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Mr John Bryant
Headteacher
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St James Avenue East
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Dear Mr Bryant

Short inspection of Arthur Bugler Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 June 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 your predecessor schools, prior to their amalgamation to form Arthur Bugler Primary School, were judged to be good in March 2011 and February 2014 respectively.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You lead with passion, enthusiasm and determination to improve outcomes for pupils. You are supported well by your leadership team and by governors. Staff who responded to Ofsted's online survey said they were proud to be a member of the school community. They say they feel motivated and supported to improve their teaching skills. Staff commented on how leaders show high regard for their well-being and work-life balance by ensuring efforts are focused on improvements that have the greatest impact on pupils' learning.

Parents views are positive. The vast majority who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, spoke highly of all the staff. Parents expressed their appreciation that staff 'go above and beyond' to provide pupils with interesting activities to ensure pupils do well. As one parent put it, 'It's clear the children are the main priority for the school.'

Pupils are polite and courteous. They behave well in lessons and show positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are proud of their achievements. They respond well to adult feedback and try their best to improve their work and to present it neatly. Pupils have a good understanding of the school's system of rewards and sanctions for promoting good behaviour. They say it works well.

Governors access training so that they are more able to offer leaders critical

challenge. Notes of governor meetings show they hold you and your leaders to account for the quality of education by asking pertinent questions. They visit the school and work jointly with staff to see for themselves how well pupils are learning. Governors ensure the pupil premium is being used effectively. They know it is increasing eligible pupils' attendance and helping them to make good progress.

Since the school converted to be an academy in September 2016, outcomes for pupils have improved, including for the most able. Published information shows that the proportion of children in the early years reaching a good level of development is above average. Outcomes for the Year 1 phonics screening check are above average. The proportion of key stage 1 pupils achieving at least the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. The percentage of pupils working at greater depth improved in 2018. Key stage 2 pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average and improving. Their progress in reading and mathematics is below average and it is average in writing.

You and your leaders have rightly identified that pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school in Year 6 could be stronger. Inspection evidence shows that the actions leaders are taking to improve pupils' progress are working. More children in the early years are reaching and exceeding a good level of development. A greater proportion of key stage 1 and 2 pupils are working at or above the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school's safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. You and your staff have created a strong culture in which safeguarding and promoting pupils' welfare are everyone's responsibility. Staff are clear about systems to report safeguarding concerns. Records of child protection information are meticulously kept. Staff training is up to date. The single central record meets requirements. Procedures for checking adults' suitability to work with children, including volunteers, are secure. Governors check these systems are working and that records are carefully maintained.

Pupils feel safe. They told me that staff do all they can to keep them safe. For example, they know adults wearing a green lanyard have been checked by office staff and are trusted adults. Pupils say bullying happens only occasionally. They say this is because pupils are taught about friendships and how to treat each other with respect. Pupils know who to approach and are confident that any member of staff will deal with any worries they might have. They have a thorough understanding of how to keep safe when using the internet.

Pupils are articulate and can explain their views clearly and confidently. Older pupils told me they appreciate the wide range of responsibilities afforded to them. Play leaders in Years 5 and 6 teach younger children fun games to play and sometimes offer them advice about how to cope with minor disputes. They say this helps them develop independence and feel this will prepare them well for life in secondary

school and later on in the world of work.

Almost all parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire were highly positive about the work of the school to keep pupils safe. Many parents noted the care their children receive. Typically, parents said they find it very easy to approach and talk to staff. Several referred to the school community as a lovely family to be part of.

Inspection findings

- The inspection focused on a number of lines of enquiry. Two of these involved looking at action taken to improve outcomes for most-able pupils and to raise progress in reading, writing and mathematics for all pupils. To tackle this, leaders have raised staff expectations of what pupils can achieve. They utilise expertise from across the trust to share the most effective practice. Leaders have built on the positive relationships that exist with parents and run workshops in partnership with staff, focusing on different aspects of pupils' learning. This means that parents have a deeper understanding of what their children are doing in school and are better placed to support them at home.
- To enhance pupils' learning, leaders have invested in promoting pupils' well-being and developing their resilience. They have organised the curriculum so that it offers pupils opportunities to practise and refine their learning. Staff provide interesting learning activities that enthuse pupils, and this helps to maintain their interest. For example, they spoke excitedly about authors and other dignitaries who come to the school to answer questions and share their expertise. Visitors such as these inspire pupils and raise their aspirations.
- Leaders have added greater rigour to the way in which pupils' knowledge and skills are assessed. This is checked every few weeks. Staff hold frequent discussions with pupils about their learning. This means that teachers know more precisely what pupils already know and are able to plan what they need to learn next in order to deepen their understanding.
- You and your leaders have created a robust system, known as 'teaching over time', that checks the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Leaders identify what is going well and where improvements are needed. This helps you provide staff with the training they need to develop their skills. They are building on recent improvements to the teaching of phonics by making closer links with spelling. Leaders support staff in finding ways to enable pupils to practise their writing while learning about other curriculum subjects such as history, geography and science. There is an increasing emphasis on widening pupils' subject-specific vocabulary. For example, pupils in Year 4, learning about the water cycle, learned words like evaporation, condensation and precipitation.
- Similarly, staff are providing greater challenge for all pupils, including the most able, in mathematics. Pupils learn to develop proficiency in basic skills while becoming more confident in reasoning. Year 6 pupils confidently explained the various ways they had used their existing knowledge and skills to calculate 23% of £480.
- As a result of actions taken, the school's assessment information, confirmed by work in pupils' books, shows that more pupils in every year group are working at

the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Greater proportions of the most able pupils are working at a greater depth. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress from their individual starting points.

- Next, I wanted to know how effectively you and your leaders have used the pupil premium to diminish differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils in the school and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. Leaders identify potential barriers to disadvantaged pupils' learning and ensure the pupil premium is used to provide the extra help they need. Often, this consists of support for social, emotional and mental health needs alongside help with academic learning. Eligible pupils are making good progress. Differences between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in the school and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally are diminishing rapidly.
- Finally, I looked into how leaders have used the pupil premium to reduce how often disadvantaged pupils were absent from school. To address this, leaders establish positive relationships with families, and provide effective support where it is most needed to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. As a result, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is equal to that for non-disadvantaged pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they build on the effective strategies to ensure that pupils make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

I am copying this letter to the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Thurrock. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Warboys
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I held discussions with you, the deputy headteacher, SENCo and the primary executive headteacher of the Osborne Cooperative Academy Trust about the progress made since the two predecessor schools were previously inspected and to gather information about my key lines of enquiry. I noted your evaluation of the quality of education, improvement planning and also information about how well pupils currently in the school are achieving.

I met with you and the deputy headteacher, as two of the school's leaders for safeguarding, to review child protection procedures. I met with the staff responsible for leading curriculum development, English and mathematics. I spoke to the chief

executive officer of the Osborne Cooperative Academy Trust and four other governors, including the chair of governors.

I joined you and the deputy headteacher in visiting most classes, with a focus on how well pupils are learning. I spoke to pupils and looked at work in their books. I observed and talked to pupils during breaktime. Two Year 6 pupils led me on a tour of the school and talked to me about their learning and other experiences at the school.

I took account of the responses by 125 parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 60 free-text responses. I scrutinised the 53 staff responses and 23 pupil responses to Ofsted's online surveys.