scrutinised Ofsted's online survey for parents (60 responses) and associated commentary (58 comments), as well as responses to the staff survey (31 responses) and the pupil survey (51 responses). I examined the school's website and reviewed information about pupils' progress, attainment and attendance. I also considered the school's evaluation of how well it is doing, its improvement priorities and assessment information for current pupils.