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Sue Walker  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Walker

### **Short inspection of Belmont Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 30 March 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 February 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 and the deputy headteacher make a formidable team. You have an accurate picture of the strengths and areas for development at the school and are relentless in your drive to ensure that outcomes for pupils are high. School improvement planning is focused sharply on areas identified in your detailed and accurate self-evaluation.

Your leadership team and subject leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their roles. They work very well together and embody your school motto of 'Supporting each other to achieve success'. For example, the leader responsible for mathematics identified that pupils were not given enough opportunities to use problem-solving skills. From our scrutiny of the mathematics books across all year groups, it is clear that this issue has now been successfully addressed.

There is a good mix of experience and skills on the strong governing body. Governors have had appropriate training in, for example, safeguarding and are therefore well placed to carry out their duties diligently and effectively. Minutes from meetings show that you are asked challenging questions and therefore held fully accountable for the actions you take. Governors are knowledgeable about the school and visit regularly to find out at first-hand how staff and pupils are progressing. Governors are right to prioritise pupils' emotional support in order to

support pupils' academic achievement and success. One parent commented that this is 'An excellent school that takes pride in developing the whole child.'

Pupils in all year groups are enthusiastic about learning and work hard. They take pride in their work and present it well. Classrooms have a 'buzz' about them as pupils are fully engaged in their work. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils told me they were enjoying the challenge of calculating whether nine could be split into two, three or four separate groups. Pupils are polite and look smart in their school uniforms. They told me that behaviour was good both inside and outside on the playground and that bullying was extremely rare. Pupils have confidence in adults to resolve any disputes swiftly and fairly. Pupils enjoy the opportunities provided for them in extra-curricular sport, dance and the school choir. The Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are looking forward to the upcoming residential visit to Whitemoor Lakes.

There are good opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects, including art, music and, in particular, science. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain as they have a good knowledge of faiths and cultures that are different to their own.

Teaching assistants are a strength of the school. They receive regular training and are deployed effectively to support the learning of all pupils in classrooms.

You have successfully achieved the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Staff and pupils talk enthusiastically regarding the increased opportunities for pupils to become more independent and to develop their speaking and thinking skills. Teachers set work that helps to challenge pupils, although some high-ability pupils are not moved on to this challenging work quickly enough. Finally, at the last inspection, the inspector asked you to ensure that pupils in Year 2 received higher targets. Consequently, in 2016, standards in Year 2 rose to be in line with those seen for other pupils nationally.

Standards in the 2016 key stage 2 tests were untypically lower than in previous years. Pupils made less progress than other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Similarly, attainment in these subjects was below national figures at both the expected and higher levels. You and your senior leadership team have quickly identified the reasons for this dip and have devised rigorous plans to ensure that standards will rise to previous levels in 2017. Information provided by you and work seen in books would suggest that this will be the case. Standards in the Year 1 phonics check and in the early years have been broadly in line with national figures over recent years.

You are aware that the attendance and punctuality of a small number of disadvantaged pupils is not high enough. Consequently, the attendance rates for this group of pupils are lower than those seen for other pupils nationally.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a strong safeguarding culture within the school. Staff and governors receive appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding training, including how to fulfil their 'Prevent' duty. This means that staff are aware of the dangers posed to pupils through potential exposure to extremism and radicalisation. You have robust policies and procedures in place for staff to record any welfare concerns they have about a child. Any concerns that need escalating to an outside agency are done so promptly, therefore ensuring that pupils and families receive any extra support they need quickly. Staff and parents overwhelmingly state that pupils are kept safe at the school. Pupils with whom I spoke had a good understanding of e-safety, and during the inspection a number of Year 6 pupils were out learning to be safe on their bikes, undertaking 'bikeability' training.

## **Inspection findings**

- You and the deputy headteacher have acted swiftly to address the dip in standards seen for disadvantaged pupils in the 2016 end of key stage tests. You organised an external review of pupil premium funding and have acted upon its recommendations. There is now a comprehensive system in place to monitor the allocation of the funding. This ensures that every pupil is receiving the support to which they are entitled.
- The deputy headteacher has a robust system in place for monitoring the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils. Pupil progress meetings are held routinely with class teachers to specifically discuss the progress of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, any pupil who is falling behind is identified quickly and given the help they require in order to catch up.
- Teachers take into account any emotional and social issues that may be preventing a disadvantaged pupil from learning effectively. Pupil and parent views are actively sought in a bid to leave no stone unturned when ensuring that the disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are being catered for effectively. Information provided by the school and work seen in pupils' writing and maths books would suggest that the school is successfully diminishing the difference between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at the school. The chair of governors is responsible for the monitoring of this area of the school and he does so very well.
- The leader responsible for English has successfully implemented a wide range of strategies to improve standards in reading. For example, 'reading recovery' has been introduced which has enabled many pupils to make great gains in their reading ability. There has also been a reorganisation of guided reading groups to ensure that any planned independent activities are more purposeful. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and read regularly at home and at school. They told me about their favourite authors, including Philip Pullman and JK Rowling.
- Provision in the early years is good. The leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic, correctly identifying that physical development is an area for children to improve upon. As a result, Reception children now undertake one hour of physical activity every day, whether in the hall, on the playground or with

an outside provider. The classrooms and outdoor areas are bright and stimulating, containing a range of interesting activities for the children to explore. Assessments are carried out in a timely fashion and enable staff to plan for the next steps in children's learning carefully. There are good links with other early years settings within the cluster that enable the sharing of good practice and the monitoring of children's work.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the punctuality and attendance rates of a small number of disadvantaged pupils are improved to be broadly in line with the national figures
- teachers move pupils on to challenging work quickly so that an increased number of pupils achieve at a greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Stonier  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met you and the deputy headteacher and shared my key lines of enquiry. I also met with a representative from the local authority, the leaders responsible for English, mathematics and the early years, the three team leaders and two representatives of the governing body, including the chair. I considered the 53 responses of parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the responses by staff and pupils to their respective Ofsted online questionnaires. We visited all classrooms where I spoke with pupils and examined their books. I viewed a range of documents, including your evaluation of the school's current performance, your school improvement plan, safeguarding records and information relating to the allocation and monitoring of the pupil premium funding. I examined the school's website to check that it complies with the Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish. I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and met with a group of them after lunch. I listened to a group of pupils read from Year 1 and Year 5 and scrutinised a sample of books from disadvantaged pupils in every year group.