

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



21 April 2017

Susan Denham  
Executive Headteacher  
Bratton Fleming Community Primary School  
Station Road  
Bratton Fleming  
Barnstaple  
Devon  
EX31 4SB

Dear Mrs Denham

### **Short inspection of Bratton Fleming Community Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 28 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 November 2012.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are highly committed to your school and hold dear the belief that every pupil deserves the best. In the case of the most vulnerable you 'go the extra mile' to ensure that pupils have what they need to thrive in school. Over the years you have built up a strong relationship with the local community. This is because you understand the school's important place at the heart of the community.

You have also galvanised staff so that they share your high ambitions for pupils in the school. Middle leaders strive to improve their work because they feel empowered to do so. They report that they feel trusted to lead and encouraged to explore new ideas and ways of working. Consequently, they relish opportunities to work with external partners and share the fruits of their learning with other staff back in school. The growing effectiveness of middle leaders is evident in the quality of their action planning and their monitoring of pupil progress.

The governing body shares your high aspirations and commitment towards vulnerable pupils. They are knowledgeable, astute and confident in their work. This means that they act with conviction and provide you with the necessary degree of challenge that aids the school's continual improvement. Governors bring a range of skills and experience to their roles and understand the increasing

importance of what they do. To this end, they recruit carefully and ensure that new governors have the necessary skills and attributes. I found evidence to support the comment from the chair of governors, who told me, 'We've raised our game since the last inspection.' You benefit from a positive relationship with governors. They support you in your work as well as hold you to account. This open relationship means that governors are encouraged to interrogate the school's performance information. This helps them to have strategic oversight of areas for development.

Staff and governors feel it is important to 'look outwards'. Yours is not an insular school. This is because you recognise the importance of working with other professionals and advisers to keep up to date with current practice and new ideas. Being part of a federation with another primary school and also a member of the Three Valleys Learning Partnership has helped to strengthen aspects of the school's work.

You have been assiduous in your efforts to tackle the areas for improvement from the last inspection. Pupils' achievement in mathematics has risen and continues to improve. This is because leaders are focusing their efforts on ensuring that teaching enables pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding to a greater depth. Pupils are being presented with more opportunities to solve problems, and develop their reasoning and fluency. Pupils are now more adept at improving their work. This is because feedback from staff better enables them to identify their mistakes. It is also because tasks are planned to incorporate different levels of challenge which encourage pupils to stretch themselves.

Your leadership has fostered a fully inclusive school culture. Staff get to know pupils well and ensure that they are well looked after, regardless of background, ability or need. Behaviour is good because pupils are treated with respect, dignity and kindness. However, a few pupils said to me that the behaviour management system is not always effective in helping pupils to resolve friendship issues. Pupils are ordinarily happy, confident and comfortable in school. They enjoy the stimulating teaching they receive. They also respond well to the exciting, colourful and informative wall displays, which proudly 'shout' about how much fun learning can be. Consequently, pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. Pupils' achievement in 2016 was in line with the national average in writing and mathematics. In reading, pupils' achievement was in the top 10% of schools nationally and, therefore, well above the national average.

At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the key lines of enquiry to be considered during the day. These included establishing the effectiveness of actions taken to ensure that different groups of pupils achieve to the best of their ability at key stage 2. We also considered the effectiveness of actions to improve the attainment of pupils in reading and writing at key stage 1, particularly the standards reached by middle-ability pupils. Furthermore, we considered whether safeguarding is effective. These lines of enquiry are considered below under 'Safeguarding' and 'Inspection findings'.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

Child protection is an integral part of the school's culture. Leaders are fully aware of their responsibilities; they take them seriously because some pupils are particularly vulnerable. You, as the designated safeguarding lead, have experience of some complex child protection cases. These have provided you with valuable experience, which helps in your ongoing work to keep children safe. You also work closely with parents and other professionals, such as the educational psychologist, to follow issues through to resolution. Staff are appropriately trained and know that they are expected to use the online system to record concerns, however small they may consider them. This referral system enables you to keep a careful track of concerns and take the appropriate action. Checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children are fit for purpose. Governors have effective oversight of safeguarding matters.

You ensure pupils' safety and well-being, the school site has been risk-assessed and appropriate action taken in light of recommendations. Consequently, there is an appropriate level of staff supervision when children are outside during breaktimes. External doors are secure and are operated electronically when staff have established the identity of visitors. Signing-in procedures for visitors are suitably robust.

Pupils who spoke to me said, in one voice, that there was a particular member of staff they would go to if they had any worries. This member of staff fulfils a counselling role in the school. One pupil said, 'The teachers are good at protecting us.'

## **Inspection findings**

- Leaders' self-evaluation is sharp and accurate. You clearly identified that middle-ability pupils did not achieve as well as their peers at the end of Year 2 in 2016. Consequently, you have factored this issue into the school development plan and have taken effective action to ensure that middle-ability pupils are better supported.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well to work with targeted pupils in key stage 1. They work with pupils in small groups, skilfully questioning them so that they can move forward rapidly with their work. In addition, pupils are set tailored activities pitched at the right level that stretch them. Pupils who spoke to me said how staff prompted them to move from 'comfort zone' tasks to attempting more difficult 'danger zone' tasks. They are also encouraged to think for themselves and develop resilience in their learning. Pupils use available resources, such as the learning walls, before asking the teacher.
- Staff use assessment information well to track the progress made by pupils. This enables staff to adapt their teaching and help pupils catch up when they fall behind. Leaders maintain an ongoing 'big picture' view of the progress and attainment of different groups of pupils. This helps hold staff to account for the progress being made by pupils.

- Pupils' work across the school shows that teachers expect pupils, irrespective of ability, background or need, to think hard and conscientiously apply themselves to their work. In mathematics, the most able pupils are required to explain their thinking and justify their choice of method. For example, one Year 6 pupil wrote in response to the teacher's request for an explanation, 'I know that the answer is "C" because I folded all the sides together and it matched.'
- The feedback provided by teachers enables pupils to consider what is good about their work and what could be improved. Pupils are encouraged to see mistakes as important stepping stones to success. Staff ask questions such as, 'What did you do wrong?' and 'How do you know you're correct?' Pupils' work shows evidence of redrafting, indicating that pupils are given the chance to correct their mistakes and have another go.
- Staff have the same high expectations of all pupils. The work produced by disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs shows that they engage with the stimulating activities that are set. These particular groups of pupils produce high-quality outcomes. For example, in Year 6 they write lively, charismatic poems and creative stories as well as spirited responses within debates such as, 'Should mobile phones be allowed in schools?' This is because they are helped to take advantage of appropriate resources, which make tasks accessible and prompt them to succeed. When required, pupils who have special educational needs receive additional teaching in advance to help prepare them for specific activities.
- All different groups of pupils across the school are making good progress. In 2016, pupils' overall achievement in reading in the Year 6 national tests was strong. However, boys outperformed girls. The work of current pupils shows that the progress being made by boys and girls is equally strong.
- Pupils follow an interesting and engaging curriculum. Staff hook pupils' interest and imagination in the first instance with 'Wow!' moments that introduce them to the topic. Trips and residential visits are worked into various topics to engage pupils. A topic being studied by some year groups at the time of inspection was 'Where in the world is Bratton Fleming?' This topic work encourages children to develop greater social and cultural understanding, alongside specific subject skills. Pupils are provided with lots of opportunities to practise their writing for different audiences and purposes.
- The presentation of some pupils' work could be better. Scrutiny of work showed that some pupils did not always cross work out neatly, use a ruler to underline titles or write in pen when it was appropriate to do so.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the behaviour system is fully effective in helping pupils to resolve issues if they 'fall out' with each other
- expectations of pupils' presentation of work are raised.

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

Yours sincerely

Steve Smith  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I spoke to you and middle leaders. I also spoke to pupils, representatives of the governing body, the school improvement adviser and the member of staff responsible for coordinating the sports premium additional funding.

You and I made visits to lessons to observe pupils' attitudes to learning. I also scrutinised the work in pupils' books.

A range of documentary evidence was considered, which included the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan as well as records of current progress and attendance. I also considered governing body minutes. Additionally, I scrutinised various safeguarding arrangements, including records relating to the suitability of staff to work with children and referrals from members of staff.

I took account of 17 responses to the Parent View online survey.