

25 January 2019

Mrs Nicola Foulds
Executive Headteacher
Bradley CofE Primary School
Yew Tree Lane
Bradley
Ashbourne
Derbyshire
DE6 1PG

Dear Mrs Foulds

Short inspection of Bradley CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 January 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 May 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection.

Bradley is a small, inclusive school that sits at the centre of the local community. You and the governing body have established a caring and nurturing culture. Pupils are at the heart of your decision-making and are valued as individuals. You lead the school with determination and passion. You ensure that all your pupils achieve the highest standards academically, while also preparing them to be respectful, tolerant and knowledgeable citizens. As one parent explained, 'The school is an extended family and school values resonate throughout all they do.'

There have been significant changes since the previous inspection. The school is now federated with another local primary school. You have taken on the role of executive headteacher across the federation. There have been other staffing changes, with two new teachers joining the school recently. You and the governing body have managed change well and are using it to secure further improvements to the quality of education you provide. For example, pupils now regularly visit each other's schools, building new friendships and attending shared sporting events. Teachers and leaders work together across the federation to develop the wider curriculum and share best practice through joint training sessions.

You have maintained the strengths identified at the last inspection. You carefully monitor the quality of education and skilfully analyse your findings to drive further

improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teaching is effective and improving throughout all year groups. As a result, standards in reading, writing and mathematics continue to be in line with or above national averages by the end of key stage 2.

You ensure that the curriculum is broad, meaningful and enriching. Pupils relish learning a wide range of topics and can recall facts and skills they have learned in detail. For example, key stage 2 pupils learn about the Victorians by visiting museums, designing Victorian homes and timelining events, recalling facts such as the invention of the first flushing toilet. Parents speak highly of the school's personalised curriculum and the wider opportunities available to their children such as brass instrument lessons, swimming and woodland activities.

Leaders, other than yourself, receive training to develop their leadership skills. They are developing systems to improve the quality of assessment to ensure that teachers plan lessons that match pupils' abilities well, in subjects other than English and mathematics. You and leaders have made a promising start to developing the quality of the wider curriculum but, as yet, it is too early to see the impact of your actions on pupils' learning and outcomes.

Governors know the school well and are ambitious for the future. They hold leaders to account effectively and provide you with the support needed to improve the school's performance further. For example, governors make links with other industries, such as Rolls Royce, to provide innovative and specialist training to develop leadership throughout the school.

Pupils behave very well and work and play together harmoniously. Older pupils look after younger pupils, even helping them to ride bicycles at breaktimes. As one pupil said, 'We are all friends and we look after each other.' Staff build positive relationships with pupils. They know all pupils well and work hard to provide tailored activities for individuals throughout the school day. One pupil said, 'My teacher even comes out to play football with me at playtime because I'm really interested in sports.' Pupils are proud of themselves and their school. They enjoy opportunities to represent their school and to support their community, for example singing Christmas carols at the local nursing home.

Parents are overwhelmingly in support of the partnership they have with school. They value regular feedback from staff about their children's learning and appreciate the individual care and attention given to their children. As one parent said, 'Bradley is a fantastic school, led by a great team.' Parents feel thoroughly involved in school life. For example, parents recently participated in 'The Great Bradley Bake Off', visiting school to see learning in action and enjoying cakes baked by the children.

You and the governing body have addressed many of the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. Teachers' use of questioning has improved considerably throughout school. You have provided tailored professional development and training alongside coaching and support for individual staff. Teachers expertly use questioning to check or deepen pupils' understanding. For

instance, teachers often ask 'Can you show me in a different way?' or 'Can you explain how you did that?' As a result, pupils can talk about their learning and find new ways of solving problems.

Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support the higher- and the lower-attaining pupils, asking questions which support learning or stretch pupils' thinking. For example, in the early years children were engaged in play activities outdoors, fishing for numbers in the water tray. Staff thoughtfully questioned children, asking them to identify the number, show it on their fingers, or count on or back from the chosen number. As a result, children's understanding of the value of each number improved.

At the previous inspection, you were also asked to improve pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar skills in key stage 1. You introduced a new spelling scheme and are systematically evaluating its impact. Pupils' skills, particularly in spelling, are now rapidly improving in this key stage and this is also the case in the early years. For example, children in Reception are already able to spell a wide range of three-letter words accurately. However, in key stage 2, pupils still find it difficult to apply their spelling skills when writing at length. They do not always check for spelling errors in their writing and this is resulting in some pupils not making as much progress as they could. You are fully aware of this and are putting actions in place to improve teaching in order to address it.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and the governing body have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a culture of vigilance throughout the school and staff are quick to act upon concerns to ensure the safety of pupils in school. You are tenacious in seeking the right external support for pupils and their families. When this support is not always forthcoming, you strive to provide 'in-house' support from specially trained staff in school. One example is the use of a highly skilled teaching assistant to provide tailored support for pupils with mental health difficulties.

You ensure that staff are well trained and that their knowledge is regularly updated. Governors ensure that their statutory duties are fulfilled. They carry out checks of recruitment and vetting procedures and receive termly safeguarding updates. Pupils said that they feel safe in school. They say there is no bullying and that any minor 'falling out' is quickly dealt with by staff. Pupils told me that they feel confident to speak to staff about any worries they may have. They use the 'worry box' if they do not feel as confident, knowing staff will read it and help them. Parents agree the school is a safe place for their children to learn and grow.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection I considered how well pupils in all year groups are challenged to achieve the highest standards in English and mathematics. Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and are aspirational for all pupils. Evidence from work in current pupils' mathematics books shows that

teachers plan activities that are well matched to pupils' abilities. This ensures that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are challenged, able to develop effective problem-solving and reasoning skills and make good progress towards achieving higher standards. Occasionally, some pupils do not spot errors in their calculations when they do not show their working out in mathematics.

- English lessons and evidence in work books indicate that pupils are challenged to use adventurous and ambitious language in their writing. Teachers model vocabulary well and use a variety of different teaching methods to help pupils write with creativity and flair. Teachers provide effective verbal feedback to help pupils include more advanced features in their writing and achieve higher standards. Pupils are receptive to this feedback and resilient in their approach to improving their work. Sometimes teachers do not encourage pupils to check their work thoroughly enough. This results in some pupils making simple errors in spelling.
- I also considered how well the curriculum prepares pupils for the next stage of their education and for life in modern Britain. You have developed a curriculum that meets the needs of individual pupils, while developing pupils' knowledge of, and responsibilities to, the world in which they live. You are acutely aware of your school's context and the need to broaden pupils' understanding of our multicultural world. Pupils enjoy visits to different places of worship and have recently attended a pupil-led religious education conference in an inner-city setting, meeting and working with pupils from a wide range of faiths and cultures. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the opportunities to learn about conserving the environment. Pupils have recently learned about the importance of recycling plastics, linked to work on oceans and seas, and have sponsored an orangutan in Borneo to support their understanding of the negative effects farming has on wildlife.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. You ensure that pupils attain well in reading, writing and mathematics and are confident, resourceful and reflective learners by the time they move to the secondary school. Pupils have many opportunities to work with pupils from your federated partner school and speak highly of the visits to the local secondary school to take part in physical education and competitive sports each week. Transition to the secondary school is managed well and pupils look forward with excitement to meeting new friends and continuing their learning journey.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- middle leaders access further training to develop their leadership skills so they can fully evaluate the impact of their actions on pupils' outcomes in subjects other than English and mathematics
- pupils have appropriate strategies to check their work so they can correct errors in their calculations in mathematics and their spelling in English.

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

Yours sincerely

Steve Varnam
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and other leaders. I held discussions with three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and with a representative from the local authority. I observed learning jointly with you in all classes. I scrutinised pupils' work in English and mathematics jointly with you. I met with a group of key stage 2 pupils and examined their work from across the wider curriculum. I scrutinised the school's self-evaluation document, the school's plans for improvement, minutes of the governing body and documents relating to safeguarding. I observed behaviour around school with a group of key stage 2 pupils. I met with a group of parents before the start of the school day and considered the 34 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. There were no responses to the pupil or staff surveys.