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Mrs Georgie Metcalfe
Slingsby Community Primary School
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Dear Mrs Metcalfe

Short inspection of Slingsby Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 17 November 2015, 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 March 2012.

This school continues to be good.

You and your leadership team have maintained the good quality of education provided by the school since the last inspection. You have established a secure, safe environment that successfully supports effective teaching and learning. Furthermore, you and your staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning, both of which are excellent. It is a combination of these factors that results in all pupils achieving well.

At the time of the previous inspection, two areas for improvement were identified: to improve the quality of assessment through marking; and to raise pupils' achievement in mathematics. The marking seen during the inspection provides pupils with detailed feedback about how well they are doing, with specific guidance about what they need to do next to improve their work. Pupils said how helpful they find the advice from their teachers. Pupils' work seen during the inspection and their responses to questions in lessons clearly indicate that they are currently making good progress in mathematics throughout the school. The current Year 6 pupils are already working at age-related expectations and are on track to exceed expectations by the end of the academic year.

You have demonstrated great resolve and determination to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning meets your high expectations. You evaluate the work of all staff well. Regular visits to classrooms, the checking of pupils' work and meetings

with teachers to review pupils' progress ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

All parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, would recommend the school to prospective parents. They acknowledged your good leadership in relation to the quality of care, safety, teaching and the progress their children are making. Parents particularly appreciate the open relationship they enjoy with you, staff and governors. This is a real community school that is held in high regard: as one parent commented, 'What more can anyone want than to see happy children being inspired and supported to achieve their best by a caring and passionate staff.'

Safeguarding is effective.

You, the governing body and all staff take your safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Staff have received training in relation to child protection procedures and further training is planned in order to ensure that their awareness and knowledge are kept up to date. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and receive guidance about road safety, e-safety and bullying in all its forms as part of the curriculum.

Inspection findings

- School leaders check the work of the school regularly and have a good understanding of its strengths and any areas of weakness. Rigorous procedures are in place to hold teachers to account for the work they do and this is underpinned by support and training, often in partnership with neighbouring schools.
- The school improvement plan contains appropriate strategies and milestones. You and other leaders acknowledge that the plan could be usefully strengthened by ensuring a closer link between leaders' actions and the impact they intend to have on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
- You have high expectations of the quality of teaching and learning and have successfully communicated this to staff. Teaching is consistently good and this is why pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are achieving well. There is no gap between the attainment of pupils nationally and the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in the school.
- Good systems are in place to allow teachers to assess pupils' progress over time. As a result, any signs of underachievement are identified quickly and further support is provided for pupils that will enable them to catch up. Teachers provide good support during lessons through carefully crafted questions that are designed to promote thinking and clear explanations which are underpinned by good subject knowledge. On occasions, pupils'

misconceptions are not quickly identified and addressed during lessons. If this skill could be honed, pupils would make even quicker progress.

- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 in 2015 was above the national average. This has been the case for many years. Attainment in mathematics at the end of Year 6 dipped in 2015 compared to the high standards attained in previous years but, even so, the pupils in this very small cohort made good progress in relation to their starting points.
- Staff with middle leadership responsibilities make a valuable contribution to enhancing pupils' progress. The work undertaken by the special educational needs coordinator through individually targeted support programmes is benefiting both teachers and pupils. The subject leader for mathematics has a good understanding of what needs to be improved to raise attainment further and is taking the necessary steps to make this happen.
- The governing body provides the school with appropriate support and challenge. Governors are fully aware of the strengths and areas in need of further improvement. The governing body shares your vision of becoming an outstanding school in the near future and, as such, they are true partners in the drive to secure further improvement.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- steps are taken to refine teachers' ability to recognise when and why pupils are experiencing difficulties with their learning during lessons and then take appropriate and timely action to help them
- the school development plan contains clearer links between the actions taken to secure improvement and the expected impact on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in order to help evaluate their effectiveness.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Keeler
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, the leader of mathematics, the special educational needs coordinator, a group of pupils, and members of the governing body. I also had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. Together, we visited all classrooms to observe teaching and look at pupils' work. Consideration was given to 19 responses from the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View). I evaluated recent information in relation to pupils' progress throughout the school, the school's self-evaluation document, the school improvement plan and your arrangements for checking the performance of teachers. I also reviewed documentation and records about how you keep pupils safe.