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Mr Andrew Moorcroft
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Moorcroft

Short inspection of Boughton Leigh Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 2 February 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 July 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. This is because you, and your deputy headteacher, set high expectations for your staff and have put in place clear structures for teachers to follow. You frequently check that staff are following agreed procedures. This leads to good-quality teaching across the school.

You systematically set about tackling the areas identified for improvement at the previous inspection. As a result of your actions, the quality of teachers' questioning has improved significantly. Questions now challenge pupils to think deeply and explain their reasoning. Pupils use discussion as an effective tool to help them learn with, and from, each other. The teaching of reading has improved and now caters well for pupils of all backgrounds and abilities. Pupils' attendance is now tracked meticulously. Staff work closely with parents to help them bring their children to school regularly and on time. Many respond well to this support. Nevertheless, some families still persist in allowing their children to stay off school when they are fit to attend, or in taking their children to visit relatives abroad during term time.

Leaders, including governors, are outward looking and ambitious for the school to do as well as it can for its pupils. You have sought ways to improve the quality of education further, even where outcomes for pupils are high. For example, you recently introduced a new approach to teaching phonics in order to give pupils a more secure foundation for their reading and writing skills. Pupils' results in the

Year 1 phonics screening check have been consistently above the national figure in recent years, yet you are determined that no single pupil will fail to meet the expected level in future. Early signs are positive. I observed consistently effective phonics teaching in all year groups during the inspection.

You have created a vibrant environment which motivates pupils and supports their learning. Welcoming classrooms contain a wealth of helpful resources. Good use is made of space, taking pupils' needs into account. For example, you identified that the open-plan design of the building occasionally makes it difficult for some pupils to concentrate. You set aside appropriate spaces for pupils to work in smaller groups or individually with an adult when needed. Governors have supported you in being innovative in the use of space and resources. The shining example of this is the popular 'Library Bus'. Pupils and staff alike are proud to have this converted London bus as their library. It provides a stimulating space in which pupils develop an excitement about books and a love of reading.

Pupils are happy at school and enjoy their learning. They behave exceptionally well in lessons and learn to concentrate very well from an early stage. Children in the Nursery sit and listen to stories without fidgeting. In the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2, pupils focus on their work without the need for reminders. Pupils are well mannered towards adults and generally get on well together.

You provided effective training for teachers to implement a new approach to teaching mathematics, aimed at helping pupils meet the enhanced expectations of the new national curriculum. You chose the selected approach carefully, making sure it would fit the particular needs of your pupils. As a result, they are learning to talk confidently about numbers and use mathematical knowledge fluently when solving problems. You are aware that teachers need training to give them a similar degree of confidence in understanding the age-related requirements for pupils' writing.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are robust. School staff get to know families very well and consider carefully how to support them in order to meet the needs of their children. All staff are vigilant to spotting concerns. Procedures for reporting worries are followed immediately and thoroughly. The designated leads for safeguarding understand their role well. They follow up concerns tenaciously, making sure relevant outside agencies are involved as needed. Records of meetings and actions are detailed and filed meticulously. As a result of these effective processes, pupils are well cared for.

Staff are well trained in keeping pupils safe. In addition to the required levels of training, many staff are trained to higher levels in child protection, first aid and safer recruitment. Checks on all adults connected to the school are extremely thorough, going beyond minimum requirements.

Inspection findings

- When children join the school in the Nursery or Reception classes, many have skills that are weaker than those of typical three- or four-year-olds. Some have particular difficulty in communicating with adults or in managing their personal and hygiene needs. Wide differences exist in the skills of different groups of children. By the end of the Reception Year, these differences are diminishing. Disadvantaged children are beginning to catch up with others and boys are beginning to catch up with girls.
- By the time they leave the school, there are no significant differences in outcomes for different groups of pupils. Where differences exist, they are mostly reflective of specific difficulties experienced by particular pupils. Approaches to supporting individual pupils who struggle with learning are generally effective. When this has not been the case, leaders have identified the reason and taken remedial action.
- Leaders are alert to any differences that may emerge in outcomes for groups of pupils. Effective analysis of data about pupils' achievement is used to inform improvement planning. Actions taken often benefit all pupils, not just the specific group for whom they were designed. This is best exemplified in the positive impact of the Library Bus. Originally introduced to promote the benefits of reading to disadvantaged boys, it has motivated all pupils to enjoy reading.
- Pupils' books show that staff are less familiar with the requirements of the new national curriculum for writing than they are for those in mathematics. Teachers' assessments suggest that most pupils are meeting or exceeding the expected standard for their age. However, pupils' writing does not always contain the full range of grammar, punctuation, spelling or sentence types that are now expected by age seven. The school's judgements have been checked by the local authority several times in recent years. Nevertheless, pupils' work does not fully support this verification.
- One reason for the slight difference between outcomes for mathematics and writing is that leaders' checks on the quality of teaching have recently been focused on the implementation of the new approaches to teaching mathematics and phonics. Leaders have spent less time checking the quality of writing in pupils' books than they have done previously. Therefore, leaders have not picked up on the discrepancies between what the books show and the results of assessment.
- The school's attendance officer tracks the attendance of individual pupils closely. She is alert to unusual patterns of absence or prolonged periods of non-attendance. Together with the learning mentor, she identifies families who may be experiencing difficulty in bringing their children to school regularly and arranges support.
- Leaders promote attendance in many ways: from offering rewards for attending regularly, to providing taxi fares for pupils who live a long way from the school. Many families appreciate this support and their children's attendance has improved. However, some families continue to keep their children off school too often. Governors are aware that attendance rates still do not consistently match

national figures and are happy to consider taking innovative action to further reduce absence.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they keep seeking new ways of engaging with those families who are the hardest to convince that frequent attendance is essential
- pupils confidently and consistently apply appropriate grammar, punctuation, spelling and a variety of sentences to their writing across all subjects, in order to be judged as meeting the expectation for their age.

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

Sandra Hayes
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, your deputy headteacher, other school staff and two governors, including the chair. I spoke to a group of Year 2 pupils as they showed me around the school. I spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and at lunchtime, as well as to parents as they collected their children from school. I looked at the responses to the Parent View survey and your survey of parents' opinions. We visited lessons together. I looked at the work in a selection of pupils' books. I considered the school's self-evaluation and its plans for development. I took into account pupils' standards of attainment and rates of progress. I read a range of school policies, including those for safeguarding and child protection. The inspection focused particularly on differences in outcomes for groups of pupils as they progress through the school; the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements; and pupils' rates of attendance.