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Mr Paul Bargh  
Executive Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Bargh

### **Short inspection of Frithville Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 21 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 May 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and the staff team have improved the quality of teaching in the early years and key stage 1 since the previous inspection. Pupils' standards at the end of key stage 1 in 2016 are now above the national averages in reading, writing and science. The proportion of pupils who achieved a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was above the national average in 2016.

You have created a harmonious school community where pupils respect the staff and work well. Pupils enjoy learning and attendance is good. They are caring towards each other and demonstrate compassion to others. For example, each year at the Christmas production, pupils organise a raffle and donate half of the proceeds to the children's ward at the Pilgrim Hospital in Boston. Pupils are welcoming to new pupils who may speak little or no English. School staff work well with external agencies to support this group of pupils. These pupils make strong progress from their starting points and are achieving well.

Parents speak highly of the school. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, felt that their child was safe and happy at the school and that staff respond well to any concerns they raise. Parents who spoke to the inspector commented on how well the school meets the needs of their child. The parents association raises funds each year to support pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 to

take part in residential trips with pupils from other schools, which the pupils particularly enjoy. The overwhelming majority of parents would recommend the school to other parents.

You and other staff ensure that the pupils have the opportunity to participate in sport against other pupils from local schools. The pupils take part in many tournaments, for example tag rugby, netball, athletics and football. All pupils in key stage 2 have the opportunity to represent the school. Recently, you invited a Paralympian athlete to inspire pupils to participate in sport and to learn how important it is for pupils to have a healthy diet.

At the last inspection, the inspector praised pupils' achievements and the high levels of care that the staff provide for pupils. These strengths have been maintained. However, the inspector also asked you to ensure that activities challenge all pupils, particularly the most able pupils. You have worked hard to achieve this and the proportion of pupils who achieved highly at the end of key stage 1 in 2016 was higher than other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. In key stage 2, pupils are developing into good writers. They write for a range of purposes, for example writing about the digestive system in science. You have concentrated well on pupils' sentence construction and choice of vocabulary. One pupil in Year 6 wrote, 'A murder of crows hopped around plucking worms from the ground.'

The inspector also asked you to focus on improving problem-solving in mathematics. Pupils regularly encounter word problems in their work. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were asked how many nails can be made from two metres of zinc, if six centimetres of zinc is required to make a nail. Pupils in Year 6 made more progress than other pupils nationally through key stage 2 in mathematics in 2016.

Finally, the inspector asked you to provide training opportunities to develop the leadership roles of the staff. The deputy headteacher has received training from the local authority and visited other schools to improve the provision in the early years and key stage 1. This has contributed to improved achievement for pupils. The new literacy leader has also received training for her role and she has astutely scrutinised pupils' work and recognised the need for pupils to develop further their sentence work. Consequently, staff received suitable training and the quality of pupils' writing is improving, particularly in key stage 1 and in Years 5 and 6.

In mathematics, too few pupils are achieving highly at the end of key stage 2. Pupils calculate accurately and teachers provide the most able pupils with more difficult calculations to stretch their skills. Too often, however, teachers do not ask pupils to explain their mathematical reasoning and this means that they are not gaining the deeper understanding of mathematics that they should.

In reading, pupils do not always demonstrate a deep understanding of what they are reading. In particular, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use clues in the text to reach a conclusion. This means that pupils are not developing the skills of inference to support their understanding.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

You lead very well on safeguarding. You work actively with external agencies to make sure that all relevant information is shared in a timely manner. Your record-keeping is robust. All the necessary checks have been completed on adults and volunteers who work in the school. Staff training is comprehensive. All staff have read the latest safeguarding information from the government and received training about domestic abuse.

Pupils said that bullying can happen from time to time but that the staff deal with it well. The pupils know how to stay safe online. They know not to pass on personal details online and to be aware of spam emails.

## **Inspection findings**

- Leaders have taken effective action to raise standards. Governors visit regularly and ensure that the performance management process is robust. The quality of teaching has improved across all subjects, including phonics. Younger pupils use their phonic knowledge to read unfamiliar words well. Most pupils in Year 1 are on track to meet the national standard in the phonics check this year. Standards improved across the school in 2016. The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined at the end of key stage 2 was higher than the national average in 2016.
- Teachers challenge pupils to achieve well in writing. They teach pupils the correct grammatical terms to enable them to write better sentences. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were finding the verb and subject of a sentence so that they could learn how it was put together. One pupil in Year 2 wrote in her story, 'Moody Margaret came rushing out of her room.' By the end of key stage 2, many pupils use figurative language well to express emotion. For example, one pupil wrote, 'I was melting from my rage.' The proportions of pupils who achieved the expected standard in writing and in English grammar, spelling and punctuation at the end of key stage 2 in 2016 were higher than the national averages.
- Pupils enjoy reading and most read at home regularly. The library is well stocked and pupils recommend books to other pupils. A recent visit by an author inspired pupils to read even more. In addition, the school has provided helpful hints to parents to support them when hearing their children read. The staff take opportunities to begin to develop pupils' inference skills in reading. During a phonics session, the pupils first identified the soft 'c' sounds in the sentence, 'Cinderella was stuck in the cellar washing socks.' The teaching assistant then asked, 'Why do you think Cinderella was in the cellar?' One pupil said, 'She was a slave.'
- Pupils are not consistently developing their reading comprehension skills well enough, however, to answer more challenging inference questions and further improve their understanding of the text. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that, on too many occasions, pupils do not complete the more difficult questions. The proportion of pupils who achieved highly in reading at the end of key stage 2 in

2016 was below the national average.

- Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of how to complete written calculations and solve word problems in mathematics. In Years 3 and 4, pupils had a complicated timetable about a family's visit to the zoo. They had to work out how much time the family spent observing each enclosure. One pupil said, 'That was difficult.' In Years 1, 2 and 6, however, teachers provide limited opportunities for pupils to explain their mathematical reasoning. In Year 2, pupils had to explain why a diagram showing a shape split into four unequal parts was not split into quarters. There are too few examples of this type of questioning throughout the school, however, to develop pupils' mathematical thinking further and enable more pupils to achieve highly by the end of key stage 2.
- Disadvantaged pupils are currently making good progress from their starting points. The school carefully plans how to use the pupil premium funding to provide additional support to meet the pupils' needs. These support programmes are regularly reviewed to check that they are having a beneficial impact. Last year, most disadvantaged pupils made good progress throughout the school, except in reading in key stage 2.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that teachers:

- give pupils more opportunities to answer questions requiring inference skills, to improve their reading comprehension skills
- throughout the school consistently challenge pupils using questions that involve mathematical reasoning, to enable more pupils to achieve highly.

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

Yours sincerely

Martin Finch  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met you and the majority of the staff. I spoke with parents and a group of pupils. I visited every classroom and looked at pupils' work. I met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. I listened to pupils read. You and I reviewed records about attendance and keeping children safe. I studied your school improvement plan, your self-evaluation and minutes of meetings of the governing body. I looked at documents relating to performance management. I considered the 25 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire,

Parent View, and the free text service to parents. There were no responses to the online pupil or staff surveys.