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Mrs Beverley Riddle
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Dear Mrs Riddle

Short inspection of Morton Trentside Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 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 April 2012.

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 governing body have successfully steered the school through a period of significant staff changes. There is clear cohesion in the ambition and drive for improvement. This is shared by leaders, governors and staff, who are constantly seeking ways in which to improve the school. Continuing professional development for staff is carefully considered, often informed by research, and highly relevant to the school's needs. Leaders very readily work in collaborative partnerships with other agencies, schools and settings to share expertise and support improvement. Governors are very involved and are effective in their role to both support and challenge the school.

Parents were almost unanimous in their praise for the school. Many of those I spoke with were very positive about the work you and your colleagues do to promote pupils' confidence and personal development. They also appreciate the strong and timely support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils are proud of their school and they show respect and consideration for each other. They conduct themselves impeccably around the school and in the classrooms, where they concentrate, apply themselves to their work and confidently offer contributions to class discussions. Many were eager to share their work with me. Pupils in Year 6, for example, told me how they had enjoyed the practical aspects of some of their lessons, for example when making wooden Victorian toys

in design and technology. Pupils also enjoy the extra-curricular clubs the school offers. These include a wide range of sporting activities and inter-school events. Pupils also spoke very positively about the many roles of responsibility offered to them, for example school councillors, prefects, and ambassadors for English and carbon. Pupils are confident, self-assured and discuss their learning in a mature manner.

You and the other members of the leadership team have worked closely together to tackle the areas for improvement identified in the last report. Staff are provided with targets to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The 'Mobilise' training programme for teaching assistants, for example, is one example of the well-chosen training and professional development initiatives which have supported improvement in the quality of teaching across the school. This work has had a positive impact across the school by improving teaching assistants' questioning skills in order to promote children's deeper thinking.

Middle leaders now very effectively monitor and evaluate standards in their subject areas and they identify aspects which can be improved. Leaders have worked with partner schools, drawn upon external expertise and enabled teachers to work alongside each other. This has helped to improve the accuracy and effectiveness of the use of assessment to support teachers in planning lessons to meet the learning needs of pupils. This is particularly evident in the work the school is doing to promote learning at the higher levels.

Your self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. You have correctly identified that too few pupils who are disadvantaged, or of average ability, achieve highly. This is one of your main areas of focus. Teachers are not consistently following the school's agreed policy on the feedback that pupils should receive to help them improve their work. This means that some pupils receive more effective feedback than others.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. You and the governing body monitor and review these arrangements thoroughly. Staff and governors have undertaken a comprehensive programme of training relevant to child protection and safeguarding issues, such as raising awareness of the risks of extremism, domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation. Pupils and parents feel that the school is a safe place. Pupils told me how they are taught to be safe through the curriculum, including how to protect themselves from the risks they face when they are using online technology.

Inspection findings

- Your self-evaluation and improvement plans are accurate because you regularly check on pupils' attainment and progress and on the quality of learning, teaching and assessment. Effective, personalised support is provided for teachers so that they can improve their practice.

- Leaders have improved the quality of the transition from the new Nursery and from other early years providers, so that children who need extra support are identified quickly. Leaders' rapid grasp of children's individual needs in the early years enables children to make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development remain strengths. This was evident in my discussions with pupils as well as through displays showing the experiences and opportunities provided. One display, for example, detailed the links the school has established with a school in Nepal, which were inspired by a pupil's question about fundraising. This contact has given pupils opportunities to reflect on and compare their own lives to those of others in different circumstances.
- Pupils' work in their books shows that in nearly all classes they produce a good standard of work across the curriculum. However, pupils are sometimes not given clear enough guidance on how they can improve their writing or correct errors or misconceptions in mathematics, for example, to help them make even better progress.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively and is having an impact on improving the achievement and attendance of disadvantaged pupils. Published information on pupils' performance shows that some groups of middle-ability pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, do not make as much progress as similar pupils in primary schools nationally. Leaders have accurately identified this issue as a priority and, because of the focused actions taken, many of these pupils in nearly all classes are now making good progress. This is not yet consistent in all classes and across all subjects, however.
- The level of disadvantaged pupils' absence, including persistent absence, is above that seen nationally. The school has identified that a small number of extended absences have had a significant impact on these figures. You and other staff are working hard to improve attendance, symbolised by the banner in the school hall, 'The greater the attendance, the greater the achievement'. You have introduced a range of new approaches, including publishing weekly attendance rates, challenging absences promptly and working with families and external support agencies. Figures from autumn 2016 to spring 2017 show improvement. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is still too low, however.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers consistently apply the approaches identified by the school so that a greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils, and those pupils of average ability, achieve highly across subjects
- teachers consistently follow the school's policy on giving pupils feedback on their work
- they sharpen the checks they make on attendance and take timely action with parents to improve the attendance of the small number of pupils who are persistently absent.

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

Yours sincerely

John Lawson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the school's two assistant headteachers, the inclusion manager, a senior administrator, three governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, and a group of pupils from Year 6. I spoke with some parents at the start of the school day. I considered 55 responses from Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, as well as 42 and 25 responses to the pupil and staff questionnaires respectively. I visited all classes in the school with you and I looked at a sample of pupils' work with middle leaders. I reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, plans for further development, information about pupils' achievement and how the pupil premium is spent, and a number of policy documents, including those relating to safeguarding.