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Mrs Rebecca Birch
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Birch

Short inspection of Bugbrooke Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 February 2019, 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 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, your deputy and governors provide effective leadership and are aspirational for the school and determined to realise future improvements. The governing body makes regular visits to school so that it fully understands the work you do. Since the previous inspection, leaders have successfully acted upon the areas to improve. Leaders' plans for school improvements now have clear targets and success criteria, so that the impact of actions taken can be precisely measured.

Since September 2018, you and your new leadership team have implemented several changes to the school that have been well received by staff, pupils, parents and carers, and governors. The vast majority of staff feel a strong sense of pride in being a member of staff at Bugbrooke Community Primary School and feel that leaders support their well-being. One parent commented on the new leadership team as being a 'breath of fresh air'.

The school has designed and implemented a purposeful and relevant curriculum that links various subjects together and creates purposeful learning. During the time of the inspection, the pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 were learning about the Romans. To enhance their learning, the shared area was creatively decorated as an Ancient Roman village. This created an inspiring learning environment and allowed pupils to be transported back in time to help them experience what life might have been like during that period in history. 'Wow days', which celebrate the cross-curricular topics

taught, are popular with both pupils and parents. Pupils spoken to also say that they enjoy the challenges provided in their lessons as they help them to 'deepen their knowledge'. One parent made the comment, 'My daughter comes home feeling proud of herself.'

You have been tenacious in your desire to connect with parents and families. The vast majority of parents appreciate the nurturing environment of the school. Summing up the views of many parents, one stated, 'I am proud to send my child to Bugbrooke,' while another commented on the 'happy and supportive atmosphere' of the school. Weekly open mornings allow parents to come into their child's class to see what they are learning and to speak with the teachers about the progress their child is making. Reading and mathematics workshops have also been provided for parents to help them understand how their children are taught. These are all very well attended. Nearly half of all pupils' parents or grandparents attended a recent mathematics workshop held at school.

The current behaviour system is based on the school's values of friendship, respect, excellence and perseverance. Pupils are divided into four houses that are named after people who have demonstrated these values during their lives. Pupils work together to collect points for their house and earn rewards. Pupils spoken to were very clear about their understanding of the school's rules and how these relate to the school's values. They were supportive of the system and liked that adults do not accept poor behaviour and reward those who demonstrate good behaviour. Consequently, pupils are polite, well mannered and friendly. They generally conduct themselves well at different times of the school day, including at playtime and during lunch. No poor behaviour was observed.

Children receive a good start to their education in early years. Teachers create a purposeful and stimulating learning environment that celebrates children's work and interests. Work in current books and in electronic records shows that they are making good progress. The majority of parents are actively involved in supporting the assessments of their children and regularly add photos and comments to their child's records. Phonics is taught effectively. Children use their knowledge of the sounds that letters represent to support them in their early spelling and reading skills. Most children enter key stage 1 with a good level of development.

Safeguarding is effective.

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders are tenacious in their approach to safeguarding. Records show that any safeguarding concerns are dealt with in a timely manner. This is because all staff not only understand their responsibility and the processes to follow, but do so vigilantly. Leaders make sure that staff safeguarding training is up to date and that staff and governors are aware of new guidance and statutory information. The home-school link worker has developed a positive working relationship with pupils and families, allowing her to support them when needed.

Pupils were keen to tell me how safe they feel in school. They used words such as

'amazing', 'exciting' and 'encouraging' to describe their school. Pupils understand what bullying is and say that rare instances are quickly and effectively dealt with. Pupils spoken to were unanimous in saying that they had an adult in school who they felt comfortable speaking with if they ever have a worry or concern. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly because they say teachers make learning fun.

Inspection findings

- Since the previous inspection, the school has improved outcomes for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2018, pupils' overall attainment both at the expected standard and at the higher standard was either in line with or above the national figures.
- School information and work in pupils' books indicate that the pupils are making secure progress in mathematics. Pupils are given opportunities to problem solve and to apply their knowledge in different contexts, allowing them to deepen their understanding of key mathematical concepts.
- Leaders have implemented strategies to improve the progress in writing across the school for all pupils. For example, writing is now linked to real-life experiences, allowing pupils to have a clearer understanding of purpose and audience in what they write. Pupils are provided with opportunities to write independently and at length across the curriculum. Although over the past three years the progress boys make in writing has been weaker than that of girls, leaders have not strategically targeted boys' progress. While the strategies that have been implemented to improve writing across the school have been effective overall, boys continue to make less progress than girls in writing, particularly in key stage 2.
- Approaches to teaching and expectations for basic punctuation and spelling are not consistent across the school. Work in books shows that sometimes errors or misconceptions in basic punctuation and spelling are not addressed by adults. As a result, not all pupils are maximising their capacity to learn from their mistakes and errors are repeated over time.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning effectively during lessons to assess pupils' understanding of concepts. Pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking both verbally during lessons, as well as in writing in their books. Teachers use this to adjust their teaching to suit the needs of the pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- monitoring of the progress that girls and boys make is precise, so that leaders and governors can hold those responsible to account for the impact of their actions on pupils' learning and progress
- a consistent approach to teaching and assessing spelling and basic punctuation is undertaken, so that pupils' accuracy increases and these skills are embedded in pupils' writing.

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

Yours sincerely

Heidi Malliff
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher and shared my key lines of enquiry. I also met with a representative from the local authority, four members of the governing body, your home-school link worker and two middle leaders. I spoke formally with a group of Year 6 pupils and informally to many others throughout the day. I considered the 75 responses of parents from Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, as well as the 73 free-text comments. I also spoke to several parents at the start of the school day. I visited all classes in the school, spending a short time in each, and looked at a sample of pupils' work. I viewed a range of documents, including an evaluation of the school's performance and plans for further improvement, behaviour logs, attendance figures and information regarding pupils' progress across the school.