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Mrs Helen Steele  
Principal  
Caldicotes Primary Academy  
Spencerfield Crescent  
Middlesbrough  
TS3 9HD

Dear Mrs Steele

### **Short inspection of Caldicotes Primary Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 10 March 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in June 2012.

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

The school has converted to an academy since the last inspection. The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education seen in the predecessor school and built on many of its strengths. The school's ethos successfully promotes a friendly, welcoming and calm environment where everyone is respected and valued. There is a purposeful and caring atmosphere. Pupils are supported and challenged to be the best that they can, and encouraged to make their 'best better'. Pupils are happy to come to school and value the advice and support given by teachers.

You have nurtured constructive relationships between staff and pupils, based on promoting positive behaviours. As a result, pupils behave well in and around the school. They have a positive attitude to learning and socialise well together at playtimes. Pupils settle quickly in lessons, move around the school in an orderly manner, and respond immediately to adults' instructions.

Parents are confident in your leadership, feel well informed about the progress their children are making and consider that the behaviour of pupils is good. Information provided to parents on the school's website meets requirements but is not always easy to access or understand.

Effective leadership, including the support of governors and the Academies Enterprise Trust, has ensured that the school has maintained the strengths that were noted at the last inspection. The shared ambition to see the school continue to improve can be seen in school leaders' actions to identify issues early and address them speedily. This is demonstrated by the improvements in early years provision which have seen outcomes for children improve for each of the last two years.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and your staff give the upmost attention to keeping pupils safe. You ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, and records are detailed and of high quality. Rigorous systems are in place that go beyond what is required and promote a culture in which pupils say they feel safe. You and your safeguarding team continually review provision to ensure that practice and processes are as good as they can be. Your drive to ensure that pupils are safe extends to a programme of early interventions and support for vulnerable families, working closely with other agencies and maintaining a point of contact for parents even during school holidays.

### **Inspection findings**

- Evidence seen during the inspection supports the view held by school leaders that this is a good school with some notable strengths. The vision to establish 'a purposeful yet nurturing atmosphere, where both families and pupils are supported and are confident to be challenged' is reflected in the ambition of the trust, yourself and senior leaders, including governors.
- Strong teaching, pupils' positive attitudes to learning and a balanced curriculum are raising attainment. In addition, you monitor, support and challenge staff and hold them responsible for the progress pupils make. You have rigorous systems in place to make sure that teachers are well prepared to meet your high expectations. As a result, teachers consistently apply policies and effective practice in and around the school.
- Where inconsistencies emerge, the school leadership team acts quickly to identify issues and address them. This is because school leaders have an accurate view of what is working in classrooms and where classroom practice needs to be strengthened further. School leaders, along with the support from the trust, provide effective interventions to strengthen teaching and share best practice.
- Pupils of all abilities, including the most able, make rapid progress across the school. As a result, the vast majority of pupils leave the school well equipped to access learning in secondary school. Despite the speedy progress pupils make, some still do not achieve the expected standard in writing. School leaders rightly identify this as a continued focus for improvement.

- The picture is much improved. However, leaders recognise that despite recent improvements, outcomes at the end of early years are still not strong enough for some children. This rightly continues to be a focus for development.
- Pupils who need to catch up do so quickly. Disadvantaged pupils and those vulnerable to underachievement are well supported; planned learning matches their needs well and advice on how to improve their work is followed up systematically. As a result, these pupils make better progress than seen nationally.
- Pupils are enthused about their life in school. They concentrate well and contribute to the purposeful working atmosphere. Pupils speak confidently about what makes them proud in their work and their enthusiasm for their learning. They take an interest in the achievement of others. As a result, pupils have high aspirations and a clear understanding of what they need to do to achieve them.
- Bullying is rare and pupils talk knowingly about the different forms it can take and the impact it has on people. Pupils who are 'bully busters' on the playground are well regarded and contribute to an orderly and friendly atmosphere. Staff respond rapidly to pupils' concerns and anxieties. Consequently, pupils say they feel safe in school.
- Governors' regular presence in the school, and systems for checking on the progress the school is making, ensure that they know the school well. They work closely with school leaders to understand the priorities for improvement and ask searching questions to ensure that the right direction of travel is set. On occasions, school leaders and governors lack clarity about what will take the school to the next level, and what it will look like when they accomplish this.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they have a more accurate understanding of what is required to take the school to the next level so that they can better identify the steps required to achieve this
- best practice seen in lessons is more consistently applied in all classrooms so that the number of pupils reaching expected standards in writing matches that currently seen in reading and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Brown  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. I looked at information from Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I evaluated recent information about the progress pupils make across the school and looked in pupils' books to check the accuracy of assessment made by teachers. I visited all the classrooms with you to observe teaching and carried out joint observations in some lessons. I spoke about the school with a range of pupils in lessons and at playtimes, and a selected group of pupils. I reviewed safeguarding arrangements in the school, including documentation, files and information on the school's website.