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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Claire Shortt
Headteacher
Broughton Primary School
Cransley Hill
Broughton
Kettering
Northamptonshire
NN14 1NB

Dear Mrs Shortt

Short inspection of Broughton Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 March 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 May 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Along with your deputy headteacher, governors and staff, you continue to provide strong leadership to this school. You have a focus on providing a broad and balanced education for the 'whole child'. You and your staff aim to develop a love for learning, reading and problem solving that will last your pupils for the rest of their lives. The school has improved significantly under your leadership and you are rightly proud of the progress of your pupils in recent years.

Broughton Primary School is a small village school so this focus on quality also includes preparation for life as good citizens in Britain and more widely. The school community has developed a slogan, 'A happy school, a brighter future' and this sums up the school well.

The strong sense of happiness starts at the school gate in the morning when you open the playground to the waiting parents and children and remain outside so that parents can talk to you. Children are happy to come to school and parents are happy to bring them. As one father said when asked, 'It's brilliant. That's all I've got to say.'

There is a balance between emphasis on pupils' progress and academic success and on wider development. Governors are in full support of this and talk about leaders who 'love their figures' but who know that there is more to the school than that. Children have experience of the arts and sport, and they have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument such as the violin, ukulele or drums, to play football, to act or to sing. Pupils can get involved in the school council and there are plenty of clubs and activities before, during and after school. A residential experience was described with great enthusiasm by a group of pupils. In lessons also there is colour brought to pupils' learning – you told me that when they learned about the Great Fire of London, there was a planned real fire.

Governors and senior leaders are clear about strengths and areas for improvement and have appropriate plans in place. Staff say that they feel lucky to work here, that the school is always striving to improve and they are always working on 'whatever the next thing is'. Governors are vigilant in ensuring that their pride in a good school does not become complacency. They work well with senior leaders to ensure that there are no surprises, checking with external published information and with governors at other schools to ensure that their judgements are correct.

The school has increased in popularity and so classes in the older year groups have filled up with children from a rich variety of backgrounds, often from outside the village. School outcomes have improved over the last few years. School leaders track the progress of each child in reading, writing, mathematics and science with regular assessments informing understanding of their progress. Leaders plan subsequent interventions to help pupils catch up where necessary. Tracking is very much focused on the individual child and you say that you are now working on a strengthened system that will enable you to track progress over the full seven years.

You and your team have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. For example, standards of attainment in mathematics have risen such that the 2016 key stage 2 mathematics progress score placed the school in the top 20% of schools nationally for mathematics. You have also worked hard to improve and develop different ways to communicate with parents and to listen to their views. These include texts, whiteboards, regular newsletters and conversations at parents' evenings and other events. This has been largely successful such that 95% of parents in the inspection survey said that they would recommend the school to other parents. You and your governors are aware that communication can be improved still further by ensuring that the information on the school website is current, accurate and easy for parents to find and understand.

Work in the early years has continued to be a strength of the school and lays down a solid foundation for the learning to come as the children get older. You analyse carefully any assessment information to identify next steps for improvement, such as responding to the relatively weaker progress of disadvantaged pupils in their reading and writing in 2016. As a result, staff are confident that they are developing the correct aspects of their work.

Despite these improvements, there is potential to refine teaching further. For example, although the new mathematics curriculum has enabled most pupils to thrive, the integration of problem solving and reasoning into learning has not yet been planned consistently for all pupils. You are also aware that pupils' responses to reading can be deepened and that there is scope to track pupils' progress in a wider range of subjects.

Safeguarding is effective.

You are the school's designated safeguarding officer, supported by another trained member of staff. You have detailed knowledge of the pupils in your school and the difficulties some of them face. You have ensured that staff and governors are well trained through face-to-face and online courses. Staff awareness of safeguarding issues is maintained at a high level because keeping pupils safe is a discussion point in training throughout the year.

The safeguarding policy and procedures are up to date and take account of the most recent legislation. You ensure that safeguarding records are securely stored and that you have a detailed knowledge of the school's work with other agencies to ensure that each individual child is protected. You take decisive and persistent action so that vulnerable pupils receive the help they need.

Pupils in the school say that they feel safe and are able to tell an adult if they are worried about a friend or themselves. They have also been taught to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils were confident to talk about using the internet safely and knew not to share personal information. One pupil had developed a question that could be asked to check whether friends are who they say they are. The school has supported parents with this so that the pupils are as safe as possible when using computers at home.

The pupils spoken to were happy to come to school and were clear that any name-calling is rare and quickly dealt with. They say that you tell them that they must have 'kind hands and feet'. As a result of these examples and other ongoing care throughout the school, leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- Pupils' understanding and progress in mathematics have improved since the last inspection. Work in books shows careful and regular practice of new skills and techniques. This led to very strong progress for Year 6 pupils in 2016. Demand is pitched according to the needs and age of the child. However, there is not yet consistent integration of problem-solving and reasoning activities into regular classroom learning for all pupils.

- In 2016, disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 did not appear to make as much progress as others in reading and writing at the highest standards. However, numbers are very small. More widely, in-school information suggested that results might fall in 2016. You planned a range of careful extra help and you were all very pleased when the forecasted drop did not happen. This year, you have identified aspects of reading where further improvements can be made and have adjusted teaching accordingly. Leaders and governors have ensured that there are well-trained adults working alongside pupils who are able to make a positive impact on learning. For example, in a lesson on writing in the future tense, adults could be heard challenging pupils to develop their sentences.
- In addition to reading, writing and mathematics, pupils are able to learn about a wide range of other subjects and this enriches their time in school. Subjects such as history or geography are blended creatively in series of lessons on a topic such as 'castles'. As a result, it is not easy for progress in any one subject to be disentangled. You have developed portfolios of work to show the pupils and teachers the quality that is expected. The topic work is also used to provide literacy and numeracy opportunities. However, despite these constructive experiences, leaders do not have an overview of progress in these other subjects, with the exception of science, and so cannot fully identify strengths and weaknesses for individual pupils.
- A great deal of thought has been given to the way parents are involved in the life of the school. Parent governors have put themselves forward in recent years. There have also been new methods introduced such as texts and whiteboards. Many parents appreciate your availability to them. The vast majority of parents say that they are very happy and have 'absolutely no complaints'. A very small number would like to feel even more involved in decisions. Leaders could ensure even better communication through the school website where documents are not always as accurate as required, or published in a timely fashion. Governors had already noticed this and have introduced a new system to regularly check compliance with the latest requirements.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- continue to respond to the challenges of the new mathematics curriculum and assessment system by integrating reasoning and problem-solving experiences into the learning of all children
- consider how best to evaluate the progress of children in a wider range of subjects so that successful strategies can be identified and developed still further
- ensure that all the statutory and recommended information for parents on the website is as accurate and up to date as it should be.

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

Joanne Ward
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Prior to and during the inspection, I considered evidence from a range of sources and activities. I reviewed the previous inspection report and performance information from the school's data dashboard for 2015 and 2016. I also reviewed the school's website. I spoke with parents as they brought their children to school. Meetings were held with you, senior leaders and governors to discuss the school's progress since the previous inspection and agree the key lines of enquiry. I considered a range of documentation, including information about the progress of pupils currently in the school, and the school's self-evaluation and action plans. I looked at the school's safeguarding policy and records of actions taken to protect pupils' welfare, and checked the single central record of the checks on staff. I looked at staff training records to ensure that training was up to date. I talked with a group of staff to make sure that they knew what to do if they were concerned about a child. Together with you and the deputy headteacher, I made short visits to lessons, looked at the quality of work in pupils' books and spoke with pupils about their learning. I met formally with a group of pupils from across key stages 1 and 2 and heard them read. I observed pupils' behaviour in class and at breaktime. I considered the 58 responses to Parent View as well as the free-text responses, the 25 replies to the staff survey and the 62 responses to the pupil survey.