

10 June 2019

Mr Lee Shilton  
Headteacher  
Sutton Bonington Primary School  
Park Lane  
Sutton Bonington  
Loughborough  
Leicestershire  
LE12 5NH

Dear Mr Shilton

### **Short inspection of Sutton Bonington Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 21 May 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 second short inspection. The school was judged to have continued to be good in the inspection of January 2016.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since the previous inspection, there have been significant staff changes. These include your appointment as headteacher in September 2018, and that of the two assistant headteachers in January 2019.

Leaders and the governing body have focused their efforts on managing staff changes as well as other priorities they have identified. You and the new senior leadership team are establishing systems and procedures to better hold staff to account while being aware of teachers' workload. You are developing better communications with parents and carers, and ensuring greater consistency in pupils' progress and attainment. Leaders and the governing body have a clear vision for continuing improvement.

At the start of the inspection, we reviewed the priorities identified at the previous inspection and agreed the key lines of enquiry that I would investigate to test whether the school remains good. The current school improvement plan is focused with clear criteria for success. To support the school in achieving its improvement priorities, you have established a more robust process for managing the performance of staff. This includes the meetings you and senior leaders hold with staff to discuss and review the progress of pupils in each class, including pupils who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). You check standards in the school carefully and provide staff with focused feedback to help them improve the quality of teaching. You also provide detailed

information to the governing body about different aspects of the school's work. However, governors' and senior leaders' grasp and analysis of the progress of different groups of pupils are not as sharp as they could be to more effectively hold staff to account.

Linked to this, reviews of the impact of additional funding, including the pupil premium, are not as thorough as they could be. The governing body cannot be certain that the funding is having the maximum impact on improving pupils' outcomes. The governing body has provided effective support for the new senior leadership team in a challenging period of the school's development. Members of the governing body are now committed to ensuring that they both support and hold leaders to account for all aspects of the school's work.

At the last inspection, leaders were asked to further improve pupils' progress in writing. We saw that pupils are able to write at length in a range of different styles, including in their 'exciting writing' books. In some classes, pupils complete work in different subjects that is of similar quality as work in their English books. However, some inconsistencies remain. Teachers do not have equally high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in different subjects. Sometimes, they do not help pupils to improve their writing as well as they could.

Since your appointment, leaders and the governing body have identified relevant priorities for improvement, including improving standards of behaviour. You and other staff have been effective in this. I saw that pupils are well behaved. They are friendly, positive and polite at all times of the school day. Leaders and other staff support pupils who need help to improve their behaviour. You have sought the views of parents in reviewing the behaviour policy. Pupils know the new school approaches, including the system for gaining rewards and what will happen if they do not behave well. New school rules and the 'role-models' and 'ready to learn' initiative are well understood and encourage pupils to be responsible and make positive decisions.

Many parents commented positively on the 'family' ethos of the school, friendly staff and recent improvements. Many commented on the efforts you and your staff are making to improve communications and involve parents. These include the creation of a parents' forum, for example. The large majority of parents said their children were happy coming to school, were taught well and are making good progress.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a secure culture of safeguarding. Leaders ensure that all members of staff are kept up to date with the latest guidance on keeping pupils safe in education. Leaders take timely actions where there are concerns about pupils' welfare, including the involvement of external agencies where this is relevant. You carefully record the actions you take. The governing body also checks that the school meets safeguarding requirements, including records of the checks made before people can work or volunteer in the school.

Pupils say they are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They spoke with confidence about being aware of peer pressure. Pupils say bullying is rare and they are confident that staff will resolve any concerns they may have. While some parents did raise some concerns, leaders, and, where relevant, the governing body, take appropriate actions. You and your staff are managing the current building work well to ensure that pupils are kept safe as well as making additional improvements to the security of the school site.

## **Inspection findings**

- Teaching is strong across the school. Pupils' work shows that the majority of pupils make good progress. Our observations of teaching and learning showed that teachers have good subject knowledge and plan well-organised lessons which are often lively and engaging. Some teachers plan logical sequences of lessons that enable pupils to gain a deeper understanding, for example in mathematics or in other subjects. However, this is not consistent.
- Teachers are often skilled in teaching the technical aspects of writing such as spelling, grammar and punctuation. Pupils show a good understanding and can explain the features of their work. However, teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils can apply their understanding accurately in their work or know how to edit and improve their own work. There are still some inconsistencies in the quality and presentation of pupils' work and in different subjects.
- Pupils learn about different religions such as Islam, Buddhism, Christianity and Judaism. However, their understanding of some religions is not as well developed as it should be. Pupils do not have an understanding the fundamental British values appropriate for their age or maturity.
- There is evidence of leaders' work to improve standards in mathematics. For example, staff often use pictorial imagery well to support pupils' learning. Staff are also increasingly providing opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- Leaders and the governing body are in the process of updating the school website. Additional aspects were updated during the inspection. The school's website meets the requirements of what a maintained school should publish.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they check and review more carefully the progress of different groups of pupils to better hold staff to account
- teachers consistently teach pupils how to edit and improve their writing and in different subjects
- teachers plan more carefully sequences of lessons that challenge and enable pupils to make stronger progress

- the curriculum better promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and understanding of the fundamental British values.

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

John Lawson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I scrutinised a variety of documents including those relating to safeguarding; behaviour; the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; pupils' attainment and progress; and staff performance. I also looked at the school's self-evaluation document and plans for improvement. I assessed the impact on standards of leaders' actions taken since the last inspection, as well as additional lines of enquiry. I looked at the range and quality of information provided on the school's website. I considered the 60 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, the 13 responses to the staff questionnaire and 38 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

I met with you, the assistant headteachers and members of the governing body and spoke with a representative of the local authority. I spoke with parents at the beginning of the day. I met with pupils informally during the school day, as well as holding a formal meeting with a group of pupils. Together, you, I and an assistant headteacher observed teaching and learning in seven lessons. During these visits, I looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils to evaluate the quality of their learning. I also examined with you and the assistant headteachers pupils' work in a sample of their books.

