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Miss Sarah Johnston
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Dear Miss Johnston

Short inspection of Cutthorpe Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 17 January 2017, 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 September 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your school motto is 'Achieving and caring together', and you have ensured that both of these elements are valued highly and embedded fully within the school. Pupils told me that they feel safe at Cutthorpe and that they make good progress in their classes. They show interest and enthusiasm for their work and their books indicate that they are making good progress throughout the school.

You make sure that staff, governors, parents and pupils have the opportunity to contribute to developments in the school. For example, they have been involved in well-advanced plans to introduce wraparound care for pupils, to help those working parents with their childcare arrangements before and after school. This strong partnership means that staff feel valued and pupils become confident, independent learners; the vast majority of parents would recommend the school to others.

You have successfully resolved all the areas that were identified for improvement at the last inspection. For example, pupils enthusiastically explained to me the 'red, amber, green' cup system that informs the teacher whether pupils understand exactly what to do during a lesson. As a result of this, teachers know which pupils need extra support and this support can then be given quickly.

You have ensured that the quality of teaching is at least good throughout the school. The subject leaders for English and mathematics told me that they value the recent training opportunities they have had. The moderation of pupils' work with other schools helps them to support teachers to ensure that the assessments of pupils' attainment and progress at Cutthorpe are accurate.

The current priorities for school improvement are well understood by staff and governors. During our discussion, the governors explained these current priorities clearly to me. The plans that leaders have written are clear and enable the governing body to check progress against the proposed actions. As a result of this, governors are holding you and the subject leaders for English and mathematics to account well for the progress that pupils are making.

You and the subject leader for English have recently introduced strategies to improve standards in writing, particularly for boys. Their newness has meant that these are not fully in place with all teachers and teaching assistants, but they are already having an impact, and boys' standards in writing are beginning to improve.

You and I discussed that the governing body has not ensured that it meets the statutory requirement for the publication of information on the school's website so that parents have fully up-to-date information on the work of the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding and the welfare of pupils are of the utmost importance at Cutthorpe. You ensure that all the appropriate vetting checks take place before an adult works at the school. Records are well organised and detailed. There is a strong system in place for staff members to report any safeguarding concerns they may have regarding the welfare of the pupils. You have made referrals to the local authority when necessary, and rigorously follow the correct procedures before taking pupils who leave the school off the school roll. Staff and governors have received the most up-to-date and relevant training and speak knowledgeably about issues relating to safeguarding pupils.

The vast majority of parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, said that their child was safe in school. Pupils overwhelmingly say that they feel safe in school. The pupils told me that bullying was very rare, but if they had any concerns then there were adults in school that would help to stop it. 'Worry boxes' around the school encourage pupils to write down any concerns they may have. The pupils told me that these were used well and staff responded to any concerns raised. Pupils are able to explain how to keep themselves safe when online using the 'block it, flag it, zip it' maxim. The pupils also spoke confidently about water safety, stranger danger and the training to ride a bicycle that occurs in key stage 2.

Inspection findings

- Governors have a wide range of experience and skills which they use to good effect to ensure that they know the school well. They ask pertinent questions at meetings, guaranteeing that you and the other school leaders are held fully to account for your actions. The governing body has been instrumental in driving change at the school. For example, as a result of a parental suggestion, governors recently arranged a service whereby parents can drop their children off at school early, before school staff take over the supervision at 8.45am.
- Governors have also received a range of relevant training, covering for example school progress and attainment information, finance and safeguarding. As a result of this, governors have the knowledge and skills that enable the governing body to discharge its duties effectively.
- Cutthorpe is a calm and orderly school where relationships between pupils and adults are strong. The behaviour code is followed consistently by teachers in all classes. Behaviour in school and outside at break- and lunchtimes is good. Pupils listen well to their teachers and work hard.
- You have implemented a strong system to keep track of the attainment and progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers regularly update this information so that any pupils who are falling behind are quickly given the support they need in order to catch up. You also analyse this information for any patterns that may occur. For example, you recently identified that boys' writing was an issue and the actions that you and the subject leader for English have put in place to address this are already having an impact and standards are rising.
- You have made good use of the support offered by the local authority. This has enabled you to validate the accuracy of your judgements on the quality of teaching in the school, the attainment and progress of pupils and the standard of work produced by pupils in their books.
- The school has good procedures and policies in place for monitoring pupils' attendance. Recent figures indicate that pupils at Cutthorpe attend school more regularly than other pupils do nationally.
- In 2016, results indicate that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly in line with other pupils nationally at the end of key stages 1 and 2. The proportions of pupils achieving a good level of development when leaving the Reception Year and those achieving the phonics standard at the end of Year 1 are both above national averages.
- The pupils with whom I spoke told me that they enjoyed school and there was little they would change about it. They particularly like being given extra responsibilities, especially the 'Bronze ambassadors' scheme, which gives pupils the opportunity to organise and run a sports event at the school.

- When I was listening to pupils read, the majority told me that they enjoy reading and that they read regularly at home. Their reading diaries showed that this was the case. They read confidently using the appropriate expression, and correctly take account of the punctuation.
- During my tour of the school, I saw children in the well-organised and resourced mixed Reception/Year 1 class using the correct mathematical language to describe two- and three-dimensional shapes accurately. There was evidence of good progress in writing from Years 2 to 5. In Year 6, pupils were being suitably challenged to order decimals by dividing fractions. In all four classrooms, there was a good, lively, working atmosphere and positive relationships between pupils and adults were clearly evident.
- The school does not meet statutory requirements for the publication of information on its website about the curriculum, governance or the school's use of the physical education and sport funding.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all teachers and teaching assistants fully implement the recently introduced strategies to accelerate pupils' progress in writing, particularly for the boys
- the school website is fully compliant with statutory requirements, to enable parents to have fully up-to-date information about the work of the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Stonier
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I held meetings with you, the subject leaders for English and mathematics, and three members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair and a group of six pupils. I also met with a representative of the local authority and a representative from a provider of alternative provision that a pupil attends. I scrutinised a range of the school's documents, including those relating to the progress of pupils, the school's improvement planning, its self-evaluation, and documents relating to safeguarding.

I visited all the classrooms to see the learning that was taking place. I spoke with pupils and looked at the work in their books. I listened to four pupils read. I spoke with parents as they brought their children to school in the morning and I took account of the views of staff and parents through responses to their respective online surveys.