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Mrs Philippa Utting
Headteacher
Burlington Junior School
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Dear Mrs Utting

Short inspection of Burlington Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 3 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 September 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 worked with great determination so that pupils' learning can thrive in a safe and secure environment. Together with your team, you have focused on promoting high-quality teaching to improve outcomes. You provide energy, vision and clear leadership which is recognised and highly valued by pupils, parents and carers, staff and governors.

Burlington Junior School offers a particularly nurturing and inclusive community atmosphere. This ensures that all pupils feel valued, respected and safe. You are very ambitious for the pupils in your care and passionate about improving the quality of provision for all.

Staff share a pride in the school's strengths. Your evaluation of the school is detailed and the school development plan is sharply focused on the areas which can be improved further. Leaders check the school's work regularly and take action to support pupils' good or better progress. However, some pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and lower-attaining pupils, do not typically make as strong progress. You have rightly identified this as an area for improvement.

Governors are a knowledgeable, determined and dedicated team who are fully committed to the school. They work effectively with leaders, offering support and challenge. Some have supported the school for many years. They pay regular visits to the school and are actively involved in setting targets and monitoring school

improvements. They are clear about their purpose and determined to ensure that the school secures the best possible outcomes for its pupils.

Leaders have developed a team of staff with talent in a range of areas. Staff at all levels have opportunities to increase their skills through regular training and professional development tailored to their needs. Senior leaders coach teachers to improve the quality of teaching, sharpen assessment practice and accelerate pupils' progress. Staff enthusiasm for learning with their pupils is very evident.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They like the way teachers bring learning to life and help them to achieve well. The comment from one pupil, 'I like Burlington because I do a lot of learning' is typical. Pupils try hard and are polite, showing kindness and thoughtfulness to each other. They respect each other's ideas and play well together. Any incidents of poor behaviour are managed well. In lessons, pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They engage well with staff and work hard. These strong relationships promote a sense of teamwork and trust.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All the required checks on staff are completed before they start employment. Comprehensive training enables staff to identify and report concerns when they arise. Leaders take swift action where there are concerns relating to pupils' safety and well-being. Governors play a significant role in checking important aspects of safeguarding, including health and safety.

Pupils reported that they feel safe in school, and parents who responded to the online survey supported this view.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed the key lines of enquiry. The first one was to consider how successfully leaders are ensuring consistently high-quality teaching, especially for lower-ability and disadvantaged pupils.
- We visited classes in all year groups and looked at work in pupils' books. They show that pupils are making clear progress from their starting points. The senior leadership team regularly monitor work in books to ensure a consistent approach to teaching and learning. I found that pupils concentrate, work hard and listen carefully; they are well supported by additional adults.
- You have clearly identified strategies designed to help pupils make faster progress and improve their comprehension skills. We agreed that pupils would benefit from further direction in guided reading sessions to improve the impact of teaching and learning.
- Pupils are now involved in discussing and agreeing their individual targets. This is having an impact on improving standards and boosting pupils' confidence.

- We agreed that absence, and especially persistent absence, has an impact on pupils' progress. The school has been successful in monitoring attendance and reducing absence overall.
- The second key line of enquiry was to consider how effectively leaders have addressed issues from the previous inspection report and in particular to review the progress in writing.
- Writing standards increased in 2017 because leaders introduced successful strategies to improve the quality of teaching in writing. They are keen to embed these initiatives further to ensure consistency across the school. They have been successful in supporting teachers to teach writing so that pupils make faster progress and their enjoyment of writing increases.
- High-quality texts and stimulating experiences have increased pupils' interest in writing; they now respond well to teachers' advice. Some pupils are able to judge their own writing and identify which features will improve the quality of their work. The school plans to give more pupils the chance to do this so that they benefit from this strategy.
- Work in pupils' books shows that they write regularly across a range of subjects. Pupils generally take care over the presentation of their work. Leaders regularly compare the quality of pupils' writing to ensure that standards are being met or exceeded across different classes. However, we agreed that standards in handwriting and presentation are too variable in some workbooks.
- The third key line of enquiry we agreed was to consider how effectively leaders are developing the school's culture and curriculum to impact on standards, especially at greater depth for the most able pupils. I visited classes and held discussions with leaders, governors and pupils. This established how the culture of the school and the design of the curriculum have an impact on raising standards.
- Pupils are rightly proud of their encouraging and positive school. They enjoy celebrating success and show respect for each other and adults. Pupils value the 'GREAT' ethos of 'Getting ready, Reflect and respond, Every child achieves, Attitudes, Targets'.
- The international and global dimension of the curriculum is designed to appeal to a wide range of pupils from diverse backgrounds. The range of stimuli, for example visits to museums and galleries, visitors to school and theme days, promotes pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Specialist teachers, including music and French, further enrich the curriculum.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers support pupils' learning more effectively in guided reading sessions
- the curriculum continues to be developed for all pupils and especially to improve the progress for disadvantaged and lower-ability pupils
- standards of handwriting and presentation are consistent in all subjects throughout the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Linda Harvey
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you and leaders to discuss the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress and improvements since the last inspection. Together, we visited classes in all year groups. We observed teaching and learning and looked at a range of pupils' work in books. I talked to pupils about their learning, experience of school life and how safe they feel. I held meetings with leaders and governors and held discussions about safeguarding. I took account of the views of 115 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and their written comments. I also took account of 34 responses from staff, together with pupils' views, both from the online inspection surveys and conversations with staff and pupils I met during the day.