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Ms Jenette Guy
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Guy

Short inspection of Windhill Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 1 February 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 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your strong leadership has steered the school successfully through the changes in staffing and the integration of new, less experienced teachers. You say that these staff have brought new energy and ideas to the school. They are united in their dedication to quickly developing their own skills to impact positively on outcomes for pupils.

You have built a very positive culture for children and staff. You give your full support to the staff team, while constantly challenging them to do their best. This is respected by everyone and there is an obvious shared culture of learning in school – adults and pupils strive to be the best they can be.

Middle and senior leaders have ably risen to the challenge of supporting new colleagues. The induction process and action plans for new staff have been rigorous, with clear direction and expectations. The experience, knowledge and skills of leaders are deployed well to ensure a consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across school. The pace of improvement in teaching has been rapid since September 2016, as you knew it would have to be, and consequently pupils are making good gains in their learning.

Governors share your vision and are proud to be part of the school. A strong partnership has been created, where honest and open discussion takes place and support is strong. You provide governors with focused and precise improvement

plans and highlight progress against these, which, along with external reports, enable governors to ask informed questions about school performance and improvement.

The confident, respectful and friendly attitudes of pupils are clear to see, and often commented on by visitors and parents. Many pupils wanted to share their learning with me throughout the inspection. They gave enthusiastic summaries of their learning, for example a pupil in Year 5 was very eager to tell me about the new strategy he had learned in mathematics that morning. Pupils also spoke about their enjoyment at break and lunchtimes, because of the direction and support of staff and the activities and resources they have access to. They enjoy the extra-curricular activities that are available, as well as the opportunity to join friends at the breakfast club before school starts each morning. They take clear responsibilities themselves too. For example, their work as Eco Warriors was high profile – everyone in school was reminded to save energy as part of 'Switch off Fortnight'.

Improvements in the early years are clear to see since the last inspection. The provision for two year olds, under your remit since September 2016, and the development of the outdoor area in particular, are having a positive impact on children's progress. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of their time in the early years has continued to rise and is now similar to that of other children nationally.

Parents have confidence in the school successfully supporting their children's academic and social needs. They particularly mention the care and positive attitudes from school leaders and staff.

At the last inspection, an area for improvement was to provide appropriate challenge for higher-attaining pupils. You and your team had successfully addressed this, as can be seen in prior work and pupil outcomes in 2015. However, the bar has been raised with the introduction of the new national expectations in English and mathematics, and you are now working with a new team. You have rightly identified that the level of challenge for higher-ability pupils is not consistent across the school. You have clear plans in place to remedy this.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and all staff have a good understanding of safeguarding policies and practices, and their role in ensuring that pupils are safe. Leaders ensure that everyone is kept up to date with training and any changes in policy. There are effective systems for reporting concerns, and record-keeping is organised and checked carefully. There are clear procedures for the recruitment and induction of new staff.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school because they have a variety of assemblies and lessons about how to keep themselves and others safe. These include learning about keeping safe online, bullying, fire safety led by the fire service and road safety. Pupils say that bullying is very rare, but speak with confidence about key

staff who are always available at breaktime and throughout the day to help pupils if they have a problem.

Inspection findings

- Though there have been several changes in staffing and arrangements for the early years, outcomes for children have continued to improve. In September, provision for two-year-olds became part of the school. Children get a very positive start to school life, which now continues seamlessly through Nursery, Reception and the rest of school. For example, children entering Nursery this January have settled very quickly and are already making good progress.
- Much work has been done to develop an early years' outdoor learning environment, where children can explore, experiment and develop their skills, independently and cooperatively, in a wide variety of different activities. This work is having a positive impact – children in the outdoor area are industrious and sustain interest and concentration in their activities. One group were building a den (or, as one child said, 'It's a bungalow, because there is only one floor. We have learnt about that.') and an outdoor eating area. The children pointed out that they were putting the seats for the eating area under the trees because it was raining.
- A high ratio of adults use careful questioning to effectively support children of all abilities in developing their learning. Good attention has been given to engage children in outdoor activities which develop their basic skills, for example recording their writing and mathematics work in the construction area. In the indoor environment, tasks are purposeful, but are not developed well enough to challenge the most able children.
- Work to improve outcomes in reading has been thorough and creative. A wealth of carefully thought-out strategies and systems are in place to inspire a love of reading and develop a good understanding of the range of texts that are read. Reading has a high profile in school, through displays (for example, 'Can you guess which teacher's favourite book this is?'), in the new classroom reading areas and in pupils' work. A project to review, recommend and purchase new reading materials is spoken about eagerly by pupils. They have enjoyed researching what makes a good book and planning for the spending of their own class book budget. Targeted support is matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities, so that all pupils are deepening their understanding in reading. This includes work based on developing their ability to argue a viewpoint and extending vocabulary. Motivation is high and pupils are making good progress in reading across the school.
- The leader for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has a very good understanding of the individual needs of these pupils and a clear view of the progress they are making. She tackles any dip in progress quickly and thoroughly, involving parents in these plans and working with other agencies effectively when necessary. The leader works alongside teachers, planning activities that are carefully matched to the needs of each pupil who has special educational needs and/or disabilities, and works with some pupils directly. As a result, these pupils make good progress over their time in school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the focused support for the large number of new teachers continues, ensuring that skills are further improved and knowledge of national expectations is strong
- the most able pupils, from the early years to Year 6, are challenged in their learning to deepen their understanding and reach higher standards
- the school's plans to improve reading continue to be implemented and, as a result, pupils' outcomes in key stage 2 improve.

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

Yours sincerely

Kate Rowley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, you and I spent much time together in classrooms and looking at pupils' work. We discussed your evaluation of the school, the resulting action plans and the impact of this work. I looked at external reviews of the school and spoke with your external consultant and local authority partner. With other middle and senior leaders, we looked at the progress that pupils are making using the school's data assessment system and leaders' analyses, including information about disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. I also met with governors, pupils and the school business manager. I heard pupils read in lessons. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, attendance, the quality of teaching and learning and arrangements for managing teachers' performance. I met with parents and considered their written correspondence, as well as responses in Ofsted's Parent View.