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Ms Sam Linton
Interim Headteacher
Bond Primary School
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Dear Ms Linton

Short inspection of Bond Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 13 February 2019, 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 February 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 as interim headteacher, you have provided a steady hand to ensure that actions planned for improvement are continued and followed through. You have earned the support of an able leadership team whose members know the school's areas of strengths and weaknesses. Together you have secured improvements that enable standards to rise steadily and consistently. Through the support of the local authority, leaders have established strong links with other schools in the area. Such links have provided subject leaders with many opportunities to observe and learn from good practice. As a result, the actions they have drawn up for improvement in their respective areas of responsibility are effective.

The school is a happy and friendly place. Adults create positive learning environments where pupils work well together. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. They behave well, in and out of lessons. They are polite and show respect for adults and each other. The pupils that I met told me that they feel safe in school and well cared for. They were confident that their teachers would help them if they had a problem. They understand about being a good citizen and spoke to me about making good choices, following rules and being kind. Leaders provide opportunities for them to develop their sense of citizenship. The library area, for example, is full of messages and reading materials that encourage and celebrate women's empowerment.

During the previous inspection, you were asked to sustain improvements in

achievement in key stage 1, so that standards rise further. You have put in place effective actions to address this. School leaders have strengthened the teaching of phonics and reading. As a result, the proportion of pupils passing the phonics screening check has been above the national average for the last three years. There are also more pupils making strong progress in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 1 than in previous years.

You have a team of very committed governors with a range of expertise and skills. They know the school very well and offer a healthy balance of challenge and support to you and your team. They are knowledgeable about the actions school leaders have taken to drive improvement. They plan and implement effective ways to monitor the impact of such actions on pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding procedures are robust and fit for purpose. Records relating to safeguarding are of high quality and sufficiently detailed, including details of pre-employment checks made on staff. The leadership team regularly seeks the opinion and advice of external agencies to check on the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Staff are well trained and vigilant and they raise any concerns promptly. Senior leaders work together effectively to ensure that timely and appropriate actions are taken to reduce risks to pupils' welfare. This includes seeking advice and support from external agencies when required.

Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe in different situations. The curriculum offers numerous opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep safe. As a result, pupils have acquired a strong understanding of keeping themselves safe at home, at school, or when online.

Governors take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. They regularly undertake checks to ensure that pupils are kept safe and feel safe in school. Governors also attend training regularly to make sure that they understand the latest statutory guidance.

Inspection findings

- During our initial discussions, we agreed to look at mathematics as a key line of enquiry. This was because in the past three years, pupils at the end of key stage 2 made progress that was significantly above the national average. We wanted to know what accounted for such strong progress in this subject.
- Leaders have invested heavily to provide pupils with high-quality learning experiences in mathematics. They have ensured that staff are well trained in the delivery of the mathematics curriculum. Across the school, pupils receive plenty of opportunities to practise and consolidate their mathematical skills. Adults ensure that pupils achieve mastery in a specific area of mathematics before moving them on to the next topic.

- Pupils talk about learning mathematics with excitement. They say that they like learning about numbers and how they are able to use and apply mathematics in their daily lives. Adults encourage them to use accurate mathematical language. Pupils are therefore clear when reasoning mathematically. As a result, pupils across the school make strong progress in mathematics over time.
- We also agreed to look at writing across the school. This was because in the past two years, the proportion of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, who met the expected standard in writing in both key stage 1 and key stage 2 was below the national average.
- Leaders have identified writing as a priority for improvement. They have worked hard to identify exactly those issues that needed to be addressed to improve pupils' writing. Acting on guidance from their leaders, teachers have focused on providing pupils with plenty of opportunities to develop the skills necessary to produce writing that meets expected standards. Across key stage 1, there are now more pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, who are writing within the expected standards than previously. However, the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are not challenged and stretched enough to enable a higher proportion of them to achieve greater depth in their writing.
- In key stage 2, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and they provide timely and effective advice for improvement. Pupils often act on this guidance from adults, and over time they make strong progress in writing. They use ambitious vocabulary and complex sentence structures when writing. They are becoming more accurate in their spelling, grammar and punctuation when writing extensively. As a result, there are now more pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, meeting the expected standards in writing across key stage 2.
- Finally, we considered whether pupils achieve in the wider curriculum as well as they do in reading, writing and mathematics. Following the previous inspection, leaders have undertaken a review of the curriculum. They have put in place a curriculum that provides pupils with a variety of experiences across a wide range of subjects. Across the school, pupils develop their scientific skills as they engage in numerous fair tests and investigations in a wide range of areas. From understanding the basic concept of the passage of time in Year 1, pupils' understanding of history develops further as they move up the school. As they reach Year 6, pupils are able to make generalisations about periods in history by looking at primary and secondary sources, including by investigating artefacts.
- Pupils achieve well in geography. They develop a deep understanding of places and their features. In Year 4, for example, pupils wrote extensively about how volcanoes form and die. However, pupils do not achieve in design and technology as well as they do in other subjects. This is because they do not receive enough opportunities to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to engage in the process of designing and making.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are stretched and challenged enough, so that a higher proportion of them achieve greater depth in writing in key stage 1
- pupils make better progress in design and technology, by providing them with enough opportunities to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to engage in the process of designing and making.

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

Yours sincerely

Edison David
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I discussed the work of the school with you and with members of the senior leadership team. I spoke to a number of pupils to discuss their experiences in lessons, the extent to which they feel safe, and their views on learning and behaviour. I held discussions with a representative of the local authority. I considered 152 responses to the parent survey and 14 responses to the staff survey. I met with governors, including the chair of the governing body.

I considered documentation provided by the school, and information posted on the school's website. I looked at the single central record of staff suitability checks, and the school's analysis of pupils' attendance. Together with school leaders, I visited classes to observe learning, and I looked at samples of pupils' work across all subjects. I listened to pupils read from across the ability range.