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Mrs Heather Benson
Headteacher
Barnham Broom Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School
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Dear Mrs Benson

Short inspection of Barnham Broom Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 May 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 October 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have successfully raised pupils' standards further, particularly in early years and key stage 1. Your consistent determination and successful implementation of school improvement plans have helped to improve the progress that pupils make.

Since the previous inspection, you have increased the size of your leadership team. You ensure that leadership roles and responsibilities are clear and that this increased leadership capacity continues to have an impact on further improvements. Nearly all staff who responded to the staff questionnaire are proud to work at the school and most feel well supported at school by school leaders.

Governors have a clear understanding of the priorities for improvement and offer good support and challenge to leaders. They visit the school often and know it well.

Pupils who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire and those spoken with during the inspection agree that they enjoy school and their learning. All parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that their children are happy and well cared for at school. One parent's comment echoed the sentiment of others: 'The behaviour of the children is brilliant – they are polite, confident and proud of their school.' Pupils show consideration to each other in lessons and around the school. Their attitudes to learning are consistently positive

and they work and play well with each other.

The dedication of your staff and the very positive attitudes of pupils to their learning are, undoubtedly, contributory factors to the school's ongoing success.

Leaders' vision of 'reaching for the stars' is at the heart of the school's work. There are many good-quality displays around the school that celebrate pupils' achievements. Pupils have opportunities to be involved in decision making and exercise social responsibility through the work of the school council. Leaders ensure that the assembly programme supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.

There is a small minority of parents and staff, however, who have expressed some concerns about the quality of communication from the school. You recognise that this is something to continue to improve and have firm plans in place to achieve this aim.

Safeguarding is effective.

As the designated safeguarding lead, you place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. You have provided suitable training for staff and governors and closely check that all policies are implemented effectively and rigorously. Governors are effective in checking that all staff who work at the school are suitable and records meet current statutory guidance.

You record all concerns carefully and comprehensively. When necessary, you take appropriate actions, including working with external agencies, to make sure that families and children get the help and support required.

Pupils I spoke to all said that they felt safe. They explained that this was because the adults at school looked after them well. They could explain how to keep safe when using the internet. Pupils learn about safety in assemblies and personal, social and health (PSH) education lessons.

Parents and staff in the surveys and discussions I had overwhelmingly agreed that children are safe and well cared for. A culture of safeguarding is clearly established and reflected in policies, procedures and day-to-day activities.

Inspection findings

- One line of enquiry I explored was how well leaders had addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection, in 2014. I focused on pupils' achievement in phonics and raising standards in writing.
- Staff training and clear leadership have had an impact on pupils' outcomes in phonics and these are now higher than the national average. We saw in lessons pupils' ability to use their phonics knowledge confidently in their reading. Pupils' achievement in phonics continues to be a strength of the school.
- In writing, key stage 1 results have improved since the last inspection, but I

wanted to check what was being done by leaders to raise standards in key stage 2. In 2017, pupils' attainment in writing was above the national average, but the numbers achieving the higher standard were lower than those found nationally. You had already identified this as a priority in your improvement plans.

- Your focus on improving writing has been to set levels of difficulty in tasks to encourage pupils to challenge themselves to do better, especially boys. Pupils have opportunities to write at length and to edit and redraft what they have written, often with their peers and teachers. Pupils are becoming more adept at improving their writing and use the precise guidance and resources to identify what they need to do to improve. We saw evidence of your chosen assessment resources being used in many of the classes we visited, and in the English books we looked at together. Pupils could explain how to improve their writing.
- The impact of your work can be seen in the school's own assessment information, which confirms that more pupils are now demonstrating significantly improved progress. However, the same writing strategies need to be embedded across all subjects to ensure that this high standard of writing is maintained across the curriculum.
- I considered the quality of teaching in reading as my second line of enquiry. This was because the number of pupils reaching the higher standard by the end of key stage 2 was lower than that found nationally in 2017.
- You have ensured that there is a celebration of reading across the school. You have created an environment where a love of reading is promoted. Reading is successfully encouraged through the many displays and in lessons.
- Reading is not seen as an isolated activity. You have introduced specific reading lessons, where pupils are given opportunities to explore the meaning of words and improve their comprehension skills. In addition, pupils are beginning to see reading as something that permeates the whole curriculum and is not confined to English. Pupils say that they are improving their reading skills as a result.
- You have a clear and comprehensive system to ensure that those who fall behind are provided with the support they need to make more rapid progress. Pupils are gaining in confidence and skills during additional sessions by reading aloud to each other. Adults use questions effectively, so pupils improve their understanding and explanation skills.
- Your assessment information demonstrates that the number of current pupils working at the higher standard in reading is improving.
- My final line of enquiry was to consider why pupils' attainment in mathematics at key stage 2 was below the national average in 2017, and what leaders are doing to address this. You have included mathematics in your plans for school improvement this year. The focus is on teachers using assessment information more carefully to plan work that supports individual pupils and ensures that they make better progress.
- You have improved the quality and range of strategies teachers use in lessons. The quality of teaching in mathematics is becoming more consistent as a result. Pupils enjoy the many challenges they receive in lessons and are more confident in applying their knowledge and understanding in different and exciting ways.

Consequently, they are seeing their learning in mathematics as fun and accessible.

- Pupils and parents appreciate the extra workshops you provide to help pupils overcome any barriers they may face to learning in mathematics. Parents and visitors to the school work with pupils to solve mathematical problems. Your work this year is having an impact because pupils demonstrate enjoyment and curiosity in mathematics lessons. Currently, there are more pupils aspiring to and achieving the higher standards.
- Pupils I spoke with said they that enjoyed mathematics. You plan to develop this love of mathematics even further to support raising standards for all pupils.
- You recognise that pupils' achievement in mathematics needs to improve further. This is particularly important in developing pupils' skills in mathematical reasoning and problem solving so that more reach the higher standard by the end of key stage 2. Nonetheless, school assessment information shows that across key stage 2, current pupils are making good progress from their starting points in mathematics this year. This is an improvement on the previous academic year.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- more pupils reach the higher standard in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 2
- more pupils are provided with opportunities to apply their writing skills across the curriculum to the same standard as they do in English.

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

Yours sincerely

Russell Ayling
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and other senior and middle leaders. I met with two members of your governing body and spoke with your school improvement adviser on the telephone. Together, we visited classrooms, where we looked at pupils' work.

I spoke with pupils and staff throughout the day. I observed pupils in lessons, and

at playtime. I met parents at the start of the school day.

I took account of 34 responses to Parent View, together with 58 free-text comments. I met with two groups of pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 and reviewed 19 responses to the Ofsted pupil questionnaire. I considered 13 staff responses to their Ofsted questionnaire.

I evaluated a wide range of school documentation, including the school's view of its own performance and school improvement plans. I analysed assessment information about the progress pupils on roll are making. Statutory documents relating to safeguarding and behaviour were also considered.