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Mr Lester Hunt
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Lester Hunt

Short inspection of Bishopton Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 5 December 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.

Your inspirational leadership underpins the continued success of the school. Pupils, parents and staff feel strongly about the high-quality care, guidance and purpose that you provide. Leaders and staff are completely committed to getting the best for pupils. As a result, pupils are thriving and the school's reputation continues to grow.

Parents who completed Ofsted's survey Parent View and those who spoke to the lead inspector were unanimous in their positive view of the school. Comments included: 'It is a hidden gem, the headteacher knows each individual child and the teachers take good care of pupils' and 'We are impressed by the school, it achieves the right combination of child-centred education and academic challenge.'

You and your leadership team know the school well. You work with staff and pupils to evaluate what works well and what needs to be developed. Improvement plans identify and successfully address relevant priorities. You carry out precise checks on the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils are making. Feedback to teachers is precise so that they know exactly what they do well and how they need to improve. Regular and meaningful training also helps teachers to refine their classroom practice. Your strategies for improvement are proving to be successful and as a result teaching continues to develop and pupils enjoy learning.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are strengths. Pupils are polite, articulate and curious about learning new things. They appreciate the staff and the good teaching that they receive. Comments from pupils included, 'I like how teachers get to the point and help us understand our learning.' High-quality relationships between staff and pupils provide a strong foundation for pupils' happiness and their good progress. Staff take time to get to know pupils as individuals, so that they can provide a high level of care. Vulnerable pupils are particularly well supported.

Pupils make good progress across the school because teachers' subject knowledge is good, and they give clear explanations. Outcomes by the end of key stage 2 have been particularly positive. For example, in mathematics, pupils' progress has been in the top 20% of all schools nationally over the last three years. You and your deputy headteacher reacted well to the increase in demands of the mathematics curriculum by placing a greater emphasis on the application of mathematics skills. Teachers provide regular high-quality opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical understanding through a range of problem-solving activities.

You have ensured that the early years foundation stage provides a wonderful start to children's education at Bishopton Primary School. Teaching is stimulating and adults provide excellent care. As a result, children are settled, happy and enjoy learning. Activities are thoughtful and enable pupils to be challenged across the different areas of learning.

Pupils develop good knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of subjects. They talked in great depth about how their visit to a gurdwara has supported their learning about Sikhism, and how inspired they were by a Buddhist who visited school. Pupils also appreciate the practical lessons that they receive in art, music and science. Educational trips, such as a visit to a space centre, help to motivate pupils and provide a rich learning experience for them.

Pupils' personal development is well catered for through clubs and enrichment activities. Staff's commitment ensures that there is high attendance at clubs such as gardening, choir, football, art and drama. Pupils' creativity is enhanced by music lessons and regular drama performances across the school. Staff have made strong links with the Royal Shakespeare Company. As a result, pupils go to the theatre regularly and some pupils have performed at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. You also ensure that physical education and sport are given a high priority.

You have responded well to the areas for improvement highlighted in the previous Ofsted report. Teachers have a good understanding of the demands of the curriculum and they use this to plan work that matches well to pupils' abilities. As a result, pupils are receiving a more consistent level of challenge in their learning. A particular success is the standards reached for the most able pupils. In 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards was above the national average at the end of key stages 1 and 2 for reading, writing and mathematics.

You have also ensured that teaching assistants receive more training and support to develop their practice. They are now directly involved in planning lessons and are

deployed efficiently according to their particular skills. Teaching assistants' proactive support in class and within the range of additional support has a positive impact on pupils' progress.

Governors are committed to the school and have a good understanding of its strengths. Governors with specific responsibility are active in their roles. For example, the safeguarding governor carries out appropriate checks in school. However, governors do not have a strong enough understanding of some of the areas for improvement in the school. Their knowledge of information about pupils' performance is not good enough. As a result, they do not provide sufficient challenge to leaders about weaknesses that arise.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and the staff ensure that arrangements for safeguarding are thorough and well organised. As a result, pupils are kept safe from harm. Staff receive regular training and have a good understanding of their responsibilities. They report concerns diligently to you as the designated safeguarding leader. You follow up concerns tenaciously and involve external agencies when it is necessary to do so. Other designated safeguarding leads are appropriately trained and add further capacity to the safeguarding culture that exists in the school.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Staff teach safety through assemblies and in different subjects of the curriculum. Pupils are very clear about how to stay safe on the internet and know they must not release any personal details to people who they do not know. They also have a good knowledge of different types of bullying and how to seek help from a trusted adult if they see or experience bullying. Pupils feel that bullying is extremely rare and that if it does happen, adults quickly address it.

Inspection findings

- A key focus for the inspection was the effectiveness of procedures for identifying pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and the quality of the provision made for them. Leaders and staff put in place precise additional support for pupils, which enables them to make good progress in their learning. Pupils who have complex needs are well provided for through their education, health and care plan. Leaders make good use of specialist external services, including the on-site specialist language unit, to help pupils overcome barriers to learning and participate in classrooms. The special educational needs coordinator works effectively with staff and parents to identify pupils who need to go on to the special needs register. A positive focus on early identification ensures that pupils receive timely support. However, occasionally, some pupils in key stage 2 remain on the register when their attainment and progress suggest that they do not need to be. Some of the additional support for pupils is evaluated well to measure the impact. For example, pupils who have emotional and social needs have assessments to check how well they are doing. The impact of other additional support is not sufficiently analysed.

- In 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check dropped below the national average. You provided convincing information to show why this dip occurred. There were several pupils with complex needs who could not access the content. However, you also acknowledged that the quality of phonics teaching could improve. As a result, you put in place additional training for staff, so that teaching could be even more precise. We observed effective phonics teaching in Reception and in key stage 1.
- We also looked at the quality of teaching in key stage 1 to see if middle ability pupils are being challenged enough to reach the expected standards. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in reading dipped below the national average. You have invested well in reading resources and put greater emphasis on developing pupils' comprehension skills. Some of this work is starting to have a positive impact on pupils' reading skills. The most able pupils are being challenged well because more pupils achieved the higher standard in 2017 than the national average. However, there needs to be consistent challenge throughout key stage 1, so that more pupils attain the expected standards, particularly in reading.
- You acknowledged that historically attendance rates have not been good enough. In 2016, overall attendance and the persistent absence of key groups were in the bottom 10% of schools nationally. You now check and analyse attendance more thoroughly. Parents who are not ensuring that their child attends regularly are given appropriate challenge and support. The turnaround has been substantial. In 2017, overall attendance has risen by two percentage points and persistent absence for key groups has dramatically improved.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- governors develop a deeper understanding of information about pupils' performance, so that they can provide sufficient challenge to leaders on where improvement is needed
- teaching in key stage 1 provides consistent challenge, so that more pupils reach the expected standards, particularly in reading
- there is sufficient evaluation of the impact of additional support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
- pupils are taken off the special needs register when it is appropriate to do so.

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

Yours sincerely

Matt Meckin
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and other leaders. I also met with the chair of governors and two other governors. I spoke to pupils informally and formally. I made short visits to nine lessons with you and looked at pupils' books. I spoke to parents at the start of the day and considered 33 free-text responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. I also considered the responses from the online questionnaire completed by pupils and staff.

I scrutinised various documents, including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plan, information about teachers' performance management and the documents that you use to check the quality of teaching. You shared with me the most recent assessments of pupils' attainment and progress. We discussed the national test results and assessments undertaken by pupils in 2016 and 2017. I also looked at the school's published information on the website, as well as minutes of governing body meetings and information about attendance, behaviour and safety.