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Ms Sally Hey  
Headteacher  
Foxhill Primary School  
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Dear Ms Hey

### **Short inspection of Foxhill Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 29 June 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.**

You and your leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school in the six years since the school was last inspected. Your actions have improved the quality of the teaching of science and that of day-to-day assessment, the two areas for improvement identified in November 2010. Your accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses over time have allowed you to respond effectively to the changing needs and expectations placed upon the school. Along with staff and governors, you take great pride in the school and, in line with the school's ethos, inspire and challenge pupils through a vibrant and creative learning environment. Consequently, pupils become well-rounded young people who are eager learners and ready for the next stages of education. Nearly all parents are appreciative of your actions to improve the school. One parent wrote, 'I could not be happier with this school. They are caring and nurturing with the best intentions towards all children. I am happy with the progress my child is making and the exciting curriculum he receives.'

You have ensured that standards of attainment have been maintained and improved. They are particularly high in writing because of the good quality of teaching and effective guidance that pupils receive.

Through your evaluation of the school's work, you accurately identify the areas for development and take effective actions to secure improvement. These include narrowing the gaps in progress between boys and girls, particularly in reading. Additionally, you have rightly taken the necessary steps to bring about improvements in the attendance of

all groups of pupils at school, particularly those who are disadvantaged. The school's robust implementation of the new attendance policy ensures the appropriate challenge of parents who condone the unauthorised absence of their children. This, coupled with the use of a range of rewards and competitions, encourages pupils to attend regularly. Consequently, current levels of attendance are above national averages.

You and your staff continue to promote and champion effective learning for the small, but increasing, number of most-able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Teaching regularly provides appropriate challenges for these pupils, particularly in mathematics and writing. You ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or most-able, receive appropriate support and challenge to succeed in the full range of subjects. For example, the provision of additional instrumental tuition allows pupils to develop their skills in playing brass instruments and contribute to the school's band in a community that has a love of music.

Your thoughtful use of space provides high-quality outdoor learning in the early years. The development of the 'den' provides a safe outdoor space in which children can learn, while also being protected from harsh weather conditions. Teaching is now of a better quality, particularly in phonics (letters and the sounds that they make), which ensures that a high proportion of children continue to reach a good level of development.

Governors have a good understanding of the school because they visit regularly, and always have a presence at parent-teacher progress meetings. Governors hold you rigorously to account for the impact of your actions at meetings. However, governors' challenge to subject leaders does not have the same rigour because governors do not receive sufficiently detailed analysis of the impact of subject leaders' actions on different groups of pupils.

Pupils' behaviour is good and reflects the ethos of the school. They are eager learners who are keen to discuss their learning. The new uniform introduced for older pupils, which includes a tie and blazer, results in them being smart ambassadors for the school and reflects their growing maturity as young citizens.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding adhere to the most recent statutory guidance. The school has robust procedures for checking the suitability of staff and volunteers working with children. Staff are vigilant to protect pupils from dangers, including those posed by radicalisation and extremism, because staff are well trained. Records show that leaders and staff take effective actions to address any concerns relating to the safety or welfare of pupils, including ensuring that the school site is secure and safe.

### **Inspection findings**

- You and other senior leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement because of your rigorous monitoring. As a result, your school development plan contains the appropriate priorities for further improvement. Your actions have been swift and well targeted, quickly

becoming embedded into the life of school. Consequently standards of attainment, particularly in writing, remain high and the progress of all groups, including that of boys, is improving at pace. You also recognise, because of your candid evaluations, that further action is necessary to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently at its best.

- Some leaders have positive impact outside the school through the delivery of additional support to improve the quality of teaching in other schools. Your deputy headteacher is actively engaged in supporting other teachers to improve their teaching of writing.
- Middle leaders monitor the progress and attainment of individual pupils meticulously. They do not, however, regularly collate this individual information to evaluate the impact of their actions on pupil groups.
- Your governors are well informed about the school's strengths and areas for improvement because of the quality of information provided in your reports. New procedures ensure that governors receive paperwork well in advance of their meetings. Consequently, they have time to reflect upon the information it contains and prepare appropriately challenging questions that hold you stringently to account. Governors, however, do not hold middle leaders as sharply accountable for the impact of their actions on different groups of pupils across the school. Governors have ensured that the school's website meets the requirements for information about the school.
- In 2015 overall attendance was close to the national average. However, the attendance of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals was in the lowest 10% nationally. You and your governors recognised that this was unacceptable and have taken appropriate action. The new attendance policy ensures that the school follows national guidelines and holds the parents of unauthorised absentees to account for their children's loss of education. Regular awards and attendance prizes celebrate pupils and classes who come to school frequently. Consequently, attendance for all groups is rising rapidly and overall is now above the national average.
- In 2015 pupils achieved well in the national tests in Year 6 in reading and mathematics. In writing, they did very well and achieved significantly better than pupils nationally. Nearly all pupils made at least good progress from their starting points in mathematics and writing, particularly the most able pupils. However, boys did less well in reading, where their progress was well below national figures. The school's records and work in pupils' books show that standards are being further improved and that boys' progress is accelerating, particularly in reading. The rate of progress made by pupils is stronger in key stage 2 because of stronger teaching. Leaders are aware of this and appropriate actions are in place to develop the consistency of the quality of teaching and accelerate further the progress made in key stage 1.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and leaders have a good understanding of the achievement of individual pupils because of accurate day-to-day assessment. Teachers use this information effectively to give clear guidance about how pupils can improve their work and plan appropriately challenging activities.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils from all groups, including the disadvantaged and the most able. Skilled and dedicated teaching assistants are deployed well to lead pupils' learning. Teachers and other adults use questioning

effectively to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.

- The school's wide and rich curriculum ensures that pupils have many opportunities to practise core skills in other subjects, for example through the mathematical interpretation of data or longer pieces of factual writing in geography or history. Teachers often plan topic themes and activities that reinforce learning in reading, writing or mathematics alongside developing other subject skills. For example, in Year 5, pupils improved their geography skills through the practical study of the contrasting locality of Whitby. This visit also consolidated pupils' understanding of the context within a book they are studying, which is set around the town's abbey.
- The frequent and systematic teaching of music skills ensures that pupils become competent in reading musical notation and singing in parts. Leaders actively promote music as an aid to learning and encourage pupils to learn instrumental skills. Consequently, many pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, learn to play instruments or join the school choir; some join the school's brass band and play alongside teachers and other adults.
- Work in books shows that pupils regularly undertake practical science investigations. These investigations, and the subsequent recording and evaluation of findings, ensures that pupils develop good practice in scientific enquiry and deepen their understanding of concepts.
- Pupils, including boys, develop a love of reading and read widely and often. Your development of the school's library and purchase of new stock, following consultation with and requests from pupils, means they have access to up-to-date and appropriately challenging reading material.
- Amendments to the school's timetable ensure that pupils who most need support to develop their reading and phonics skills, particularly boys, receive regular expert help. Additional training for staff have improved the quality of teaching of phonics. As a result, nearly all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, meet the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- governors hold middle leaders more stringently to account for the impact of their actions on the progress made by pupils
- middle leaders improve their analysis of assessment information to identify the impact of their actions on the progress of different groups in each key stage
- pupils consistently receive the highest-quality teaching to ensure that the gap in achievement between boys and girls, particularly in reading, is closed.

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

Yours sincerely

John Nixon  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

**Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher, teaching staff, the chair of the governing body and other governors. I also met with the local authority's adviser linked with the school. I spoke with pupils during lessons and around the school. I took account of the written responses from parents and the information contained within responses to online questionnaires for pupils, parents and staff. I visited classrooms to observe pupils' learning and looked at their work in books. I reviewed information about pupils' progress and attainment and at the school's self-evaluation and action plans. I looked at safeguarding, including evaluating the impact of the school's procedures and policies to keep children safe, recruitment checks and record-keeping.