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Mr David Walton  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Walton

### **Short inspection of Bagthorpe Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 5 March 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 November 2015.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Parents hold Bagthorpe Primary School in high regard. All of those who responded to Parent View would recommend it to others. The school has a welcoming and positive climate for learning. The corridors and classrooms are full of colourful and vibrant displays of pupils' work, including a life-sized baby whale which is suspended from the Reception classroom ceiling.

Attendance is consistently above the national average and very few pupils are persistently absent. Pupils enjoy coming to school each day and told me how lessons are both interesting and fun. Pupils pay close attention to adults, want to learn, and follow instructions well. During my visit, I saw pupils keen to take on roles such as historians and reporters to understand the death of Tutankhamen. Pupils could explain to me how learning about Ancient Egyptian society helped them to appreciate life in modern Britain, with its values of freedom and democracy. As well as academic subjects, all pupils spend time each week in the school's extensive and highly impressive grounds, including its large wooded area. Here, pupils enjoy the natural world and are given further opportunities to learn. I observed pupils from Year 1 excitedly hunting for, and classifying, toys from different decades.

Teaching is consistently effective. Teachers explain to pupils how what they are learning builds on what they already know, and how it will be useful to them in the future. For instance, pupils could explain how understanding ratio would help them adapt recipes for different numbers of people, or to judge which size product in a

shop would be the best value.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They explained to me how they learn from each other and share information. They expect pupils to behave well and to try their best. Staff feel that you treat them with respect and are mindful of their work–life balance. At the start of the current academic year, you took the decision to join a formal collaboration with seven other local schools. Staff told me how this allows them to participate in valuable training to improve their skills and gives them the opportunity to learn from colleagues in other settings.

Pupils and staff understand and adhere to the school's core values. Staff are good role models. Pupils respect others, regardless of their backgrounds. They look after their own, each other's and the school's property. They support each other to learn by discussing each other's answers, pointing out any mistakes and suggesting improvements.

You have addressed most of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. School development planning is now comprehensive and easy for staff and the governing body to understand and implement. It prioritises a range of carefully considered aspects. Each has an explicit series of milestones which allow you and your staff to check whether the actions are having the impact that you intend. You check the progress that different groups are making in English and mathematics. You and the leaders for these subjects ensure that the assessments that colleagues make about what pupils know or can do are accurate. You also conduct regular scrutinies of pupils' exercise books and speak with pupils to gather their views about their work. From this, you and leaders check that no pupils fall behind in their learning.

Teachers set tasks that are appropriate for those whose ability is low, or who need to catch up. They now quickly identify any pupils who are struggling to read and ensure that they receive daily reading practice. To help further improve the teaching of reading, you have introduced a series of new initiatives such as the well-attended morning 'breakfast club', where pupils enjoy a range of exciting new texts, and can discuss their responses to them. This is contributing to a greater enthusiasm among pupils to read. Teachers also note any pupils who have not understood an aspect of mathematics, and give them additional teaching without delay, so that they are ready for the next lesson. One pupil explained to me how this had helped her greatly to understand the relationship between fractions and percentages. Teachers provide interesting resources to help less able pupils to improve their mathematics.

The governing body holds you and other leaders to account. Governors visit the school regularly and receive accurate information about many aspects of provision. They meet with the leaders of English, mathematics and science and receive detailed reports from them, which they use to ask searching questions about improvements you are making, and the impact of these on pupils' progress. However, because they do not receive the same level of information across all subjects they do not have a comprehensive overview of the quality of the curriculum, the teaching or pupils' progress. This risks any weaknesses in subjects

being missed and improvements delayed.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are well trained in safeguarding and are vigilant for any sign that a pupil could be being abused or exploited. They understand the importance of their responsibility to pass on any concern to you. You, the family support teacher and other deputy safeguarding leaders ensure that you keep good, clear records which help you to do all you can to minimise or prevent harm to a vulnerable pupil. This includes good work with external agencies and parents.

Pupils I met during my visit explained that they, their siblings and classmates feel safe in school. They told me how they could, and do, approach staff if they are worried about anything. They described how staff quickly address any name-calling or other unkindness, on the very rare occasions when these occur.

### **Inspection findings**

- Pupils' overall attainment is high. A higher proportion of pupils compared to the national average consistently attain the expected standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science at the end of both key stage 1 and key stage 2. They leave Bagthorpe Primary School well prepared for secondary school.
- Pupils' overall progress in English and in mathematics is average. However, the progress in reading of the most able pupils has declined over the last three years, and in the last academic year was significantly below other pupils. In mathematics, the progress of these pupils has been in the lowest 20% of all schools nationally for the previous two years.
- The teaching of the most able pupils is improving considerably this year. When teaching reading, staff are now ensuring that they question the most able pupils so that they are consistently required to think deeply. The leader for English has given training on the teaching of comprehension. Teachers are now skilled in showing pupils how to summarise their thoughts in writing, and how to infer meaning from texts.
- The leader for mathematics is making sure that teachers are wasting no time in moving the most able pupils on to more challenging work as soon as they have demonstrated a secure understanding about what is being taught. These pupils have regular opportunities to undertake problem-solving activities which build their fluency across different aspects of mathematics.
- Both the school's own assessment data and my scrutiny of the most able pupils' books confirm that the progress of these pupils has improved and is now good. In almost all year groups, the proportions of pupils on track to attain the higher standards are at least in line with, and in most cases above, the national average.
- Pupils are able to explain how the school's 'core values' influence the decisions they make. For example, pupils show high levels of determination, and they do

not expect work to be easy. They are taught to be both caring and courageous, and to stand up for what is right. When learning about moral dilemmas, pupils in Year 4 were asked what they would do if they overheard someone being very unkind, when they would be criticised by the perpetrator if they let an adult know. Pupils were clear that they should inform a member of staff, regardless.

- Governors have a detailed view of the quality of education in English, mathematics and science. As a result, they can hold leaders to account for addressing any weaknesses in provision. However, the governors are not able to do this as effectively in other subjects because the information they receive from leaders is much briefer.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all subject leaders provide the governing body with comprehensive information about the curriculum, teaching and pupils' progress so that governors can hold leaders to account for the breadth and quality of the education the pupils receive.

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

Yours sincerely

Roary Pownall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and shared my lines of enquiry. I also met with representatives of the governing body, the subject leaders for English and mathematics, and the family support teacher. I scrutinised the responses of parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, read all free-text comments and considered the views of those who had responded to the school's own recent questionnaire. I met with staff to hear their views on the school, its leadership and their own roles. You accompanied me when I visited all classes as they were receiving lessons. I looked at samples of work in different subjects for pupils across all year groups, including the most able. I observed children's behaviour in lessons and as they moved about the school. I met a large group of pupils to hear their views about the school and the education they receive. I viewed a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance and plans for its further improvement. I considered a number of policy documents, including those for safeguarding. I examined the school's website to check that it meets the requirements on the publication of specified information.