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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Sheila Crichton
Headteacher
Marriott Primary School
Broughton Road
Leicester
Leicestershire
LE2 6NE

Dear Mrs Crichton

Short inspection of Marriott Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 March 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 January 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since you took up post in September 2014, you have taken effective action to bring about the necessary changes to improve the school further. You have extremely high expectations and a clear vision for school improvement that is understood and shared by all. You have a very detailed and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have ensured that detailed plans are in place, and being acted upon by all, to bring about further improvements. You are well supported by a strong leadership team whose members have had considerable impact on the improvements that have been realised.

All staff and governors are committed to the school and are passionate about their role in providing the best possible education for pupils. You have created a sense of 'team spirit' where all share the same aims and are determined in their drive to achieve them. A particular strength is the involvement of non-teaching staff who contribute to the well-being and holistic education of pupils. Staff feel valued, and they like working at the school and are proud to be part of it.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are happy and they feel safe. Pupils understand that their teachers have high expectations and they are keen to meet them. Pupils feel that their teachers care about them as individuals and want them to do well. Pupils are polite and confident. You have ensured that pupils enjoy a range of activities to broaden and enrich their experiences. You promote pupils' well-being effectively and pupils appreciate and benefit from these opportunities.

Parents are supportive of the school. They recognise that staff want the best for their children and the vast majority of parents feel that their children make good progress and are well cared for. Parents are appreciative of the support that the school provides to them, as families.

When you took up post in September 2014, you immediately identified the need to improve pupils' behaviour, which was having a negative impact on their learning and progress. You took immediate action to address pupils' punctuality, for example by ensuring that the school gates were closed promptly at the start of the day. This has resulted in considerable improvements and it is now rare for pupils to arrive late. You made your high expectations of pupils' behaviour clear to all. You introduced a new behaviour policy and a new system for monitoring pupils' behaviour. This has enabled you to track pupils' behaviour and to identify those who needed additional support to modify their own behaviour. Pupils responded quickly to this strategy and behaviour has improved considerably. Pupils report that behaviour is good and older pupils are appreciative of the differences that they recognise since this work was undertaken. During the inspection, I noted good pupil behaviour throughout the school.

You have taken swift and decisive action to ensure that staff are of a high calibre. You have eradicated the small proportion of inadequate teaching that you identified and have ensured that support staff are effective. You ensure that staff are well supported; for example, newly qualified teachers are mentored by experienced staff. You are uncompromising in your policy to recruit and retain only the very best staff who are able to meet your high expectations.

The last inspection identified the need to develop strategies to support pupils to understand what they have done well and how they can improve their work. You have introduced a new assessment and feedback policy which identifies pupils' successes and provides them with clear next steps. This policy is being applied consistently by all staff, which is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.

The last inspection also identified the need to ensure that fine-tuned, challenging tasks were set to enable all groups of pupils to make the best possible progress. You have introduced a whole-school approach to planning and, as a result, work is now more closely matched to pupils' abilities. However, you recognise that while there are many excellent examples of this, there is further work to be done to ensure that this is consistently the case.

You have established an effective attendance team whose work with parents has improved attendance considerably. However, you are aware that there is further work to be done to engage hard-to-reach families to support pupils who find it difficult to attend school regularly.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that safeguarding practices are highly effective. You have created an extensive team of highly trained staff who are very well led by the deputy headteacher, who maintains the whole-school designated responsibility for safeguarding. All staff are kept fully up to date with safeguarding practices and potential concerns specific to the school community. All staff understand and embrace their responsibilities in ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils. Records relating to safeguarding are of extremely high quality and reflective of leaders' tenacity in following up potential concerns.

Inspection findings

- You have strengthened the leadership team by appointing subject coordinators for English and mathematics. You have ensured that pupils' work is now more accurately assessed. Leaders monitor the quality of teaching in their subject areas, undertaking lesson observations and scrutinising the quality of pupils' work. Leaders use this information to support staff in need of further development and to hold teachers to account for pupils' progress. There is now greater use of pupil performance information to identify gaps in pupils' learning and leaders ensure that strategies are put in place to improve pupils' progress. Current pupils are making faster progress in all key stages than has been evident in recent years.
- You have ensured that there is a whole-school focus on reading. You have introduced a new phonics scheme and ensured that it is consistently followed across the school. You have also introduced a whole-school approach to guided and shared reading. There is a focus on using technical language to develop pupils' vocabulary and understanding. Pupils are encouraged to practise their reading and writing skills at every opportunity. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were writing on the playground using chalks, and children in the early years setting were spelling words using pebbles during an outdoor session.
- All pupils are encouraged to read regularly, both at home and at school. Pupils report that they are expected to read regularly at home and are proud of the reading records they complete with their parents. I listened to a number of pupils read and they were keen to discuss their reading habits with me. Less confident readers were able to use their phonics skills to work out unfamiliar words and most-able readers read with flair and expression. Pupils were able to discuss their books and to make inferences about the texts.
- You have introduced a new approach to the teaching of mathematics and actively encourage staff to adapt materials to meet the needs of individual pupils. You have prioritised the development of pupils' reasoning skills, which are improving. There are now much higher expectations of less able pupils, which means that they are making faster progress than previously.
- The most able pupils are supported to extend their learning through extension

activities. However, some pupils, particularly the most able, say that they find some of their work easy in mathematics. Leaders have rightly identified the need to ensure that pupils are consistently challenged in order to support them to achieve the highest standards.

- The quality of teaching in all key stages is good. More accurate assessment, consistency of planning and raised expectations have had a positive impact on pupils' progress. Current pupils are making more rapid progress than in the past.
- In recent years, pupils' attendance has been below the national average. You have rightly prioritised this as an area in need of rapid improvement. You have created an effective team to work with pupils and their families to support pupils to attend school. You have applied a combined approach of challenge, support and rewards. For example, you are clear about your expectation that all pupils attend regularly, but support families to identify and overcome barriers to attending. Pupils and parents are appreciative of the considerable work that has been undertaken. For example, several families make use of the highly successful 'walking bus' which collects pupils each morning. Attendance has improved and continues to do so. Whole-school attendance is now in line with the national average; disadvantaged pupils' attendance remains slightly below that of other pupils nationally but continues to improve. You are maintaining this as a priority.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers consistently challenge pupils, particularly the most able, by ensuring that work is matched to ability to enable them to make more rapid progress and achieve the higher standards
- strategies already in place to improve attendance are further developed to support pupils who find it difficult to attend school regularly.

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

Yours sincerely

Deborah Mosley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with senior leaders, other staff and governors. I spoke to parents before school and also considered the 17 responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, and the seven free-text responses. I also considered parents' views in information collected by school leaders. I met formally with a group of pupils and also spoke to pupils during their lessons. I looked at pupils' work in their lessons and in a sample of work across different year groups and abilities. I visited classes with senior leaders and observed pupils' learning. I scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, school improvement plans, monitoring documents and records relating to safeguarding. I also viewed the information published on the school's website.