

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Mr Marek Krzanicki  
Headteacher  
Barton Seagrave Primary School  
Belvoir Drive  
Barton Seagrave  
Kettering  
Northamptonshire  
NN15 6QY

Dear Mr Krzanicki

### **Short inspection of Barton Seagrave Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 26 January 2017, 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 January 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have effectively managed a period of significant change since the previous inspection. This includes considerable building work to link together two separate school buildings that had accommodated the key stage 1 and key stage 2 departments. During this time, you have successfully galvanised two groups of staff to become one strong staff team across the whole school.

You have effectively shared with staff and governors your vision that pupils at Barton Seagrave will learn, not only academic skills, but skills such as confidence and resilience that will stand them in good stead for life. This is reflected in your school motto, 'to educate children to confidently face the future'. Staff have engaged with this because you communicate well with them, ensuring that they receive high-quality professional development and establishing an ethos where staff are proud to work at Barton Seagrave School.

At the time of the previous inspection, inspectors noted that pupils behaved very well and were keen to learn. This has remained the case. During my visit to classrooms and as I observed pupils around school, it was evident that they are well mannered and behave very well both in class and as they move around school. Pupils told me that behaviour is good, but that if any pupil did not behave as well as expected, they were confident that an adult in school would address it fairly.

Following the last inspection, inspectors asked you to make sure that teaching helps lower ability pupils, that every learner knows how to improve and that pupils are given books to read that are the right level of difficulty for them. You were also asked to make better use of data to ensure that action is taken to support pupils effectively. You have successfully addressed each of these issues. As we toured the classrooms to see the learning that was taking place, we saw pupils were tackling work that was just right for them. Pupils told me about the new library and how the teachers help them to make sure that the books they read are appropriate for them. Pupils also told me that teachers offer them useful feedback so they know how to improve their work. You have implemented a new system of assessment and tracking of pupils' progress since the removal of national curriculum levels in 2014. You and your leaders make good use of it to keep a check on pupils' progress and to ensure that pupils who need extra support receive it. You and your deputy headteacher are very reflective leaders. You have not been afraid to modify this system over time to ensure that it precisely meets your school's needs.

During the last inspection, inspectors noticed that the chair of the governing body led the governing body well. There has been a new chair of the governing body since that time, but the current chair is also highly effective. Governors understand their strategic responsibilities. They receive the appropriate training to execute these responsibilities well. Governors offer an appropriate level of support and challenge to school leaders, through meetings and visits to school. The chair of the governing body carefully considers the skills that different governors can offer to make sure that these skills are put to best use in supporting improvements in the school.

Our visits to classrooms showed that pupils from the Reception class right through to Year 6 were engaged with their learning. Teachers use classroom displays to provide useful information about mathematics or spelling, punctuation and grammar, which pupils refer to as they undertake their work. Teachers explain new concepts clearly and ask carefully targeted questions to check that pupils are grasping the ideas that are being taught. The recent improvements that your leaders have introduced to the teaching of writing are beginning to take shape. However, they are not fully embedded across the school.

Our examination of pupils' books from across the school showed that pupils take pride in their work, as they generally keep their books neatly. Mathematics books showed that pupils build logically on their previous knowledge because teachers plan sequences of lessons. While pupils have opportunities to practise their problem-solving and reasoning skills, this is variable across the school. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Teachers make close links between skills taught in English and mathematics lessons and other subjects (known as foundation subjects). Pupils practise their mathematical skills during science lessons, for example. Leadership of some subjects is well established, but in some foundation subjects, leaders have looked more closely at curriculum coverage than at the progress pupils are making.

Pupils told me that they enjoy the wide range of clubs on offer and that they are proud to represent their school at sporting events. They enjoy learning about different cultures and religions, giving particular mention to 'around the world' week where they learned about the foods and cultures of different countries. Pupils can take responsibility around school, for example with setting up assembly, being table monitors or as part of the school council. They told me that this helps them to learn to be responsible and they appreciate the staff trusting them to complete these tasks well.

The school environment is bright and the displays celebrate pupils' work around the school. Motivational script on the school corridor walls, for example, 'Nothing is impossible, the word itself says, "I'm possible",' remind everyone of the school's values of equal opportunities and encouraging everyone to reach their full potential.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding is a high priority for you and your leaders. You have made sure that all staff have the most up-to-date training and safeguarding pupils is an item on the agenda of every staff meeting and meetings of the governing body. Your record-keeping is detailed and of high quality. You make sure that all the appropriate checks take place before a member of staff starts working at the school.

Parents and pupils who shared their views with me all agreed that pupils are safe in school. Pupils told me that they are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when they are using modern technology. They said that visitors to school help them to understand about safety at different times of the year. For example, a visit from a police officer prior to Bonfire Night had highlighted the importance of safety during this annual event.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the end of the summer term 2016, you and other school leaders noticed that there had been an unusual dip in the progress pupils had made in writing. You wasted no time in addressing this. The leader with responsibility for English immediately drew up a programme for teaching spelling, punctuation and grammar that followed a logical sequence for staff to use.
- During our examination of pupils' books, we could see that this is already having an impact on the progress pupils are making so far this year in their writing. You have taken further steps to ensure that there is a whole-school approach to teaching writing. This is still relatively new and while we saw some signs of this being implemented in some classes, there is work to do to embed this strategy fully.

- Published results in 2016 showed that fewer pupils in Year 2 reached the greater depth of understanding in reading, writing and mathematics in the newly introduced national assessments than was seen nationally. You and your leaders have carefully considered why this was. You have begun the task of ensuring that, across the school, those pupils who may be capable of reaching the higher standards can do so. However, there is still work to do to make sure that the most able pupils are fully challenged to reach the highest standards of which they are capable.
- As we looked at pupils' books and toured the classrooms, we noticed that teachers used their secure subject knowledge and careful questioning skills effectively to ensure that pupils grasped the concepts that were being taught.
- Almost every parent who shared their views with me said that staff were approachable and agreed that they would recommend the school to others.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils across the school make the best possible progress, including those who are the most able, by ensuring that:
  - teachers fully implement the recent strategies to improve progress in writing
  - teachers provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to improve their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics.
- leaders with responsibility for the foundation subjects carry out their responsibilities fully so that they can be held to account for the progress pupils make in these subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Di Mullan  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this short inspection, I held meetings with you, your deputy headteacher, five other school leaders and a small group of other staff. I also met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body, and I spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I spoke with parents as they brought their children to school in the morning and took account of their views through the 111 responses to the online survey, Parent View. I also spoke with a small group of pupils and heard two pupils read. I took account of pupils' views through the 86 responses to the pupil survey. I took account of staff views through the 39 responses to their survey. I visited classrooms from every year group with you and the deputy headteacher to see the learning that was taking place and we examined a range of pupils' books from across key stage 1 and key stage 2. I examined a range of school documentation, including the school self-evaluation, the development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, school assessment information and documentation relating to the safeguarding of pupils.