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Dear Mrs Watts

Short inspection of North Stainley Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 3 February 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 November 2010.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Pupils at North Stainley Primary School are happy, confident learners who blossom in your care. Despite the challenges presented by a small and very old building, you and your staff make effective use of the space, managing to create a safe, affirming environment. Photographs of smiling pupils, including 'pupil of the week' and 'mathematician of the week', adorn the corridors, along with celebrations of pupils' accomplishments in sports and other endeavours.

You deploy every teacher as a leader in the running of this very small school. Teachers, along with teaching assistants, form a close-knit team who have developed well because of the effective training, challenge and support they receive.

You ensure that teachers assess pupils' learning accurately. The effective new system of assessment you and your teachers have developed, in collaboration with local schools, enables you to continue to track each pupil's progress carefully, and to identify any pupil who may be underperforming. You have a good handle on the progress being made by pupils with special educational needs or disability and those who are disadvantaged, and where any pupils are falling behind you take action. As a result, almost all pupils make expected progress and many make more than

expected progress. You and the governing body recognise the scope for more pupils to make faster progress in order to reach the highest level of attainment.

Governors make regular visits to listen to pupils and look at their work. Regular checks on the school's work help governors understand where strengths and weaknesses lie. This enables the governing body to challenge as well as support you and your staff, and to set clear targets for improvement. Governors are passionate about what they want for the pupils at North Stainley and communicate their vision clearly.

The last inspection identified two areas for improvement. The first was to improve pupils' use of information and communication technology (ICT). Teachers and pupils make effective use of the up-to-date ICT equipment that you have invested in since the last inspection. The second area highlighted was to improve opportunities for children in the early years provision to learn outdoors. Reception children now have everyday access to a secure outdoor space. However, the resources available and the way in which they are arranged offer the children limited challenge.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors effectively fulfil their statutory duty to safeguard pupils. You carry out robust checks when recruiting staff to make sure they are suitable to work with children. You ensure that accidents are properly recorded and that regular fire drills are carried out. Arrangements for escorting pupils daily, in their high-visibility vests, to the village hall and back are safe.

A small but significant minority of parents responding to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, last term felt that adults did not deal with bullying effectively. You have been proactive in listening to parents and pupils, and carried out your own anti-bullying survey with parents to seek their views. About half of the parents responded; none had concerns. Pupils told me that they were happy in school and that bullying is very rare. Pupils are confident that adults will deal well with any incidents.

Inspection findings

- You monitor teaching regularly and provide feedback and guidance to teachers, on which they act. Teachers observe each other's practice. They scrutinise pupils' workbooks in each subject, identifying areas for improvement in their own and the teaching of others. You follow up to check for improvement where it is needed. You also set teachers challenging targets for the progress made by pupils in their classes.
- The actions of leaders to improve mathematics have had a strong impact on teaching. Most of the teaching of mathematics challenges pupils well. For example, in an upper Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson we observed together, pupils grappled with tricky problems. Both the teacher and teaching assistant worked seamlessly together as they asked a series of increasingly difficult questions about the relative speed of two cyclists based on time and distance travelled. Questions required pupils to think carefully and to explain their thinking. Work in pupils' books and teachers' challenging written feedback reflect what we saw in this lesson. Pupils really enjoy the 'Passport' challenges, which are resulting in improving mental arithmetic skills.
- Pupils' progress is good due to good teaching. All Reception children make at least expected progress from their broadly average starting points on entry to the early years. A few make more than expected progress in some areas of learning. All reached a good level of development in 2015.
- Almost all pupils go on to make good progress through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Across the school, most pupils are working at or above the age-related standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Around two thirds of pupils are reading at above age-related expectations, though fewer pupils are attaining as highly in mathematics and writing. Pupils' workbooks show that writing skills are developing well. However, more could be done to raise the quality of handwriting because teachers do not always insist that pupils produce their neatest work.
- Teachers deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, and this contributes well to pupils' personal development, as well as their progress in the full range of National Curriculum subjects. Pupils enjoy a rich diet of additional activities in and out of the classroom. This ranges from the Forest School initiative to extensive opportunities to participate in sports and sporting events, such as an inter-school swimming gala.
- Along with you and the staff, governors promote the school's values very well, ensuring these permeate the whole curriculum. As a result, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, and prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Through a programme of religious education, philosophy, the humanities and collective worship, pupils explore and discuss a range of topical questions such as, 'should we allow refugees to settle in Britain?' Pupils shared with me their insights into the major world religions and demonstrated a good understanding of individual liberty and the rule of law.

- Pupils' understanding of democracy is very well developed, and they are able to make a positive contribution, because all pupils in upper Key Stage 2 sit on the arts council, sports council, eco council or worship committee. The worship committee helps to plan weekly assemblies. Council and committee members act on the suggestions of younger pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- expectations of pupils' handwriting are raised to match that of the best
- more pupils in all year groups make greater than expected progress in order to reach above-average standards in all subjects
- outdoor provision for Reception children offers greater challenge.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for North Yorkshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Philip Riozzi
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

We met together to discuss your view of the strengths and weaknesses in the work of the school. I met with a group of pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 and discussed with them what it is like to be a pupil at North Stainley. I also met with four members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and the teaching team. We observed teaching together in each classroom at least once, where I was able to look in pupils' workbooks and discuss with pupils their learning. I examined a range of documents and records, including the governors' self-evaluation, the school development plan, leaders' monitoring notes, behaviour and safeguarding records, and achievement information.