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Miss Rebekah Spencer
Seagrave Village Primary School
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Dear Miss Spencer

Short inspection of Seagrave Village Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 14 January 2016, 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 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your deputy headteacher ensure that your staff have a continuous focus on high standards and you communicate clearly to them, and all pupils, the importance of hard work and success. In turn, your staff are a united team where everyone, regardless of their role, feels valued. Those whom I met during my visit explained that, despite it being a small school, it is 'one big family' where everyone knows every child. You have given staff the confidence and drive to move the school on together. As a result, staff say that there is a high level of trust between everyone. They continually use each other's strengths and experience to improve their own work, for the benefit of pupils. As one member of staff explained to me, 'I feel extremely privileged to work here.'

The governing body strongly supports you and your staff. The governors too want to see Seagrave produce the best outcomes possible and are not afraid to challenge you, rigorously if necessary, to ensure that this happens. They have a good overview of the strengths of the school and the areas that need further refinement. Together, you and they have accurately assessed the school and have written a clear and sensible plan of improvement. Although it is clear from the plan what things will be done, you have not included details of who will check that each action has taken place, nor when. This risks governors being unsure that you have implemented all of the improvements effectively and on time. You are also aware that, although your website gives very good levels of information in many respects, it is not fully

compliant with statutory requirements. This is because you have not yet uploaded details about the structure and responsibilities of the governing body and its committees.

You have dealt with the areas identified for improvement at your last school inspection well. Staff now give all pupils, including the most able, sufficient opportunities to work independently. Expectations are high, and pupils take careful note of the advice teachers give them to improve what they do.

Pupils make good progress from their starting points. Last year, all the Year 6 cohort left having made the progress expected of them, with a greater proportion than the national average making more than this. The school's recent information shows that pupils currently in the school are making good progress too. An increasing number are working not only within, but also beyond, their age-related expectations in all subjects.

During my visit, I also looked at a large number of exercise books, and talked to many pupils about what they were learning. Their work confirms that their progress is good. Pupils complete their work with pride, neatly and carefully recording calculations and written tasks. Pupils are also confident in explaining what they are learning, and which particular skills they are improving. However, pupils in Key Stage 1 do not yet have enough opportunities to write at length. As a result, progress in writing is not yet as fast here as it is in reading or mathematics.

Capacity for further improvement in the school is good. A very large majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, say that their children are happy, well taught and make good progress. A large majority would recommend the school to other parents. A small minority of parents expressed concerns regarding the leadership of the school, mostly in respect of the recent management of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The headteacher has the full confidence of governors, and leaders are putting in place communication regarding this issue.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your staff believe that it is very important that they keep pupils safe. The policies and practices that you use for safeguarding are fit for purpose. You ensure that staff are well trained to understand the warning signs of potential abuse. Those whom I spoke with were very confident in knowing what to do, and whom to report to, if they had any concerns. You work closely with external agencies, where necessary, to ensure that any necessary steps are taken. You are not afraid to take your concerns further if those agencies do not respond effectively or quickly enough.

Pupils I met told me unanimously that they feel very safe in school. They made it clear that any bullying is very rare and, if it happens, staff deal with it quickly and effectively 'so that everyone is friends again'.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have created a successful school where there is a positive climate for learning. You have high expectations and your staff work closely together in shared ways, learning from each other to ensure that lessons are engaging and exciting for pupils.
- Governors hold you and senior leaders to account. They have an effective understanding of the need to ensure that progress is good or better, and visit the school regularly to see learning taking place. Governors ensure that teachers meet their performance targets before they award them any salary rises.
- You have ensured that the curriculum for pupils is both broad and balanced, and fit for purpose. It is particularly effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils understand clearly the difference between right and wrong, and the consequences of their actions. They become young people who have a growing awareness of other faiths and cultures, and know it is very important to respect others.
- The new assessment system that you are using is effective in showing outcomes for each pupil. This, and published information from previous years, demonstrate that progress is good, but is slightly slower in writing in Years 1 and 2, where pupils do not receive as many opportunities for extended writing as they need. Progress throughout the school remains strongest in mathematics. All pupils at Seagrave make good gains. This includes disadvantaged pupils, where remaining gaps in achievement are small and closing.
- Pupils are able to explain clearly what they are learning about and which skills they need to improve. For example, in one lesson I visited, Year 3 pupils were competently revising their writing from the previous lesson, inserting the necessary features to compose a play script. Pupils at Seagrave are confident about their learning and complete their work proudly. Year 6 pupils that I spoke with feel that they will be well prepared for secondary school when they leave.
- Teaching assistants support effectively those pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs. Relationships are warm and respectful, as they are throughout the school. Teaching assistants assist these pupils appropriately, but do not give excessive support. As a result, these pupils are developing independence and confidence in the things that they are learning.
- Attendance is above the national average and rising considerably. You and the governors do not authorise requests for holidays in term-time because you believe it is vital that pupils are in school to learn as much as possible. You are taking all steps necessary to address excessive absence in the very small number of cases where this exists.
- Pupils are taught well to understand and minimise a range of potential risks to their own safety. For example, a pupil I met with could explain clearly how it is important never to give personal details online because you cannot be sure the person you are communicating with is who they claim to be.

- You and your staff take the safeguarding of pupils seriously. They have been trained well and know they must report any concerns to you or the deputy headteacher. Pupils I spoke with are very clear that, if they have worries, any member of staff will help them and sort things out.
- At least a large majority of parents express very positive views of the school. A small minority submitted views on Parent View expressing reservations about the school's leadership, mostly in respect of the management of the PTA.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- the school development plan makes it clear who will check that each action has been done and when
- the school's website is fully compliant with regulations
- communication is improved so that parents feel informed about the decisions leaders make and why they have been taken
- progress is accelerated in writing in Key Stage 1 by giving pupils more regular opportunities to write at greater length.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Leicestershire local authority. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Roary Pownall
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher and coordinator of the early years, representatives of the governing body and a considerable proportion of teachers and support staff. You and I visited all classes to observe teaching and learning, to examine pupils' work and to talk to them about their work. I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, and met with groups of them at break time and towards the end of the school day. I considered the views of 41 parents posted on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I read a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, your development plan, the latest achievement and attendance information held by the school, anonymised examples of teachers' appraisals as well as information related to attendance and safeguarding records and policies.