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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



17 March 2017

Mrs Jill Tiffany
Headteacher
Lindhead School
Limestone Road
Burniston
Scarborough
North Yorkshire
YO13 0DG

Dear Mrs Tiffany

Short inspection of Lindhead School

Following my visit to the school on 7 March 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 March 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 have worked collaboratively with your well-skilled deputy headteacher to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and abilities to a good standard. You are both determined and resolute in your vision that developing the whole child is your utmost priority. The rewards of this are clear to see. Pupils are articulate, aspirational for their own futures and recognise the improvements which are continually being made to aid them to be successful learners and to make a positive contribution to society.

The leadership team has worked tirelessly since the previous inspection, underpinned by an astute, sharp and demanding governing body, to ensure that the quality of teaching has continued to improve. The focused way in which spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught, and the staff development which has accompanied this, has resulted in standards which are above those seen nationally. Furthermore, standards in reading and writing have continued to improve in most year groups across the school. Working with the 'Scarborough literacy pledge', teachers are now more exacting in their demands when pupils redraft their writing to make improvements. The profile of reading has been raised which enthuses and engages pupils immensely. These strategies, accompanied by well-received parent workshops to aid pupils in their learning, have resulted in good standards of achievement for most pupils during their time at this school.

In addition to improvements in English, there has been a concerted effort to improve standards in mathematics since the previous inspection. There is a significant improvement in the way pupils carry out both mental and written calculations. Working collaboratively with other schools, you have managed to put systems in place which give pupils the skills to move their learning on at a good pace. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in Year 6 in 2016 was not what you all anticipated and was a huge disappointment. You did not let this dampen your spirits. You picked yourselves up and sought to find out the reasons why after seeing so much success in how calculations are taught. A meticulous, time-taking analysis of the questions by leaders and your committed chair of the governing body found that more work needed to be focused on developing pupils' problem-solving skills. This has already started with gusto, and needs to be developed further as this year continues.

Leaders and governors do not rest on their laurels and accurately identify where there are issues which need to be addressed. Furthermore, they are not afraid to tackle them. Difficulties in the early years have been successfully dealt with and children are now receiving good provision. However, further work is required to ensure that children make rapid progress so that a higher proportion achieves a good level of development, and a significant amount exceed this.

Safeguarding is effective.

The safeguarding of all pupils is given the highest priority at Lindhead. The leadership team, along with very knowledgeable and skilled administrative staff, has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Vulnerable pupils are closely monitored, which results in concerns being dealt with quickly and efficiently. All members of staff aid you in the effective safeguarding of pupils. They have excellent links with parents and an in-depth knowledge of the difficulties some of your families are facing. This vital link aids you as you make your decisions to keep all pupils safe. This includes the monitoring of attendance, which was a focus for this inspection. You have developed very clear systems to tackle absenteeism, and each individual case is looked at according to its own unique context.

Pupils revel in opportunities to keep themselves safe, and are very clear about what to do if they have any of their own concerns. They are confident that if there are any issues, they know who to talk to and that they are taken seriously. They are proud of their own 'road-safety officers' – fellow pupils who offer guidance and advice, and participate in safety competitions with enthusiasm. They are delighted with their work around the school about keeping themselves safe, including at the beach and on their bikes. They are also clear about keeping themselves safe online and the work adults in school do to keep them protected from harm.

Inspection findings

- You, your leaders and the governing body have a very accurate view of how well your school is doing, and what needs to be prioritised to improve further. This is

because you are all involved in monitoring, evaluating and analysing the impact of any improvements being made, and act swiftly to resolve any emerging issues.

- The governing body makes an exceptional contribution to the leadership of this school. Governors possess a remarkable set of skills which provide a high level of challenge, yet offer significant support to aid this school's successful ongoing journey. Governors lead and contribute effectively to senior leadership meetings, which hold leaders firmly to account for vital improvements being made. You have ensured that skills gaps are filled with the expertise you need to ensure that the school goes from strength to strength.
- The focus on developing and strengthening your middle leaders since the previous inspection is paying dividends. Your leaders responsible for English, mathematics and special educational needs know their areas very well and are given time and resources to make the necessary improvements. You have ensured that they possess the correct leadership skills to do this through focused professional development opportunities. They now play a vital part in leading the school on its successful journey.
- During the inspection, I wanted to pay close attention to the amount of progress children in the early years are making. This is because the majority of them start school with skills which are typical for their age, and only recently have started to attain in line with other children nationally. I found that leaders had identified that there were some issues with the progress children were making in the early years due to some staffing issues, and this was dealt with appropriately. From September 2016, a new structure is now in place and the provision has been improved. Children now have opportunities to develop their skills in an exciting indoor and outdoor environment. Activities are regularly linked to stories the children enjoy reading. A number of children were eager to build a trap for the troll outside after reading 'The three billy goats gruff' story, and excitedly explained how it worked and what they would say to the troll. Now that provision has improved, leaders must ensure that more children make rapid progress so that a larger proportion of children attain a good level of development and a significant amount exceed this.
- Due to standards in mathematics dipping in Year 6 in 2016, I looked closely at what leaders are doing to improve this. I found that they had acted swiftly, and had provided focused staff development to ensure that the teaching of problem-solving is a high priority. Pupils are now having more opportunities to apply their learning to problem-solving, but this needs to remain a relentless focus. The older pupils are now much more adept in being able to explain and justify their reasons when solving problems, but other pupils need much more direction, modelling and opportunities to develop this even further.
- Over time, some of the lower-attaining pupils have not made the same good progress in comparison to their peers in school and other pupils nationally. This is being addressed with a bespoke programme designed by yourselves to ensure that those pupils are given opportunities to improve their confidence, resilience and independence in their own learning. The Busy Buzzy Bee's programme (The 3B's) aims to boost pupils' self-esteem so that they can make more progress in their academic subjects. It has had a positive impact. While most pupils in school

are making good progress across a range of subjects, pupils taking part in this programme have made even more progress.

- You, your leaders and staff are firmly focused on developing the whole child, so that they are armed with the drive, aspiration, determination and resilience to flourish and prosper in the future. Pupils are given exciting opportunities both within and outside of the curriculum to hone, develop and practise these key skills. Whether through educational visits, visiting theatre groups, school clubs or watching re-enactments of Bible stories, pupils are growing into the responsible young people who have the skills to make a positive contribution to our society. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the staff's dedication and resolve.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- given their typical starting points, more children in the early years attain a good level of development, and a significant number exceed this
- there remains a relentless focus on developing pupils' problem-solving skills, and pupils are taught precisely how to explain and justify their reasons, answers and solutions.

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

Yours sincerely

Suzanne Lithgow

Senior Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher to discuss the effectiveness of the school and its leadership and management. We jointly observed teaching, learning and assessment in classes across the school. I scrutinised work in pupils' books to consider the progress being made by pupils currently in school. I reviewed school documentation and information, including policies, assessment information, monitoring files and your school improvement plans. I met with five governors, including the chair and vice-chair. I also met with a representative from the local authority and spoke to pupils both formally and informally throughout the day. I met with parents and took into account Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.