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Mr M P Younger
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Younger

Short inspection of Colegate Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 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 January 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Working alongside a supportive governing body, your perceptive and ambitious leadership has brought about a new focus and energy to school improvement. You have rigorously addressed any issues of underperformance, and have brought together a skilled and enthusiastic teaching team.

You have accurately identified the school's strengths and current priorities and detail further actions to address these priorities in the comprehensive school development plan. You recognise that some of the actions you list could be more precise so that governors can keep a closer check on the impact of your work on outcomes for pupils.

You have brought a steady hand during recent staffing changes, skilfully minimising any negative impact on pupils' outcomes. Improvement in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is now accelerating quickly the rates of progress of current pupils, including those who had fallen behind. You and other school leaders keep a close eye on the quality of teaching. You acknowledge that the many new whole-school initiatives and strategies to further improve teaching are not fully implemented in every class.

Pupils' excellent attitudes to learning and good relationships with adults remain key

strengths of your inclusive school. Pupils develop good citizenship skills, being keen to take on responsibilities through roles such as 'class monitor' or the school council. They take huge pride in being entered into the 'golden book' to acknowledge outstanding behaviour or work. Pupils' behaviour in class and around school remains exemplary.

You have successfully tackled the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Because teaching is far more consistent, pupils' progress and attainment have improved, especially in key stage 1. Most pupils are now making strong progress. Teachers use questioning well and the pace of learning secures pupils' concentration in lessons. Pupils respond well to the additional tasks and challenges provided to consolidate their understanding. Teachers pitch work well to match pupils' ability, including for the most able pupils. Pupils have a strong work ethic and show high levels of independence and cooperation in lessons. Good teacher subject knowledge and use of technical vocabulary supports pupils' learning well. Most pupils in each year group are on track to reach standards expected for their age by the end of the academic year.

Safeguarding is effective.

You effectively undertake the role of the designated safeguarding leader. Policies, procedures and records are of high quality and are up to date. Summary records of incidents of concern are meticulously kept. There are very few records of behaviour incidents or alleged bullying, and pupils categorically stated that no bullying happens at Colegate. All staff are appropriately trained and have access to well-written policies and guidance. As a result, they have a secure understanding of their individual responsibilities for safeguarding.

Pupils are very knowledgeable about bullying and e-safety. Pupils know how to stay safe and free from worries while in school. They understand how to avoid situations that may prove dangerous when not at school.

The culture of keeping pupils safe and putting them at the heart of the friendly school community is very evident. The personal development and welfare of all pupils is a key area of focus for the school. The vast majority of parents report that their children are very safe in school.

Pupils know the school values of 'respect, enjoyment, achievement, cooperation and honesty' very well, and assert that the values sum up their school well. Their confidence in staff in school to keep them safe is well placed, and underpins their excellent behaviour. Pupils are proud and pleased to be at school, and subsequently, rates of attendance in Colegate are high.

Inspection findings

- You have taken determined and rigorous actions to accelerate the progress of current pupils in the light of the results for key stage 2 pupils in the school's 2016 assessments, with which you were disappointed. You have been ably supported

by the recently strengthened leadership team and the governing body.

- Work seen in pupils' books during the inspection and analysis of the school's tracking data clearly demonstrate strong progress over the autumn term for nearly all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This includes pupils in lower key stage 2, who are rapidly catching up to reach levels expected for their age.
- Governors are skilled in their roles, to which they bring a range of transferable professional skills. They know the school very well and the journey it has taken to reach this point. Governors are proud of the school and the improvements already in place. They are passionate about providing the very best for the pupils, tackling difficult decisions head on.
- Governors are very well informed, take nothing at face value, question and challenge very effectively. They also offer support to senior leaders and participate in monitoring activities alongside the headteacher.
- Children make a fast start in their learning in the early years. They play and learn happily together. Children's behaviour is excellent and they show independence and good manners. Adults model vocabulary well and allow children time to answer well-targeted questions.
- The leadership of early years is strong. Children are making increasingly rapid progress in their understanding of number and in their reading and writing skills. The early years leader acknowledges that the indoor and outdoor learning environments require further development to fully exploit their impact on children's learning and development, and has plans to do so.
- Pupils are getting off to a good start in reading. The systematic and rigorous teaching of phonics starts in Nursery and moves into Reception. All adults are skilled in delivering phonics teaching, activities are targeted well to meet the needs of every pupil and work is well matched to pupils' abilities.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 read well to the inspector and were able to build and blend unknown words. The effective teaching of phonics continues across key stage 1. The proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 was above average.
- Pupils are provided with many opportunities to use their developing English skills in extended writing activities, often linked to the topic or class novel they are studying. Pupils in Year 5 used laptops to research on how to survive in the Gobi Desert in preparation for writing an information leaflet. Pupils in Year 3 enjoyed writing questions for the character 'Mr Twit' from 'The Twits' by Roald Dahl.
- Work in pupils' books is of a much-improved standard, extremely well presented with neatly formed, legible joined handwriting.
- Pupils are developing a good understanding of number, using materials and pictorial representations to solve calculations. Pupils in Year 2 successfully used grids and arrays to solve multiplication calculations.
- Pupils' enjoyment of mathematics is obvious. Some pupils informed the inspector that this is their favourite subject. Pupils are becoming more proficient in their problem-solving skills and are developing sound mathematical reasoning to consolidate their skills of calculation and fluency in number.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- planned actions for school improvement are sharply focused on their impact on outcomes for pupils
- agreed whole-school initiatives and actions relating to further improving teaching are implemented consistently across every class
- planned improvements to the indoor and outdoor learning environments in early years further support and enhance children's learning and development.

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

Yours sincerely

Philip Scott
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and the assistant headteacher. You and I visited lessons in each key stage. I met with the chair and other members of the governing body. I spoke to pupils about their work and their views of the school, both in lessons and in meetings. I listened to some pupils read. I considered the views of parents from the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and your own survey results. You, the assistant headteacher and I scrutinised pupils' work in books. A range of documents were considered relating to safeguarding, performance management, governors' meetings and external evaluations of the school. I also considered the school's development plan and self-evaluation, the curriculum and tracking of current pupils' progress. I also scrutinised pupils' recent achievement in statutory assessments.