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Mrs Jane Cappleman-Jackson
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Cappleman-Jackson

Short inspection of Misterton Primary and Nursery 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 November 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leaders have developed a collaborative culture where all staff are committed to school improvement. Staff describe the 'team spirit' in the school. They feel valued and share leaders' high aspirations for all pupils. As headteacher, you consistently promote high expectations of staff and pupils. You have established an open culture and maintain a high presence around the school. For example, you regularly visit classrooms and share in pupils' learning experiences. You carry out 'pride prowls' walks around the school to monitor the quality of provision but also to share in pupils' successes and to celebrate their achievements. Pupils are proud to show you their work and appreciate your recognition of their accomplishments.

Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are committed to the school and share your vision for improvement. Governors are knowledgeable and have the skills to hold leaders to account, challenging and offering support as appropriate.

Relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive. Pupils enjoy their experiences at the school. They feel cared for and recognise that their teachers have high expectations and aspirations for their success. Pupils say that their teachers want them to do well.

They enjoy their lessons and say that teachers make learning fun. For example, pupils in Year 6 enjoyed an activity where they had to practise their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills to find the guilty culprit in a criminal investigation.

Pupils are very well supported in all aspects of school life. You have developed the concept of 'bucket filling', a metaphorical description of a means of promoting well-being. Pupils are keen to 'fill each other's buckets', for example, by being kind or helping each other. They also recognise that disappointments, which might 'empty their buckets', are temporary. This helps pupils to manage difficulties and challenges alongside working towards achievements. They are extremely supportive of one another and collaborate well. Pupils are extremely proud to be members of the school.

Since the last inspection, you have introduced whole-school approaches to address areas identified as needing further improvement. For example, teachers now use regular 'mini-plenaries' to check pupils' understanding throughout lessons. This is further strengthened by teacher questioning and allowing pupils the time to reflect and consider their responses. You have also prioritised the development of pupils' independence in their learning. Teachers plan activities that enable pupils to work collaboratively and independently, exploring and experimenting with new ideas. This has helped to develop pupils' reasoning skills and their ability to work as reflective learners.

You have correctly identified pupils' progress and attainment in phonics as an area in need of improvement. You have introduced a new teaching programme which builds on pupils' learning and provides opportunities for them to practise and consolidate their understanding. You have also amended the timetable to ensure that teachers regularly and frequently focus on phonics skill development. Since the last inspection, pupils' achievement in phonics has improved significantly and continues to do so.

You have identified the use of teaching assistants as an area for development since the last inspection and have undertaken considerable work to improve their effectiveness. Senior teaching assistants lead teams of teaching assistants, monitor their work and support improvements. You have introduced a system where class teachers identify gaps in pupils' understanding in morning sessions and teaching assistants provide additional support in afternoon sessions to ensure that pupils quickly catch up. You oversee this work and accurately identify where it has been most successful and where further development is required. During the course of the inspection, you and I noted areas of excellent practice, for example in Year 6.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are effective. All staff are appropriately trained and understand their shared responsibility in ensuring pupils' safety. Processes for making referrals are straightforward and understood by all. Records are clear and appropriate.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, they have learned about the dangers of drugs and the potential risks posed by the internet. Pupils understand about diversity; as one pupil said, 'We all matter.' They understand the difference between teasing and bullying and say that although incidents of bullying are extremely rare, they have confidence that any that occur would be dealt with appropriately and swiftly.

Inspection findings

- Leadership and management are strong. Leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have accurately identified groups and subject areas where progress is less strong and are taking appropriate action for improvement. Leaders monitor the quality of teaching across the school and ensure that areas of relative weakness are addressed. Leaders hold teachers to account through regular pupil progress meetings.
- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress in all key stages. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of their time in the early years setting has increased since the last inspection and is now slightly above the national average. This means that current pupils are better prepared for key stage 1 than they have been in the past.
- Pupils make good progress at key stage 1. However, in 2016, fewer pupils reached a greater depth in reading and writing than nationally. In mathematics, fewer pupils reached the expected standard than nationally.
- At key stage 2, a higher proportion of pupils reached both the expected standard and the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined than the national average.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school is good. Teachers plan interesting lessons which enthuse and motivate pupils. For example, Year 2 pupils were making bird feeders and were excited at the prospect of hanging these in the school garden and observing birds coming to feed from their creations.
- Provision in the early years setting is good. Children settle well at the start of the day and parents are encouraged to support their children's learning, for example by helping them write their name as they arrive in school. Teachers are innovative in making use of opportunities that present themselves. For example, children in the outdoor area were creating paintings in puddles using coloured powder, expressing delight and awe as the colours merged in the water. However, there is a lack of direction in some activities when children are not working directly with an adult and they would benefit from greater guidance so they are able to practise their skills more productively.
- You have ensured that staff have received regular and appropriate training. For example, all staff have received training in new assessment models to improve the accuracy of assessment, and work is currently under way to support teachers in improving pupils' progress in mathematics.

- You have collaborated with other local schools to improve teachers' understanding of resourcing their lessons. You have invested in a wide range of what you call 'quality texts' which illustrate effective writing techniques. These are used to model effective writing to pupils. Writing has improved across the school.
- The least able pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Work is carefully matched to their ability. Teachers have high expectations of middle-ability pupils and ensure that they are appropriately challenged. However, teachers do not ensure that the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged. Some pupils say that their work is too easy, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Whole-school attendance is in line with the national average. However, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent from school is significantly higher than the national average. A considerable amount of work has been undertaken to support pupils in improving their attendance. For example, you have held meetings with parents, involving healthcare professionals, to explore reasons for absence and to seek solutions to the barriers to attending. You recognise that although this work has had a positive impact, there is still much to be done to increase the attendance of this group of pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- strategies already in place to improve disadvantaged pupils' attendance are further developed to bring about increased rates of attendance
- the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged in all key stages, particularly in English 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 Nottinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Mosley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with pupils and staff and had discussions by telephone with the chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I also spoke informally to pupils at lunchtime and in their lessons. I also spoke to parents as they were dropping their children off at school. I visited all classes with you and observed pupils' learning. I looked at pupils' work in a sample of their books in a variety of subjects and year groups. I considered the 52 responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, the 48 free-text responses from parents and the 12 responses from staff. I scrutinised a range of school documents, including records relating to safeguarding and behaviour, school policies and minutes of meetings. I also looked at information published on the school website.