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Mr Ian Tyas  
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Dear Mr Tyas

### **Short inspection of Ingham Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 15 December 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 June 2011.

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

You have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have played to your strengths as a small school that thrives by having established close relationships with and between the pupils, among the staff, and with parents. The pupils are cheerful, well-mannered, and they converse, often enthusiastically, on a wide range of topics about which they have been learning; so enthusiastically, in fact, that sometimes they are difficult to stop!

You and the governing body have set out a mission for the school to be at the heart of the local community. As a result of your efforts, the school is very much a part of the community that it serves. That is evident in the justifiably strongly positive views that parents hold about the school and in the pride that the pupils take in being a part of the school. The parents with whom I spoke told me that one of the things that they value most about the school is the friendly staff.

You and the governing body have tackled the areas for improvement from the previous inspection well. The governing body is now involved closely in monitoring the work of the school, to good effect. You have made sure that all of the different groups of pupils represented at the school make good progress, including less-able pupils, pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs. By the time that they leave the school, pupils typically reach standards that are a little above average. They do not, however, do as well in English grammar, punctuation and spelling as they do in other subjects.

You have changed the curriculum, so that pupils are able to develop their skills progressively in different subjects and successive year groups. You have made sure also that the curriculum includes a range of opportunities for the pupils to learn about and understand British values, including some striking examples that are among the things about which the pupils talk most enthusiastically. The impact of that work on pupils' awareness is not yet as great for all of them as it could be, however, because you do not have a clear and coherent strategy for promoting British values.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The school's policies and practices for safeguarding pupils are fit for purpose. The school's procedure for logging and reporting any concerns is straightforward and known well to staff. The staff are up to date with the latest guidance from the government. You have put in place a planned cycle of training, which ensures that both the staff and members of the governing body are kept up to date; for example, you are about to undertake training in the government's Prevent agenda.

Cases involving safeguarding issues are rare at the school, but nevertheless, you show no sense of complacency. You work closely with relevant agencies when necessary. Consequently, pupils feel very safe at the school and their parents are highly satisfied with this aspect of the school's work.

### **Inspection findings**

- You have made sure that the school is outward looking and have made very effective use of partnerships with other schools both to evaluate the impact of the work at Ingham and to bring about improvements. The school is itself a community in which the staff are as interested in learning and as ready to do so as are the pupils.
- You use information effectively about how well pupils are doing to identify individual pupils' particular learning needs and the specific difficulties that they experience. Subsequently, you put in place activities, experiences and ways of working designed precisely to meet those needs. As a result, you can show how the pupils concerned catch up with their peers.
- For example, you have undertaken a close analysis of the factors that have previously led to a lower than average proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in phonics, identifying precisely the issues for individual pupils. You have, accordingly, made carefully considered and well-judged changes in the organisation of classes and to the type of support provided to pupils. As a result, pupils who were not able to reach the expected level initially catch up with their peers by the end of Key Stage 1.
- By the time that pupils leave the school, differences between the achievement of groups, such as pupils eligible for the pupil premium and others, have been reduced and in some cases reversed.

- Senior leaders, the governing body and staff are fully aware of which aspects of pupils' achievement are weaker than others. That has led, for example, to a strong emphasis in all classes on improving pupils' skills in grammar and spelling. The data from the tests that you carry out show that pupils' spelling, for example, is now improving rapidly.
- Your work to provide pupils with better feedback about their learning has had a positive effect. Staff have ensured that the school's marking policy is used throughout the school. As a result, pupils are progressively gaining a better understanding of what they are learning.
- The teachers check carefully on how well pupils have grasped the things to be learned, including during the course of lessons, and look for opportunities to push pupils further, either through the questions that they ask, or additional work that they set. In a particularly effective example that I observed in a mathematics lesson, the teacher rephrased a question a number of times when it was apparent that the pupils had not understood, enabling the pupils eventually to recognise misconceptions in their answers, and with the teacher not moving on to the next point until it was apparent that the pupils understood.
- The pupils' understanding of the things that they are learning is increased also by the opportunities that they are given to assess their own progress and also to make decisions about the learning activities that they will do in lessons. The pupils were able to explain to me how the menu of activities from which they must select, with guidance from the teacher when appropriate, can be a 'starter', a 'main course', 'dessert', or 'coffee and mints', which helped them to think about the level that they have reached in their learning currently and what would provide them with the best balance of challenge and chance of success, so that they make secure progress.
- In conjunction with things that pupils find out when teachers mark their work, pupils are able to build up a picture, so that, as one pupil told me, 'You know when you've got everything right' and so they are then ready, prepared and wanting to move on.
- Generally, pupils enjoy lessons and apply themselves well to the work that they are given. They explained to me, for example, how the teachers make learning French fun, through activities such as making French Christmas baubles, learning to count in French using Advent calendars and singing songs in French.
- You have put in place a range of opportunities for pupils to learn about communities different from their own and about the wider world. Those opportunities are beginning to help pupils to appreciate different cultures. For example, the pupils described to me a visit they made to the Hindu temple in London, one summing up the views of others by saying, 'That was amazing!'
- Other opportunities are helping pupils to begin to appreciate British values. A notable example was 'democracy week', during which pupils learned about electoral and parliamentary debate. It was clear from my discussions with the pupils that such activities are helping them learn to respect different points of view.

- Not all the pupils with whom I spoke had such a strong sense of learning about such things. I found less evidence of opportunities for pupils to learn about and to develop their views as part of day-to-day lessons.
- Nevertheless, the school helps pupils to build on their experiences by responding well to initiatives taken by them. For example, the school council decided to undertake an environmental project and to enter it, successfully, for the Speaker's Award (an award scheme run by the Parliamentary Education Service), in which the Ingham project was 'highly commended'.
- In another example, a small group of pupils has organised as its own idea a lunchtime library club. The organisers arrange different activities on different occasions. For example, I witnessed them giving a book reading to a group of 15 or so pupils, engaging the audience with questions and discussion, just as they have experienced their teachers doing in lessons. The organisers use a rota system to enable as many pupils to take part as possible over time.
- In addition, events such as Primary Futures Week and a 'Dragon's Den' project are increasing pupils' positive attitudes to school by helping them to clarify their personal ambitions and to learn about the importance of education for life after school.

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

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- pupils' achievement in English grammar, punctuation and spelling at least matches their achievement in other subjects
- the school's work to promote British values has maximum impact on pupils' awareness and understanding by developing the range of activities into a clear and coherent strategy.

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with senior leaders, representatives of the governing body, the member of staff in charge of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and with the designated person responsible for safeguarding. I had a discussion by telephone with a representative of the local authority. I made a series of visits to lessons jointly with the headteacher, spending time in all classrooms at different times of the day. I examined examples of pupils' work. I held a range of discussions with a wide variety of pupils, informally when observing breaktimes and during lessons, and formally with a group of pupils. I observed pupils' behaviour around the school at the start of the day, at breaktimes and during lessons. I met with parents at the beginning of the school day and looked at the views of parents posted on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I examined a range of documents, including safeguarding records and policies, behaviour records and policies, the latest achievement and attendance information for the school, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, and external reports on the quality of the school's work.