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Mrs Sylvie Newman
Headteacher
Donisthorpe Primary School
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Dear Mrs Newman

Short inspection of Donisthorpe Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 23 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 February 2017.

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 your staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that the school is a happy place, where pupils feel valued and supported. They thrive in this environment and those I spoke to said they enjoy school and the 'fun learning'. The school provides an exceptionally strong range of opportunities for pupils to study a wide range of subjects and topics. Pupils have the opportunity to make use of the extensive grounds and explore learning in a range of contexts. For example, during my visit, a group of pupils looked at evaporation and were fascinated to see how water in a puddle in the playground reduced in volume during the day.

The governing body has provided you with strong support and a helpful level of challenge for your work. They have attended additional training to help them with their role. They have a good understanding of how well the school is doing and have ensured that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and for sports is used well.

After the previous inspection, you were asked to improve teaching further. You have tackled the areas identified thoroughly and with a great deal of attention to detail. The additional training, support and resources provided mean that the teaching of mathematics is now consistently strong across the school. The work

given to the most able pupils stretches them and requires them to think at a deeper level. The very large majority of parents recognise the improvements that have been made since the previous inspection and value the way you work with them to ensure that pupils feel safe, are confident and getting on with each other.

The pupils like coming to school. They attend regularly and are punctual at the start of the day. They feel that staff give them good support and encourage them to do their best. Their behaviour is often exemplary, and children who join the school in the Reception Year develop strong social skills.

You are very aware that the school provides education for pupils who come from a mainly White British background. You have encouraged them to develop their strength of character, as well as their awareness of different cultures and faiths. The promotion of British values is very strong across all aspects of the school.

Pupils made above average progress in mathematics and reading in the 2016 national key stage 2 tests. As they move through the school, pupils develop increasing confidence and skills. Older pupils are able to write confidently in a range of styles and they enjoy the opportunities they have to work across the wide range of imaginative topics, such as 'Angry Earth' or 'Drip, Drip, Drop'.

Pupils develop very secure skills in sounding out letters in the Reception and key stage 1 classes. All pupils have met the nationally expected standard in phonics over the last two years. Children in the Reception class develop very good social skills and receive a good range of learning opportunities.

Although pupils mostly make good progress in Years 1 and 2, a few, who had reached the expected standard at the end of the Reception Year, did not make as much progress as they could. You have provided additional support in order to help them 'catch up'. A few pupils in the current key stage 1 classes are also not making rapid enough progress from their starting points.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, records are detailed and of high quality. You carry out checks to ensure that staff are suitably qualified and experienced for their roles. Staff with responsibility for safeguarding have attended relevant training and made sure that the other staff receive regular updates in order to raise their awareness.

The systems to record any concerns about a pupil's welfare are well organised and thorough. Pupils say they feel safe in school. They have been helped to develop their understanding of how to stay safe when using computers and are aware of how to keep themselves safe when using roads.

Inspection findings

- I checked to see if pupils are making consistently good progress across the different year groups and if the strong progress made by the older pupils in 2016 is replicated across the school.
- The large majority of pupils are making good and sustained progress from their different starting points, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils have very good opportunities to study a wide range of subjects on a regular basis. This is a real strength of the school's provision. Pupils are making good progress in all of these areas. They have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of clubs, trips and events.
- The school provides a well-planned and organised approach to the study of English and mathematics. The pupils regularly use these skills in the other subjects they study. They are increasingly secure in their use of spelling, grammar and punctuation and can perform calculations with confidence.
- The large majority of pupils in key stage 1 are making good progress. A few, who did not achieve the expected level at the end of the Reception Year, are catching up. A few pupils in the current key stage 1 classes also need to make more rapid progress from their starting points. This is especially the case for those who reached the emerging and expected levels at the end of the Reception Year. You have made this a priority in your planning.
- The pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making consistently good progress. They are doing well in their reading and mathematics skills in particular. They receive good support in lessons from teachers and teaching assistants. Their progress is checked carefully and regularly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the support and planning for those children who leave the Reception class at an emerging and expected level continues to be a priority, in order that they make sufficient progress by the end of Year 2.

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

Yours sincerely

David Bray
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and the deputy headteacher on several occasions to discuss your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I met with four members of the governing body in order to discuss their views about the school and how they carried out their role. I spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I looked at learning in classrooms across the school, checked work in pupils' books and compared this to the school's records of their progress. I checked the effectiveness of your policies and procedures for safeguarding, including the records kept in relation to the recruitment of staff.

I spoke to a group of pupils to gain their views about the school and I heard pupils read. I looked at your current attendance figures and records of behaviour. I looked at the 76 responses made by parents on Parent View, as well as any comments they made. I looked at the 14 responses to the survey of staff at the school.