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Mrs Karen Dawn Espin
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Espin

Short inspection of Coleby Church of England (Controlled) Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 23 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 March 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Things have improved since the last inspection. In recent years, pupils in Year 6 have left the school with levels of attainment that are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2015, standards were particularly high. In 2016, this continued to be the case in reading where pupils made very good progress and attained at high levels. Standards in mathematics were in line with the national level and standards were slightly below national figures in writing.

The work in pupils' books indicates that good progress is being made in writing and mathematics across the school. Standards of writing are improving more swiftly than in mathematics, where too few pupils are working above their age-related expectations. The most able pupils are now being provided with work that is challenging for them but this has been a recent improvement and the impact on overall standards is not yet evident.

Pupils behave well in lessons and as they move around the school. Because space is at a premium, classrooms are used as assembly halls and dining rooms. Pupils are very well behaved during these transition times and the older pupils set an excellent example as they help and guide younger pupils. Pupils get on well with one another and value the fact that 'everyone knows everyone else'.

You responded to the findings of the previous inspection by introducing a more structured approach to checking the quality of teaching. This involves more members of staff and governors and includes both formal and informal visits to lessons, work scrutiny, listening to pupils' views and assessing pupils' outcomes. This means that you have now got a clearer understanding of where teaching is particularly effective, and where it needs to improve further.

The curriculum has undergone changes in the recent past. A more creative and engaging range of topics are in place now and pupils' interests are taken into account when deciding what to focus on. Pupils produce high-quality work in some subjects, including science, history and art. For example, in science pupils undertake investigations that are exciting and where they do not know what the outcomes will be; the resulting conclusions that pupils come to demonstrate both curiosity and a good understanding of scientific vocabulary. In art, pupils study and analyse different styles and can explain subtle differences between artists.

Governors are well-informed about the school. Visits are made and senior leaders are held to account for the school's work during meetings. The assessment information that they receive is in need of further development as it is currently dispersed between different documents and is presented in a variety of different ways.

Parents are supportive of the school. Of the 35 responses to the online questionnaire completed at the time of the inspection, 89% of parents would recommend the school to other parents. The picture was similarly positive when I spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day; they value the school's ethos and how well staff care and know about the pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Systems are in place to ensure that pre-employment checks are carried out effectively.

The required safeguarding and child protection training has been undertaken by all staff. In addition, governors have received training and are well-informed about this aspect of the school's work.

Pupils, and especially those that are vulnerable, are well known to staff. Pupil safety and well-being is a priority for the school. All pupils and parents spoken to were positive about the level of care and support that they receive from staff.

Inspection findings

- In 2016, no pupils in Year 6 gained the higher levels in mathematics. You have responded to this by reviewing the way that mathematics is taught and seeking routes to improvement. At present, things are improving but there is more work

to do in order to ensure that pupils at all ability levels are appropriately challenged. Pupils' work shows that while the most able are now being challenged more, their learning is not commonly extending beyond age-related levels.

- Assessment data is currently presented in a variety of ways. Further refinement is needed to ensure that it is very clear to teachers, leaders and governors. At present, the systems in use are not providing a straightforward picture of how different groups of pupils are performing. The information that governors receive is not always benchmarked against national levels and this would provide governors with a clearer understanding of how well pupils are achieving.
- An analysis of the assessment information that you are gathering indicates that there are some groups that are achieving better than others in some year groups, but that there are no overall patterns across the school. For example, girls are doing better than boys in some year groups and vice versa in others. Middle-ability pupils in Year 6 made less progress than other pupils in 2016 but this is not currently the case.
- Children enter the school in the Reception class with varying levels of skill and knowledge. Assessment systems in the early years foundation stage are rigorous and teachers know these children and their needs very well. Records of children's learning provide a clear picture of how individual children are making progress. The learning environment in the Reception class is bright, well-organised and easy for children to access. You are aware that the outdoor learning environment is in need of further development as currently it is not consistently offering children with opportunities for high-quality learning.
- Prior to the inspection, some of the information that should be published on the school's website was missing. Details about the whole curriculum, for example, were absent (although information about what is happening in each class during the current term was available). Almost all of the gaps were quickly remedied during the inspection. Information about governors' financial and business interests is the only area that has yet to be resolved and this was underway by the end of the inspection.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- further work to raise standards in mathematics is undertaken in order that pupils of all abilities are provided with work that challenges and extends their learning
- the existing assessment systems are refined further to provide leaders, including governors, with a more precise understanding of how well all groups of pupils are doing.

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

Yours sincerely

Christopher Moodie
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I made several visits to all classrooms where I observed teaching, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils. The headteacher accompanied me on almost all of these visits. I observed lunchtime and playtime and spoke with pupils about their experiences at the school. I met with the headteacher and a middle leader to discuss the school's performance and evaluate the quality of leadership. In addition, I met and had a discussion with two governors. I evaluated school documentation, including self-evaluation and development plans. I scrutinised systems and documentation associated with safeguarding.