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Dear Miss Travi

Short inspection of Bushmead Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 29 November 2017 with Andrew Maher, Ofsted Inspector, 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 July 2013.

This school continues to be good.

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

At Bushmead Primary School, pupils are well behaved, courteous, attend well and enjoy coming to school. Children and pupils are enthusiastic about learning, try hard and take pride in their work. Consequently, by the time they reach the end of each key stage, such as the end of Reception, Year 2 and Year 6, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Ninety-nine per cent of the parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, indicate that they would recommend Bushmead Primary school to others. This reflects the very positive attitudes of parents, who are supportive of the school and very pleased with the education it provides for their children. As a recently appointed headteacher at Bushmead, you have very quickly secured the confidence of parents in the new leadership and management of the school. Parents are full of praise for the quality of education that their children are receiving. They appreciate the 'kindness and care' given by teachers and consider Bushmead an 'amazing' school. Parental views are accurately captured in the following comment made by one parent: 'If a school's main aim is to inspire a love of learning and the ability to discover ideas, information and understanding with increasing independence then Bushmead more than fulfils this objective.'

The well-established staff team, motivated by your energy and enthusiasm, is

working effectively to take collective responsibility for pupils' progress and personal development. You are successfully galvanising the team to support you in your work. Staff feel valued and supported to develop in their roles. Consequently, the staff questionnaires demonstrate that morale is high and it was clear during the inspection that all staff are united in their ambition to improve the school's work for the benefit of the children and pupils at Bushmead. This is creating strong capacity for further, rapid improvement.

You have worked hard to get to know staff, pupils and parents as well as the context of the local community you are serving, very well. The overwhelming view of parents is that you have 'made a positive first impression'. You have dedicated time and brought 'fresh eyes' to finding out what already works at the school and what could be improved to ensure that children and pupils receive an even better education. You are not worried about challenging the status quo as you remain focused on ensuring that all children and pupils develop as successful young people of the future.

Governors are effective in their roles. The chair of the governing body has a very perceptive and realistic view of what the school does well and what is required to secure further improvements. New governors are being well inducted and are already demonstrating their strong sense of commitment to, and support for, the school. They bring a range of skills and experiences to the role. Collectively, leaders and governors provide clear direction to the school.

You, leaders and governors have an astute understanding about what needs to improve in the school and are making good progress in improving the school further and since its previous inspection. Leaders are working effectively together and are ambitious about pupils achieving success in their learning. You have identified that the curriculum needs further development across the school so that pupils have more opportunities to practise their skills in depth across a wide range of subjects. You are also unstintingly focused on improving pupils' progress at key stage 2 so that more achieve the higher standards.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school and the safety and welfare of children and pupils is everyone's priority. The checks on staff to ensure they are fit to work with children are thoroughly undertaken to ensure all adults are suitable to work with children. Additionally, you and governors check and ask probing questions to ensure that, at all levels across the school, safeguarding is effective.

A strength of the school is the pastoral care and support. This includes the inclusion team with the main designated safeguarding leader who is also the school's family support worker. Staff act swiftly when necessary and liaise well with other agencies to ensure that pupils in need receive timely and effective support.

All staff receive regular and appropriate training in keeping pupils safe from a variety of risks, including those related to online safety, and extremism and radicalisation. Staff also receive timely safeguarding updates to meet any new requirements. Additionally, staff know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being and are steadfast in their knowledge that that they are all responsible and accountable for children and pupils' safety and protection.

Inspection findings

- A focus during this inspection was to evaluate the capacity of the new leadership team to sustain the good standard of education seen during the previous inspection. This was because you have recently begun your headship, following in the footsteps of long-established and stable prior leadership.
- You report that you have felt extremely well supported during your first term. Governors worked diligently to secure a leader they considered best suited the needs of their school. In making this decision, governors then planned carefully your induction and transition into the role. As a result, you have settled well and already have had a positive impact on the school's performance and work.
- The local authority is providing effective support and advice to ensure that you have access to any specialist guidance or resources you request in order to successfully work on the identified priorities you have highlighted.
- Your well-considered induction to Bushmead has ensured that you have already gained a confident grasp on the school's performance. You demonstrate the passion and knowledge to rapidly secure further improvements. Subsequently, the change of leadership is positively sustaining and enhancing a high-quality education for the children and pupils.
- Another line of enquiry during this inspection was to check how leaders are ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently effective so children and pupils achieve well. This was an area to continue to improve following the previous inspection.
- You have not wasted any time getting to know how effective teaching and learning are at Bushmead. You have already established raised expectations by implementing rigorous 'teaching reviews' that comprise of a variety of activities that 'look at learning' to check the quality of teaching and learning. Areas of strength are celebrated and shared with other staff and actions to improve are clearly identified. Feedback to teachers is also given and followed up soon after to ensure that teachers are taking notice of guidance and developing their practice quickly.
- You have introduced a carefully chosen, coherent whole-school approach to monitoring that all leaders and teachers understand. As a result, in a short time, the effectiveness of increased, focused monitoring is clearly evident and it is serving to develop teachers well, consequently improving pupil outcomes.
- Linked to the effectiveness of teaching and learning, another specific line of enquiry I had focused upon was the progress pupils make, particularly in key stage 2. This is because results of national assessments and tests indicate that

children in Reception and pupils in key stage 1 attain well and make consistently good progress. However, results at the end of key stage 2 indicate that pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of from their starting points on entry to Year 3 through to the end of Year 6. Although pupils leave Year 6 attaining at or above national average in reading, writing and mathematics, the progress they make to do this is not as good as it could and should be.

- You had already identified that, over time, pupils' achievement is strong in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1. In key stage 2, however, you identified quickly upon arrival at the school that pupils are capable of more rapid progress. As a result, you have raised expectations of staff and are rapidly improving provision to accelerate pupils' progress across key stage 2.
- The school's most current assessment information shows that leaders and teachers are working closely together to set more challenging and aspirational targets for pupils. Recent monitoring shows they are also making more precise checks on the progress pupils are making, and identifying actions to support those who they know can do even better. As a result, there is evidence that key stage 2 pupils are making better progress.
- You also undertook an extensive and detailed audit of the curriculum provision, especially about how well pupils' core skills of literacy and numeracy were being developed. You took action to develop the curriculum so that pupils had more opportunities to practise their new skills in a broader curriculum. This is starting to support pupils in lessons to develop skills in more depth, especially in key stage 2.
- The final line of enquiry for this inspection focused on the effectiveness of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. This was because, although pupils in key stage 1 achieve well, the small group of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not appear to have done as well as others.
- Again, you are very aware of what the assessment information tells you about the achievement of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Consequently, you have already evaluated the provision for these pupils while carrying out your monitoring. You conclude that there may have been an over reliance of the pupils on adult support and, additionally, the deployment of additional adults has not been as effective as it could be in order to maximise the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Following this discovery early on, you and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) have already started to provide additional training and support to teachers about how best to use teaching assistants and to effectively utilise the many strengths of the support staff to best help children and pupils.
- During the inspection, both inspectors saw examples of teaching assistants being well deployed in class and effectively supporting children and pupils. All adults show they are very keen to work hard and be the best they can in their roles. This was clearly evidenced throughout the inspection and, as a consequence, the pupils they were working with were moving forward well in their learning. In addition, when we scrutinised children's and pupils' written work, it was clear that

pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress this year.

- This ethos and attitude, alongside you and your leaders' support and encouragement, is leading to all adults focusing on learning and this is successfully leading to an increase in the amount of progress pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- their work to develop the curriculum continues to give pupils more opportunities to practise skills and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in the wider curriculum subjects
- pupils' progress continues to quicken in key stage 2 so that an increasing proportion of pupils reach the higher standards they are capable of in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

Yours sincerely

Tracy Fielding
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I discussed with you the lines of enquiry for this inspection, the school's internal evaluation of its performance, plans for future improvement, and information about current pupils' progress and attainment.

Meetings were held with you, your deputy headteacher and four assistant headteachers (two of whom also held the roles of SENCo and curriculum leader). I also met with the chair of the governing body while Andrew Maher, my team inspector, held a telephone conversation with another governor.

I met with the local authority representative to discuss how the local authority supports the school.

Andrew Maher met with a group of pupils and heard a couple of pupils read. He discussed their reading habits and evaluated how well they apply their phonics knowledge to their reading.

I gathered a range of evidence to evaluate the capacity of leadership and management and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This included a tour of the school and visits to classrooms by both inspectors.

We looked at pupils' current work while visiting classrooms.

Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were scrutinised, including mandatory checks made during the recruitment of new staff. A discussion was held with you and the family support worker as one of the school's designated safeguarding leads.

The views of 81 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account, as well as the 79 responses parents made using the free-text service. We also considered the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.

We looked at the 30 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and the 24 responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.