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Mrs Susy Jagger
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Dear Mrs Jagger

Short inspection of Brodetsky Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 June 2018, 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 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, supported by increasingly able senior and middle leaders, have tackled the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, especially in mathematics. The progress pupils were making declined after the previous inspection, especially in key stage 2. You have been successful in reinvigorating teachers and helping them to improve their skills. Consequently, pupils' progress in reading and writing is improving. Your approach to assessment is resulting in an accurate picture of how well different groups of pupils are doing. As a result, leaders' actions to improve pupils' progress are more sharply focused and effective.

Governors hold leaders effectively to account. When they noticed a decline in standards and progress, they reflected on the quality of their own work and made significant changes to their approach and structure. As a result, they are a leaner, more dynamic group and more effective in holding the school to account.

Leaders used their rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems to spot pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills were underdeveloped. They have improved these through a range of strategies, including staff training and individual support. Consequently, pupils now routinely work through word problems and show reasons for their answers. Occasionally, middle leaders focus too much on strengths and are not sufficiently candid in highlighting what needs to improve.

Since you were appointed in 2017, you have been successful in improving the school's engagement with parents so that the majority of parents are very supportive of the school. A few parents continue to be dissatisfied with the way the school handles their concerns. However, you and your staff are committed and effective in resolving any issues.

You and your team noticed that boys were not doing as well as girls in developing fluent reading and writing skills. You have reviewed the curriculum and made changes to make learning more exciting. Pupils have regular opportunities to apply their reading, writing and mathematical skills across different subjects. As a result, boys are more engaged and enthusiastic about their learning. Boys' writing is improving quickly.

You and your staff have used the pupil premium funding well to help individual pupils. For example, pupils have benefited from small group work to improve their reading skills, while others have made gains improving their confidence because of adults' careful work with them in the nurture group. However, leaders' plans and evaluations of the effectiveness of this work are underdeveloped. This hampers leaders and governors in evaluating the impact the funding is having on improving the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Your work to ensure that the most able pupils are challenged more consistently has had some success. Teachers typically expect the most able pupils to take on challenging tasks. However, this work has not had sufficient impact on making sure the most able pupils reach the higher standards. You recognise there is more to do to raise teachers' expectations of what most-able pupils can do. Teachers' questioning skills are generally sound, but not sufficiently probing to get the best from the most able pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are confident about spotting the signs and symptoms which could indicate pupils are at risk of harm. They know how to make referrals and do so in a timely fashion. Leaders follow up referrals thoroughly and make pupils' safety their priority. You and your leaders do not give up when there are delays in getting support from external agencies. Your staff are dogged in finding other sources of support by working with the local authority or various charities so that pupils and their families are well supported.

You responded quickly when a recent audit of the school's safeguarding systems identified internet safety as an area for improvement. The pupils I spoke with were able to describe how to keep themselves safe online because of assemblies and lessons focused on this aspect.

Leaders have had marked success in reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent, from being well above the national average in 2016, to well below this academic year.

Inspection findings

- Teachers are using the new curriculum to find new ways of making learning interesting and fun. Pupils read classic texts and explore the themes within them across different subject areas. For example, pupils in Year 6 have been reading 'Goodnight, Mr Tom' and have produced high-quality writing about what life was like for evacuees. Boys are finding this approach motivating. When we looked in books we noted some marked improvements in the quality and range of boys' writing.
- Children in the early years make a strong start in developing their reading and writing skills. There are opportunities to read and write throughout the provision. Children can explore writing with different materials whatever the activity. For example, children were exploring materials gathered from a wood in the outside area. They used feathers, twigs, water and paint to write while adults skilfully encouraged them to use letters they had learned in the classroom.
- Pupils are developing a love of reading. There are plenty of resources available for pupils to practise their reading skills or simply get stuck into a good book. Teachers guide pupils effectively to books that are matched to their ability. When I heard pupils read they were able to use their phonics skills effectively to tackle unfamiliar words and spoke enthusiastically about reading.
- Disadvantaged pupils are also improving their reading, writing and mathematical skills. While the school's information shows there are some differences between the progress they make and that of their peers, this varies from year to year. When we looked at the school's plans and evaluations of how effectively the pupil premium funding is used, we agreed that they were not sufficiently detailed or evaluative. These lapses in sharp evaluation hamper how well you, other leaders and governors can judge the extent of improvements.
- Teachers have improved the level of challenge they provide for the most able pupils, but as we visited lessons, we noted that teachers' expectations are still not high enough. We noticed that teachers' questions are not routinely matched to pupils' ability nor were they sufficiently probing. When I looked at pupils' work with middle leaders we could see that there were times when the most able pupils were given unnecessarily scaffolded work. Middle leaders are accurate in their evaluations, but sometimes, do not give enough emphasis to areas which need improving.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders' planning and evaluations of the use of the pupil premium are sharpened
- teachers develop their questioning skills
- teachers' expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve are more ambitious
- middle leaders' evaluations of teaching and learning are improved.

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

Yours sincerely

Joan Hewitt
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and other senior and middle leaders and two members of the governing body. I met with a representative of the local authority. I visited lessons with you and the deputy headteacher, looked at pupils' work with leaders and spoke informally with pupils. I heard two pupils read. I looked at the results from Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) and considered 78 responses, including 26 written comments. I examined a range of documents, including information about safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.