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14 July 2017

Mrs Patricia Outram
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Dear Mrs Outram

Short inspection of Bakewell CofE Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 28 June 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 December 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 have remained steadfast in realising your vision to raise standards and improve the achievement of all pupils. The school is well organised. Teachers are clear about their responsibilities and have high expectations of pupils. Pupils enjoy school, because teachers make learning interesting for them. Pupils demonstrate the school's core values of respect and cooperation in their everyday interactions. Teachers are kind and sensitive, yet firm, in their high expectations of pupils' achievements and behaviour. You and the other staff of the school are highly regarded by pupils and parents. One parent remarked in the survey, 'This is a happy and welcoming school where all the children are given fantastic opportunities to learn, grow and develop their potential.'

One key area for improvement cited in the last inspection report was pupils' mathematical skills. You have reviewed and developed the mathematics curriculum well. From 2013, pupils in Year 2 made faster progress in mathematics year on year until 2015. However, pupils' attainment in mathematics at the end of Year 2 in 2016 was disappointing. You and the subject leader have undertaken a thorough review of the test results and, from this information, have put together an effective plan to tackle weaknesses in the mathematics curriculum. For example, you identified that problem-solving skills and pupils' understanding of number fractions were the weaker elements in the test responses by pupils.

The teaching of these areas has been strengthened this year throughout the school.

Comprehensive tracking systems show that the impact of the school's work to improve pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge through bespoke interventions has been successful. Pupils are encouraged to apply their skills and think through their responses to problems. Pupils, however, are not as fluent as they could be in their recall of multiplication tables by the end of Year 2. This means that they are slower to tackle some word problems than they otherwise could be.

Another area for improvement identified at the last inspection was the monitoring of teaching, which was not as effective as it could be. Since the inspection you have developed a robust system to check the quality of teaching. You use a range of evidence to evaluate teaching, including lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work and careful analysis of information about pupils' attainment and progress. Subject leaders also carry out regular checks on the quality of teaching. This combined information has given you an accurate insight into the strengths and weaknesses of teaching, which you have used to devise specific training sessions. Teaching is now of a consistently high quality, as a result.

Published information suggested that disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are absent from school regularly. Further scrutiny of your records shows that you have taken all reasonable steps to tackle persistent absences by the small number of these pupils and have gained some success with one or two. The rates of persistent absence from school for these groups of pupils have much improved this year.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, as the designated safeguarding leader, and the deputy leader have developed a strong culture of safety in the school. You have ensured that all staff have read the key policies and guidance to keep children safe and have also understood them. Consequently, staff are fully aware of their responsibilities. You and other members of staff are vigilant to pupils' needs and concerns. The governing body checks safeguarding arrangements effectively. Governors are knowledgeable about safeguarding matters. You keep meticulous records about pupils for whom you have concerns. They show that pupils are provided with regular support and that external agencies are engaged in a timely manner.

The school's website provides a comprehensive range of information to help parents to keep their children safe. You understand the risks facing pupils when using the internet and have developed the curriculum well to help protect pupils, especially when they use devices and games online. Community police have delivered a range of presentations to pupils about other risks that they may face, such as crossing the road and 'stranger danger'. Pupils are happy and feel safe. They trust the adults in the school to listen to their concerns. Poor behaviour in the school is rare. Parents spoken with say that they have no concerns with behaviour in the school and that their child is well cared for.

Inspection findings

- You have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This view is borne out of an effective system to check the effectiveness of teaching and pupils' performance. The systems to assure the quality of the school's work are effective. The improvement plan is effective, as the key areas of weakness are improving rapidly.
- The governing body is made up of knowledgeable and experienced members, some of whom have a strong educational background. Governors undertake regular visits to the school to check the work of the school. Governors support and challenge you in equal measure, and this has contributed to the school's continuing improvement. They have also encouraged the high levels of support that the school achieves from parents and the local community.
- Subject leaders are highly reflective. They have developed their knowledge of the curriculum by working alongside colleagues from other schools and improving their practice. They have improved the quality of teaching and support throughout the school and, consequently, pupils' outcomes in English, mathematics and science have also improved.
- Children in early years are supported well to achieve a good level of development. The early years leader and teaching assistants plan learning effectively, because they know the children's strengths and weaknesses extremely well. Play resources are chosen well and engage children in learning. Children are happy and polite. Children enjoy make-believe play as much as writing, reading and playing with numbers. All make good progress from their different starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in the school. There is no difference in attainment between them and their peers. This is because you have devised an effective plan to support their individual needs. Teaching assistants are very effective.
- Pupils reach high standards in phonics and have done so for some years. This is because teachers are highly trained and effective in tackling pupils' weaknesses in reading. Pupils in the Reception class are prepared well for Year 1.
- Unvalidated test results for 2017 suggest that pupils' attainment in all subjects at the end of key stage 1 has improved compared to the previous year. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is now as high as it is in English.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They are fully engaged in lessons and are keen to do well. They help each other readily and work sensibly during independent tasks.
- You receive valuable guidance from the diocese's educational support and the local authority's appointed school improvement partner, who is a current headteacher of a local school. Each has undertaken a review of the school and provided you with important guidance and steps for further improvement. The diocese adviser has provided teachers with valuable opportunities to observe good practice at other schools. An experienced science leader from the local authority adviser's own school has also supported the science leader in developing the curriculum further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- Teachers create more opportunities for pupils to become fluent and confident in their use of multiplication tables.

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

Yours sincerely

Zarina Connolly
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held interviews with you, subject leaders for English and mathematics and three governors. Working alongside you, I observed pupils' learning, including in the early years, during which I spoke with pupils and examined their workbooks. I spoke with four parents. I evaluated a range of school documentation including the school's self-evaluation, monitoring records, information about pupils' attainment and progress, attendance logs, school policies and safeguarding records. I took account of the 23 responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 15 responses to the free-text facility. I considered responses from eight members of staff to an online survey. No responses were received from the pupil survey.