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Mrs Tracey Jackson
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Jackson

Short inspection of Burton Manor Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 February 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 November 2014.

This school continues to be good.

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

Having joined the school three years ago, you have formed a very effective leadership team. Your commitment to developing leaders' skills has enabled them to work for national leadership qualifications and use their skills and knowledge to develop further the areas for which they are responsible.

Each year, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics in Year 1 continues to be above the national average because pupils are taught well by skilled adults.

You have strengthened the curriculum to make sure that there are good links between the teaching of reading and writing. As a result, pupils' written work shows developing creativity and imagination. Training ensures that staff teach grammar and punctuation well. Pupils apply their writing skills well to longer pieces of work. However, the teaching of spelling and handwriting is less strong, and these aspects detract from the quality of pupils' writing overall.

Improving the quality of teaching, particularly in relation to the level of challenge for the most able pupils, was identified as the key area for improvement in the last inspection. This is being addressed, although more work is still needed to ensure that the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged in mathematics and reading.

You have made sure that pupils' personal development, based on the school's values of respect, responsibility, rights, reflection and resilience, is central to the work of the school. Staff know pupils and their families well and take good care to meet the social and emotional needs of vulnerable pupils. Pupils say they know that they can talk to adults if something worries them and, as a result, they are happy in school. Pupils work hard in lessons and behave very well around school. They enjoy taking responsibility as school councillors, class ambassadors and as members of the eco club.

Staff appreciate the support that they receive in developing their skills and value the ways in which you have helped them to achieve a good work-life balance. All of the staff who responded to Ofsted's staff survey said that they were proud to be part of the school.

Governors are very well informed about the school. This is because they visit regularly to obtain first-hand information, as well as receiving detailed reports about the school's performance at their meetings. Governors have a good understanding of their roles and provide an effective balance of support and challenge to the school's leaders.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and the other designated safeguarding leaders have ensured that all the arrangements for safeguarding are fit for purpose. Monthly updates enable staff and governors to keep up to date with statutory guidelines. Effective checks are carried out to ensure that staff understand the school's safeguarding policy and apply it to their practice. Staff receive wide-ranging training, which enables them to use their skills and knowledge to take swift action if they have any safeguarding concerns.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school. You and your staff know the pupils well and use this knowledge to provide effective support when it is needed. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe because the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about issues such as internet safety and the dangers associated with fire.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have taken effective action to improve the previously low rates of attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Staff ensure that parents are aware of the impact of absence. Staff record the attendance of each class on weekly newsletters and give awards to pupils with very little or no absence. Parents are challenged, and decisive action is taken when pupils' attendance is too low. As a result, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is improving and is close to that found nationally.
- In the past, disadvantaged pupils did not make as much progress as other pupils nationally, and few attained the expected standard at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have developed a clear strategy for the use of the pupil premium funding. As a result, teachers and learning support

assistants now provide a range of well-researched interventions that are carefully targeted to remove pupils' barriers to learning. Leaders monitor the progress of these pupils more closely and report this to governors. Consequently, should any pupils fall behind, swift action is taken to accelerate their progress, so that they catch up quickly.

- Leaders have successfully closed the gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally in key stage 1. The progress of disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2 is also improving. While leaders have increased the number of disadvantaged pupils who reach the expected standard by the end of key stage 2, too few of the most able disadvantaged pupils reach the higher standard.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve the progress that key stage 2 pupils make in reading. Effective training has raised staff's expectations about what pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils are making more consistent progress across each year group and pupils in Year 6 have less catching up to do. Leaders have changed the way in which reading is taught, so that pupils read challenging books that capture their interest. Using these as a starting point, staff plan interesting activities that build on pupils' existing knowledge. As a result, by the end of key stage 2 most pupils read confidently. Teachers are skilled in asking questions and giving prompts that help pupils think about the characters in the books they read and predict what might happen next. However, the most able pupils are not consistently challenged to show a greater depth of understanding and reach the high standards of which they are capable.
- You have made sure that the quality of mathematics teaching is more consistent. Leaders have revised the mathematics curriculum to enable pupils to quickly learn to apply their knowledge to solve problems. Work in a sample of pupils' books showed that some of the most able pupils are challenged to work at greater depth, for example showing how they can prove their answer is correct. However, the most able pupils often spend time doing work they can already do easily and are not given more challenging work quickly enough. As a result, they do not make as much progress as they could.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has taken on the management of the 'Ducklings' provision for two-year-olds. Leaders have ensured that there are good links between the early years classes. Consequently, children make good progress from their different starting points. Staff encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning. Adults make detailed observations of what children do, and these form the basis for in-depth discussions with parents. This enables parents to know how to help their children's learning so that they make good progress.
- Adults monitor children's progress in the early years very carefully. They use their knowledge of children's interests well to provide a range of activities that promote their curiosity and imagination. As a result, children enjoy learning and make strong progress. Phonics is taught well, enabling children to make good progress in reading and writing and achieve well by the end of the Reception year.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- there is sufficient challenge for the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, in reading and mathematics
- teachers ensure that pupils apply their spelling and handwriting skills accurately and consistently so that the quality of their writing improves.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Morrison
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the deputy headteacher and three other leaders. I met with six representatives of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body, and I spoke by telephone to a representative of the local authority. I talked with some parents at the start of the school day and spoke informally to some key stage 2 pupils.

We made short visits to seven lessons and, together with the deputy headteacher, looked at examples of pupils' work.

I scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's own evaluation of its performance, assessment information, action plans, minutes from meetings of the governing body, strategies for the expenditure of pupil premium funding and documents relating to keeping pupils safe.

I considered the 39 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including the 21 free-text responses. I also considered the 39 responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils and the 35 responses to the online survey for staff.