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Bryn St Peter's CofE Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Collier

### **Short inspection of Bryn St Peter's CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 8 February 2017, 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 February 2012.

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

You have been appointed as headteacher since the previous inspection took place and have maintained the good quality of education in the school since then. By the time pupils leave Bryn St Peter's, their reading, writing and mathematics skills are at least in line with pupils nationally. Pupils make good progress from their starting points in reading and mathematics and achieve better than other pupils nationally.

The ethos of the school is clearly expressed in its mission statement as one which 'welcomes pupils into a secure and safe environment where pupils are valued as unique'. A parent I spoke to reinforced this by telling me how pleased she felt that, as soon as her child began in Reception class, staff knew the child's name and her own. Pupils I spoke to during the inspection described the school as one where 'a warm welcome is shown to everyone'. The findings of this inspection support these views.

You and other staff have ensured that the calm yet vibrant school environment enables pupils to learn. Pupils behave well in lessons and as they move around the school. Relationships are strong across the school. Pupils spoke freely about how they live out their Christian values in all aspects of school life, even giving examples of how they try to do this through keeping themselves and others safe while online. Parents and grandparents I spoke to were very complimentary about their children's and grandchildren's experiences while at school and the support they have received from staff.

Staff, parents and governors described the work that has been undertaken since the previous inspection to improve outcomes for pupils. Staff have worked collaboratively to support each other to improve the consistency of effective teaching across the school. As one governor explained, 'There is a clear commitment to work together for the good of the children'. This inspection found that, although there is strong teaching in both key stage 1 and key stage 2, it is not consistently strong across both key stages.

The school has a greater-than-average proportion of disadvantaged pupils. Throughout the day, we discussed the achievement of these pupils and, as we visited classrooms across the school, we looked closely at the progress these pupils were making. Test results from last year had shown that there were areas where the disadvantaged pupils did not always do as well as other pupils, especially in key stage 1. You recognise that these pupils have not yet caught up to where they need be in Year 2 and are tracking the progress of these pupils closely.

We also discussed attendance. This has been an area of focus for the school as attendance rates had fallen below national averages in previous years. Leaders have shown determination to tackle this area of weakness. They have worked hard to make sure that pupils and their families understand the high expectations that leaders have for pupils to attend school every day. Leaders have made effective use of a range of strategies which have improved rates of attendance for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. Attendance rates overall at Bryn St Peter's at present are similar to those in other schools nationally, although the percentage of persistent absentees continues to be an area of focus for the school.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and your records are detailed and of high quality. As the lead for safeguarding, you have shown due diligence of care for pupils and their families. You have liaised effectively with other agencies, including Wigan social care, Gateway, the police and health services where needed. You have used appropriate escalation and reopening of cases where required.

You and your staff make clear that pastoral support is given a high priority. The learning mentor and assistant headteacher work very effectively together, ensuring that this support is of high quality. Pupils who spoke to me told me that they feel very safe at school and felt confident that all pupils would be accepted by others. Pupils and parents, when asked, said that bullying is rare and were confident it would get resolved quickly.

### **Inspection findings**

- Evidence from learning walks and book scrutiny indicates that teaching over time continues to be good but there is variability across both key stages 1 and 2. School leaders have not always tackled this quickly enough, although there has

been support put in place to further improve the teaching.

- Work in books shows that disadvantaged pupils now make progress in line with their peers. We agreed that there is still work to be done. Historic progress and attainment data for these pupils is lower than other pupils within the school and when compared to other pupils nationally, especially in key stage 1. Plans for spending the pupil premium funding to support these pupils lack the necessary evaluation of impact.
- Leaders have introduced a number of initiatives to improve pupils' stamina for reading and their phonics knowledge. These include, for example, additional phonics sessions and additional support. These actions are having an impact.
- Historic data for the Year 1 phonics check is well below the national average. Leaders have identified that there is still a need for additional support for teaching and have taken steps to address this and improvements can be seen.
- Leaders' actions to ensure that pupils are successful in the phonics check by the end of Year 2 are successful. However, there is too much reliance on pupils having to catch up in Year 2 rather than them being successful by the end of Year 1.
- Leaders have taken effective action to tackle attendance issues with individual families. The leader responsible for supporting pupils who have poor attendance has clear plans for supporting these pupils and monitors this support. Both historic and current school data show that attendance rates overall have improved over time for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. Current attendance overall is in line with national averages.
- There are still a small number of families, including those of disadvantaged pupils, who do not support the work of the school and insist on taking holidays in term time. Leaders focus on individuals' attendance issues and work hard to address them but do not systematically track attendance or the persistent absence of groups of pupils. As a result, leaders are not able to identify improving or declining trends for groups, including disadvantaged pupils.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- continue to drive improvements in attendance by systematically analysing the absence rates of different groups of pupils and taking appropriate steps to address identified areas
- develop more effective systems to evaluate the expenditure of the pupil premium funding to ensure that pupils are benefiting
- intervene more effectively when school leaders identify weaknesses in teaching.

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

Yours sincerely

Claire Cropper  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I held discussions with you, senior leaders, four governors, the local vicar and a representative from the local authority. I visited seven lessons with senior leaders to observe pupils' learning and look at pupils' work in their books. I observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and movement around the school. I considered 13 Parent View responses. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and school development plans, information about pupils' progress, safeguarding records, behaviour and bullying records and attendance reports.