

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Andrew Robinson  
Burton-on-the-Wolds Primary School  
Barrow Road  
Burton-on-the-Wolds  
Loughborough  
Leicestershire  
LE12 5TB

Dear Mr Robinson

### **Short inspection of Burton-on-the-Wolds Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 6 February 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 September 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Since the previous inspection, you have built effectively on the school's many strengths. Pupils' progress has accelerated. In 2017, their progress in reading and mathematics was exceptional. Your school's record of strong progress means that, throughout the school, standards are consistently well above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.

Not surprisingly, pupils, staff, parents and carers hold very positive views about your school. One parent expressed opinions shared by many others:

'All the staff, from the caretaker to the headmaster, really care about the children, and help them all achieve their potential and develop great social skills. We feel this school is really outstanding.'

Relationships between staff and pupils are friendly and respectful. Pupils speak with insight and pride about what it means to be a member of the school council. They say that 'Our school is where we learn to achieve, be confident, to care and stay safe.' At the time of the previous inspection, the pupils' behaviour and personal development were highlighted as particular strengths of the school. This remains

the case. Pupils are proud of their school. They have a strong sense of community and play and learn happily together.

Governors have a range of relevant skills and experience to support the work of the school. Where necessary, they use these to provide challenge, for example to ensure that your use of the school's budget is providing value for money. The governing body understands the strengths and areas for development well. It plays an active part in reviewing the school's performance and planning for further improvements.

At the last inspection, inspectors challenged leaders to improve further the quality of teaching. You have done this through creating a culture where staff see themselves as part of a team striving to be the best it possibly can be. They confidently share their ideas about teaching and learning. They readily ask for support from their colleagues. Because your school works on school improvement with five other local schools, staff have many opportunities both to share and to gain expertise. Undoubtedly, this arrangement is helping Burton-on-the-Wolds go from strength to strength.

Inspectors also asked you to make sure that activities set for pupils match the needs of all groups of pupils. Performance information shows that pupils from all starting points make strong progress. Teachers are keenly aware of the various needs of pupils in their classes and plan their lessons accordingly. Crucially, during lessons, they keep a close eye on how individual pupils are getting on. This enables them to provide additional support or challenge as necessary.

The strong record of above-average progress and high standards has not lessened your desire for further improvement. You recognise that the quality of learning you achieve in subjects such as history and geography is not consistently evident throughout the curriculum. To get the same quality of challenge, creativity and depth of learning in all subjects is your ambitious next step.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The governing body's health and safety and safeguarding committee meets every term to discuss behaviour and safety issues. Policies are reviewed and updated regularly.

All the parents responding to Parent View agree that their child is safe at school. A survey of staff agrees with this view. Pupils said that they feel safe at school because they know that adults care deeply about their physical and emotional well-being. All staff have been trained in safeguarding and child protection. They report promptly any concerns they may have about pupils' well-being. Leaders keep thorough records of concerns, correspondence, meetings and actions taken regarding pupils' safety.

The pupils I listened to said that adults are good at sorting out any disagreements

and that the excellent behaviour observed in lessons and on the playground is typical.

## **Inspection findings**

- At the start of the inspection, you and I agreed the aspects of the school's work that we would consider closely. The first of these was to look at teaching and learning in the early years. In 2017, children's achievements were above the national average across all aspects of the early years curriculum. Visits to the early years area showed that staff use every moment of the school day to develop the children's learning. Areas such as 'the construction site' and 'the dragon school' encourage the children to work and play together. In this way, they promote excellent personal, social and emotional development. Adults take care to ensure that activities have different levels of challenge to match the children's different abilities. They have high expectations and set no limits on what children can achieve. The result is that many children gain skills in reading, writing and numeracy that are higher than those expected for their ages.
- I also wanted to look into the school's outstanding record in mathematics. In each of the last three years, pupils' progress in mathematics has been in the top 10% nationally. Visits to lessons and a review of work in pupils' books showed that teaching is consistently of a high quality. Adults use questions well to check and probe pupils' understanding during lessons. They adapt teaching accordingly to add support or extra challenge. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. This expertise means that pupils quickly become fluent when working with numbers and are confident when asked to find ways of solving problems. Teachers plan their lessons together, choosing approaches and activities that foster pupils' deeper understanding. Workbooks in subjects across the curriculum show how pupils use their mathematical skills to analyse and gain insight into topics such as deforestation and forces.
- I also considered how effectively the school uses the funding it receives to support disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The school has a very flexible approach to using its pupil premium funding. It provides targeted help in lessons for disadvantaged pupils of all abilities. In addition, it responds quickly to address issues such as poor attendance and social and emotional difficulties that often lead to underachievement. The result is that disadvantaged pupils often make better progress than other pupils nationally. They play a full part in the life of the school. For example, they enjoy educational visits, musical instrument tuition and the good range of extra-curricular clubs.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities benefit from the effective links the school has with external agencies. These ensure that, where needed, pupils receive specialist support. Staff who deliver extra support, for individuals or small groups of pupils, receive high-quality training. They are well briefed and effectively deployed. A senior leader carefully checks on the delivery and impact of any extra support to ensure that it has the intended impact. There is strong evidence that this support is helping pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities achieve just as well as other pupils.

- Finally, we agreed to consider how effectively the school's curriculum promoted pupils' personal development. Pupils are confident, thoughtful and friendly. They learn and play happily together. Many different aspects of the school's curriculum bring about these outcomes. For example, there is a strong emphasis on sporting competition. Developing musical talents is also a priority. All pupils learn to play a musical instrument and have the chance to join the school orchestra. The curriculum also provides plenty of opportunities for pupils to learn about the world around them. The school has interesting links with schools in China, Bangalore and France.
- Whole-school projects on topics such as refugees and tigers raise the pupils' awareness of political and environmental issues that they will encounter throughout their lives. The discussion and writing by pupils in all year groups on these topics are of the highest quality.
- The enthusiasm that pupils have for writing is quite exceptional throughout the school. Pupils are keen to share their reflections and opinions. Year 4 pupils, for example, sent letters to the Chinese Embassy regarding the use of tigers for medical research in China. The letters were addressed to Xi Jinping. However, at the time of this inspection, the president of China had not responded to their questions.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching in all subject areas is characterised by the same quality of challenge, creativity and depth of learning that is present in subjects such as history and geography.

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

Yours sincerely

Anthony O'Malley  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher and other members of staff to discuss the school's effectiveness. I also met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. I met with the members of the school council and talked with other pupils around the school and during lessons. I observed teaching and learning throughout the school. I looked at work in pupils' books and heard pupils read.

I considered numerous documents, including those linked to keeping the pupils safe, the school's self-evaluation document and the school improvement plan. I considered the 35 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, together with the views of parents gathered as they brought their children to school. I also took into account the responses of 12 members of staff and 49 pupils to their online surveys.