

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



10 December 2018

Miss Sam Way
Headteacher
Red Barn Community Primary School
Linden Lea
Portchester
Fareham
Hampshire
PO16 8HJ

Dear Miss Way

No formal designation inspection of Red Barn Community Primary School

Following my visit with Kevin Burrell, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 28 November 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 outcomes for pupils at the school.

Evidence

Inspectors visited lessons across the school to observe learning, talk to pupils and look at their work. With your English, mathematics and inclusion leaders, we looked at a sample of pupils' work from across the school. We met with you and your deputy headteacher, and with groups of staff, pupils and governors. I spoke with a representative of the local authority. The school's safeguarding arrangements were scrutinised, including the central record of recruitment checks, relevant policies and information about leaders' work to support vulnerable pupils. We also reviewed a range of other documents, including leaders' information about pupils' achievement.

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

Leaders and governors have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of pupils' outcomes identified at the previous section 5 inspection.

Context

Red Barn is an average-sized maintained primary school, with 239 pupils on the roll. There is one class in each year group, except for Year 3 which currently has two classes. Most pupils are of White British origin and very few are believed to speak English as an additional language. Just under a fifth of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is slightly below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is similar to other schools.

Since the last inspection, in March 2012, the previous headteacher has left the school. You and your deputy headteacher then took up your posts, having previously been assistant headteachers at the school. Most staff have been at the school throughout that time, although two newly qualified teachers joined the school in September 2018. The chair of governors remains the same, but three governors have recently left, and three new ones have been appointed.

Inspection findings

You and your deputy headteacher have sustained and built on the school's previous numerous strengths. Your shared vision is deeply rooted in the belief of investing in pupils' long-term academic and holistic development, from when they join the school in Reception to when they leave at the end of Year 6. Staff and governors subscribe fully to this goal, approaching their work with passion and dedication. Consequently, an ethos of high aspirations and expectations is palpable across the school and enables pupils to thrive.

Pupils' love of learning is highly apparent. This serves them well in making effective use of their time in school. As a result, they make very strong progress by the end of key stage 2, from their below-average starting points in early years. Alongside their academic attainment, they acquire the skills, attributes and confidence that ensure they are very well prepared for their move to secondary school.

Children are at the heart of the school and its work. Leaders promote a strong safeguarding culture, supported effectively by useful policies, systems and processes. Leaders' checks on adults working in school are rigorous and thorough, and their records are organised and clear. Staff are highly knowledgeable about their responsibilities to keep pupils safe, because of the detailed training they receive. Any concerns that arise about pupils are acted on quickly, with leaders seeking advice and support from experts beyond the school in a timely way. As a result, pupils feel very safe and well supported by the adults that work with them in school. Pupils are encouraged to play their part in the school's safeguarding work, through their roles as 'safety leaders'. This raises their awareness of potential risks and how to overcome them, as well as providing extremely useful opportunities for them to take responsibility for aspects of their school community.

When children join the school in early years, they typically have lower-than-average

starting points. In particular, more than half have standards of reading and writing that are below what might be expected for their age. Leaders look forensically and in detail at what risks impeding children's learning, using what they discover to adjust the curriculum. They shape learning activities carefully to build on children's interests and develop their vocabulary, reading and writing. As a result, children make very strong progress over the course of early years. The proportion achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception is above national figures and increasing over time. Similarly, the percentage who achieve at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average. This demonstrates that children are very well prepared for key stage 1 learning.

Published performance information suggests standards in phonics have been a relative weakness in the recent past. While the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check by the end of Year 1 has increased steadily over the past three years, it remains below the national average. However, this represents very good progress for pupils who joined the school in early years with limited language development. Leaders have taken thoughtful and effective action to raise standards in this aspect of the school's work. They orchestrate phonics provision carefully across early years and key stage 1, making best use of teachers' and teaching assistants' wide repertoire of skills. Learning activities are matched precisely to pupils' needs and prior learning, enabling them to make very strong progress, particularly over the course of Year 1. Those who do not achieve the standard are supported very well for as long as it takes until their reading skills become secure. Leaders encourage pupils, with opportunities to read at every turn. Pupils demonstrated this love of reading during the inspection, when inspectors saw pupils curled up and reading in the library, oblivious to the hustle and bustle around them. Even those who find reading difficult persevere, with support, and make sustained progress as a result.

Pupils' outcomes by the end of key stage 2 remain consistently high. The proportions of pupils who attain at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics are well above the national average. Similarly large proportions of pupils reach a higher standard of learning in these subjects. This represents very good progress, particularly across key stage 2. Pupils' learning across the wider curriculum is equally strong. For example, during the inspection, Year 4 were investigating how gases behave. Well-established learning routines and highly effective questioning were enabling pupils to use their prior learning well to test out their hypotheses. Throughout our visit, inspectors noted teachers using opportunities very well to explore learning beyond the specific focus of the lesson, in order to deepen pupils' wider understanding. This promotes pupils' thoughtfulness and motivation to learn about the world around them.

Outcomes by the end of key stage 1 are more variable over time. For example, in 2018, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 was lower than in the past, and was below the national average. In comparison, pupils' key stage 1 attainment in 2017 was above national figures. A number of factors contribute to this variation,

including there being twice as many pupils in Year 2 last year than is typically the case. This was at the request of the local authority in response to a shortage of school places locally. Evidence showed inspectors that pupils who make very strong progress during the early years then consolidate their learning during key stage 1, ready to move on again swiftly during key stage 2. Consequently, overall progress across key stage 1 is securely good, as pupils build steadily on their prior learning and prepare well for key stage 2. Those who most need to improve their reading or phonics skills do so rapidly, enabling them to access the wider curriculum successfully.

There are a relatively small number of disadvantaged pupils at your school. Leaders know them very well, recognising social and emotional barriers to their learning and taking action to help remove these. A small number of pupils from service families join the school mid-key stage. Leaders support pupils well in settling into the school, so that any negative impact on their learning is minimised. As a result, although disadvantaged pupils do not attain in line with other pupils nationally by the end of early years or key stage 1, they make very good progress over time. By the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils attain well above other pupils nationally in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

External support

Leaders actively seek opportunities to develop the school's effectiveness, learning from best practice in the local area. They engage readily with colleagues from other schools, sharing their knowledge and checking the accuracy with which they assess pupils' learning. This provides staff with the reassurance that their work is valid, and also the opportunity for ongoing professional development, which is reflected in the quality of their work in class.

Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that successful changes, such as to the teaching of phonics, lead to ongoing improvements across key stage 1, where progress is currently not quite as strong as in early years and key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

Kathryn Moles

Her Majesty's Inspector