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2 May 2019

Miss Lynne Le Marinel  
Headteacher  
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Dear Miss Le Marinel

### **Short inspection of Bollinbrook CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 2 April 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 March 2015.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

Since taking up your post in September 2018, you have galvanised the staff of the school and developed a strong shared vision to improve the school. Teachers and teaching assistants are committed to raising expectations and ensuring that all pupils achieve their potential in all aspects of their education. You have worked effectively with your new leadership team to identify what is working well in the school and what needs to improve further. There have been significant changes in staffing in the past year. This has had an impact on pupils' standards of work across the school. School leaders have identified specific areas for improvement accurately and are taking appropriate action to address them. At this stage, actions to address the improvements needed have had little time to be embedded and have consistent and sufficient positive impact. Governors are equally clear and knowledgeable about the school's strengths and priorities. They understand the barriers and challenges that the school faces, but do not accept them as excuses. Governors are aspirational for pupils. Governors hold leaders to account and are developing their skills further to ensure that they continue to offer appropriate challenge and support.

There were 38 parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They were positive about the leadership of the school. Parents spoken to at the beginning of the inspection are very appreciative of the drive and

commitment you provide for all within the school community. As one parent said: 'We are very impressed with the new headteacher and her deputy headteacher.' Parents said that their children are happy and safe.

Pupils spoken to during the inspection were unanimous in their view that they enjoy school. They appreciate the many additional educational experiences that you provide for them. You ensure that your pupils have a wide range of opportunities through educational visits, residentials and after-school activities, such as football, netball and creative clubs. The Christian ethos pervades all aspects of the school. During the inspection, pupils participated well and appreciated the opportunity to reflect in a whole-school assembly. Pupils benefit from learning about other faiths and cultures which are promoted in the work that you do on global learning. This contributes well to their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.

Pupils behave well around the school. They are polite and courteous and hold doors open for adults. They are keen and enthusiastic to share their learning and contribute their thoughts and ideas. In most lessons, pupils are focused on their learning. The relationships between staff and pupils are strong.

At the last inspection, you were asked to ensure that teachers' expectations of the presentation of pupils' work, especially their handwriting, are consistently high. There is evidence that pupils are reminded by their teachers about their presentation. However, this is not done routinely.

The local authority and the diocese offer you appropriate support and challenge. For example, you have worked with the local authority to develop clearer plans for school improvement. You also work with schools within your local partnership to moderate pupils' work and share good practice.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and the reporting of concerns are thorough. Staff know who to report to if they have concerns about a child and what signs to look for. As a team, you follow up any issues carefully and swiftly, working well with external agencies to support vulnerable pupils. Leaders complete the required checks to ensure that all staff are suitable to work in the school. These checks are recorded on the single central record, which is updated and monitored regularly by leaders and governors. You make sure that all staff have received regular and appropriate safeguarding training that supports their understanding of the current statutory guidance. You remind staff frequently about their duties in safeguarding pupils. There is a rolling programme of staff training in place.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe through the curriculum. Leaders ensure that pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe online. Pupils know that they must not share their personal details or talk to people who they do not know.

## Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was to check what action leaders have taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning to support pupils, particularly the most able, to achieve their full potential. This was an area for improvement identified in your previous inspection. The progress of the most able pupils has been weak. In 2018, the progress of the most able pupils declined at the end of key stage 2. You have worked hard with your teachers to ensure that they are planning more effectively to support the progress of these pupils.
- There are now some good opportunities for these pupils to develop high-level inference skills in their reading comprehension. In mathematics, we saw examples in pupils' books where staff are providing most able pupils with feedback that challenges them to develop their reasoning skills. However, this is inconsistent across the school.
- All subject leaders, including those responsible for English and mathematics, are engaged in monitoring activity. This is at an early stage of development and not sufficiently focused on the progress of the pupils.
- The next area we looked at was what actions leaders have taken to improve pupils' writing, including the presentation and standard of writing. Pupils' progress in writing has become weaker year on year. In 2018, the progress of pupils was well below average. You and your leaders have made writing a clear focus across the school. There are some good-quality writing displays. Your exemplary pieces of writing from each year group give pupils a chance to understand what progress looks like and where they are aiming. You have ensured that pupils have more opportunities to write. This begins in the early years and is a priority through the school. In Year 1, the teacher provided the pupils with pictures of flowers to inspire their writing. Pupils made good progress because the teacher challenged them to write complete and accurate sentences. However, the quality of writing progress, together with high standards of presentation, are not yet consistent across every year group. Pupils do not take enough care and attention to ensure that basic punctuation, spelling and grammar are correct.
- You are committed to creating a curriculum that is varied and which enhances pupils' experiences. Pupils are proud of their science, geography and history work. They have good opportunities to write in subjects other than English, and they enjoy doing this. For example, Year 5 pupils were eager to write imaginatively, using their science learning about earth and space as a stimulus. Pupils made some progress, but the quality of their written work was inconsistent. Pupils had limited opportunities to write in detail in these subjects.
- The final line of inquiry was to consider the quality of leadership and provision in the early years. Although the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development dipped in 2018, children make good progress in the early years. Staff ensure that children learn sounds and letters so that they can build simple words. Through focused teaching, repetition and reinforcement, children are well supported. During the inspection, we saw the early years teacher modelling

sounds for the children. The teacher was relentless in her expectation for children to pronounce sounds and words correctly. The most able children are encouraged to use their phonics skills to read and write simple sentences. Children's handwriting is developing well because adults correct children's accurate letter formation. The children are provided with stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments. While the children are actively engaged in the outdoor area, tasks are not always precisely planned to maximise their progress.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils are provided a higher level of challenge and make more progress in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 2
- more pupils achieve what they are capable of in writing across key stage 2
- pupils, including lower-ability pupils, are supported and challenged to form their letters correctly and present their work to the best of their ability at all times
- pupils have more opportunities to write in detail in subjects other than English
- when monitoring performance, leaders focus on specific aspects of pupils' progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Andrew Morley  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and the leadership team, the chair of governors and other members of the governing body. I spoke on the telephone to a representative of the local authority. I spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day and considered the 38 written responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also considered the 16 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and the 77 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire. I scrutinised a range of school documentation, including the single central record, the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plans, the minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding information. I visited classrooms with you and looked at pupils' work, particularly writing. I observed pupils' behaviour at the beginning of the school day, on the playground and also during lessons. I spoke to a group of pupils about writing and spoke to other pupils and staff informally throughout the day.