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Mrs Amy Goodwin
Headteacher
Belmont Cheveley Park Primary School
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Dear Mrs Goodwin

Short inspection of Belmont Cheveley Park Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 18 December 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 September 2014.

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 as headteacher, in January 2018, you have built further on the school's strengths, particularly in terms of improving the quality of teaching and assessment and providing wider opportunities for staff to share good practice.

As a result of your calm, decisive, conscientious leadership, standards in the school continue to improve and morale is high among staff and pupils. Parents' views are extremely complimentary about your leadership and the staff at the school. For example, all of the parents who completed Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, said they would recommend the school to a friend.

The school fosters a 'family' and 'community' spirit. Pupils feel a part of a unique school community. They are appreciative and proud of the staff who they feel help and care for them. Likewise, staff work hard, and they work well together, to share ideas and ensure that everything they do benefits pupils. Governors, similarly, share a strong sense of pride about the school. As such, they have an accurate view of the school's strengths, its context, and those areas which they need to support and challenge the school to improve further.

Since the previous inspection, pupils' outcomes by the end of key stage 2 demonstrate a sustained trend, particularly in mathematics and science. Over the last three years, pupils' attainment in mathematics, in this phase of the school, has

impressively been in the top 10% of schools nationally. In the early years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been sustained and demonstrates a consistent improvement over time. Although you acknowledge that disadvantaged pupils' outcomes have fluctuated over time. As a result, you, other leaders and governors continue to make this a priority.

The proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the phonics screening check by the end of Year 1 in 2018 was high, therefore providing pupils with a firm foundation for the demands of Year 2. However, there is still work to do to maintain this momentum so that a higher proportion of pupils achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Nonetheless, from their various starting points, pupils in the school make good progress, with some making excellent progress over time.

You, other leaders, and staff, have been methodical in addressing the areas of improvement identified at the last inspection. As a result, there is a whole-school approach to promote reading for pleasure. This is very evident in classrooms and displays around the school. For example, each classroom has a unique area dedicated to promoting reading and providing pupils with a peaceful, positive place to relax and read. The way you have planned your curriculum across the school encourages and promotes pupils' reading skills well. The teaching of reading is also an emerging strength of the school and, consequently, this is improving pupils' attainment in reading, particularly by the end of key stage 2. For example, teachers and support staff, where appropriate, check pupils' understanding of subject-specific words and ensure that they understand the meaning of the word in a given context. This helps pupils to extend their knowledge and demonstrate a clear understanding before they begin writing. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the different books they have the opportunity to read.

Safeguarding is effective.

All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. For example, comprehensive checks are made so that adults working with pupils in the school are safe to do so. As a result, the school fosters a caring and safe environment. You have ensured that staff are well trained; therefore, safeguarding records are maintained well and are accurate. Staff know how to spot any concerns and they know to whom they should report them. You, and other appropriately trained staff, work closely with other services that provide support as and when necessary.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Most notably, this is because of the community spirit that permeates the ethos of the school. The school is a vibrant and happy place to learn. Relationships are an evident strength in the school. Pupils I spoke with during the inspection could talk confidently about the many different types of people and families that make a community, both in and outside of the school. Pupils show respect and have highly caring attitudes towards each other, staff and visitors. They work exceptionally well together to discuss and share their learning. Pupils' attitudes to learning are truly excellent. As a result, pupils thrive in this school and, on the whole, make strong progress across the curriculum.

Inspection findings

- An area that I explored during the inspection was how leaders' actions were improving and securing more consistent outcomes for pupils by the end of key stage 1. Over time, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics in this phase of the school has fluctuated.
- You have introduced a rigorous assessment system across the school. This allowed you and other leaders to quickly get to grips with the pockets of underachievement that have been evident in key stage 1 over time. The close monitoring of pupils' assessment information, work in their books and the quality of teaching has allowed you, other leaders and staff in key stage 1 to focus precisely on those pupils who may lag behind others in a particular area of the curriculum. As a result, current pupils are making better gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding in reading, writing and mathematics, but also in other subjects in the curriculum too.
- Teaching in key stage 1 is improving. You have conscientiously moved staff about so that their expertise can be utilised in gaining ground and maintaining the momentum to improve outcomes for pupils in this key phase of the school. For example, in a Year 1 lesson pupils demonstrated strong attitudes to learning and made good progress in their writing, as they were practising writing sentences using descriptive words. This was also complemented by the teacher's movement about the room that ensured any errors or misunderstanding could be dealt with swiftly.
- Year 2 pupils are also making stronger progress over time, this is complemented by a much higher proportion of them having met the expected standard in the phonics check at the end of Year 1. Teaching in Year 2 is building on pupils' prior knowledge, understanding and skills. The curriculum in Year 2 is sequenced effectively and learning is well planned so that pupils' progress can be consolidated and developed. Teaching is increasingly meeting the needs of pupils. However, you exercise your decisive leadership well by closely monitoring this phase of the school to ensure that standards continue to improve. Key stage 1 remains a priority in the school's development plan and a priority for leaders, governors and staff.
- An area that I also explored was how leaders' actions were bringing about improvements for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes across each phase of the school. This is because, despite low numbers in each year group, disadvantaged pupils' outcomes have fluctuated in comparison to other pupils in the school and nationally.
- You, other leaders and staff have a precise understanding of the barriers that some pupils face in the school. For example, some pupils need additional support to develop their speech and language skills, while others need support to nurture them emotionally. Staff at the school know pupils well. There are high expectations for all pupils. Staff have a strong understanding of pupils' individual needs. As a result, you have worked with staff, both in the school and external to the school where appropriate, to ensure that pupils access bespoke additional support and tuition where necessary.

- I discussed with you, other leaders and governors the impact of funding to improve and secure outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Funding is used wisely to ensure that, for example, support is readily available for identified pupils to access bespoke, same-day tuition, so that any identified misunderstandings or misconceptions can be addressed quickly. Work in disadvantaged pupils' books scrutinised during the inspection, particularly in writing, and pupil assessment information demonstrates that pupils' achievement is improving. However, you, other leaders and governors agree that current standards for disadvantaged pupils need to be more consistently maintained and sustained over time.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they build on improvements in key stage 1 and maintain the momentum, so that a higher proportion of pupils consistently meet expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics
- they continue to monitor the impact of strategies, both holistically and in classrooms, so that the proportion of disadvantaged pupils working at the expected standard mirrors that of other pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Darren Stewart
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and other leaders, including governors, to evaluate the strengths and areas you are further developing across the school. We also discussed improvements since the previous inspection. Together, with you and other senior leaders, I visited all classes in each phase of the school. In addition to this, I completed a learning walk in key stage 1. I reviewed work in pupils' books across a range of year groups and subjects, particularly focusing on disadvantaged pupils' progress and the progress current pupils were making across key stage 1.

I discussed with you current pupils' assessment information. I spoke to pupils, both formally and informally, about their learning and experiences of school. I listened to a group of pupils read and discussed with them their experiences of reading at the school. I read and scrutinised a wide range of school documentation, including the school self-evaluation document, the school's development plan, attendance information and documents relating to behaviour, exclusions, and safeguarding and

child protection.

I also took into account the 21 responses to Ofsted's staff survey, 45 responses from pupils who completed the pupil survey, and the 72 responses to Parent View, including 43 free-text responses from parents.