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Mrs K Butler
Headteacher
Grewelthorpe Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mrs Butler

Short inspection of Grewelthorpe Church of England 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 January 2012.

This school continues to be good.

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

As headteacher, you provide inspiring and effective leadership together with a clear vision and strong commitment that every child should reach his or her full potential. You work closely with your capable senior teacher to drive forward improvements. You have created a culture, shared by your staff, to look for ways to improve the quality of education at the school continually. This permeates all your work and, as a result, the school continues to develop and flourish.

You, together with your staff and governors, know your school very well. You have tackled the areas that were identified in the last inspection as needing further improvement successfully. For example, you have worked effectively to ensure that teachers mainly give work that stretches and challenges all pupils appropriately in lessons, providing clear criteria for success so that pupils can tell more easily how well they are learning. You are rightly proud of the standards achieved by pupils, which have been and continue to be well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in key stages 1 and 2. However, you and your leaders are not complacent. You are now wisely focusing on improving the proportion of pupils achieving at greater depth in writing.

At the previous inspection, you were asked to make sure that the focus of all lesson

observations is on the learning that is taking place. This has certainly been successful because teaching at Grewelthorpe is typically, and consistently, good or better. It is characterised by teachers' high expectation, secure subject knowledge and effective planning, which ensures that pupils are inspired and engaged in their learning. This was seen when the teacher showed his Year 5 and 6 class two contrasting videos of an angry sea with waves crashing and an idyllic coastline with waves gently lapping onto a beach. With the poem 'The Sea' by James Reeves as a further stimulus, they were enthused to set a scene and describe figuratively the mood of the sea. One pupil wrote, 'I am a stealthy hunter, the one who leaves no escape.'

At the last inspection, you were also advised to increase the governing body's involvement in the school's self-evaluation, particularly in relation to the quality of learning and teaching. Governance has improved over time and governors have a better understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of education and care that their children receive. All who responded to the online questionnaire reported that they would recommend the school to other parents. A typical comment made by parents was, 'The school is a caring and nurturing environment in which my children are thriving and getting an excellent all-round education.'

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your governors place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. Staff and governors are trained effectively to identify the possible signs of risk or harm and their knowledge and skills are frequently updated. Consequently, there is a strong culture of safeguarding in school, with everyone understanding their role in maintaining pupils' safety and well-being. Parents appreciate the high levels of care and support their children receive and how they personally feel fully included in the life of the school. Pupils say 'It's like one big family here.' They speak confidently of their faith in teachers to care for them if they have any concerns. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, for example when working online on the computer. In discussions during the inspection, pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

You and your governors understand fully how to recruit staff safely and all checks and procedures are carried out diligently. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed, maintained well and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- A focus of this inspection was to check how well leaders at all levels ensured that pupils' progress throughout the school was as good as it could be. Pupils at Grewelthorpe are high-attaining. Leaders and teachers ensure that pupils are challenged well and suitably prepared for key stage 2 statutory tests. A greater than average proportion reach the expected standards in reading, writing, and in

mathematics. Most-able pupils achieved highly in the 2016 key stage 2 tests and assessments. A higher than average proportion of pupils reached the higher standards in reading and writing, and especially so in mathematics. Pupils do equally well in key stage 1.

- The early years leader is highly effective. The teacher has benefited from local authority support and has ensured that the proportion of children reaching a good level of development remains well above average, as it has been for many years. Her skills are also utilised across the federation.
- Governance has improved significantly. This is, in part, through their involvement in both writing and monitoring the school development plan. Of note is the frequency with which the standards committee and the chair of the governing body visit the school. They wisely use their visits to keep a watching brief on the school's developments. Governors have benefited from the training and guidance they have received on understanding data, and on the curriculum.
- However, while outcomes in writing are high, they are not quite as strong as in other areas. In a very small number of classes, the challenge and range of work is not always as strong as it could be. You have made this a priority and the challenge is now improving as a result of the effective approaches teachers are employing. You and your staff are dedicated to improving this further. One example of this is the way you plan to increase the number of opportunities that pupils have to write unaided across the curriculum. Teachers now have a clearer focus on what they want pupils to learn and inform them of what is needed to be successful. Pupils make stronger progress as a result of this approach. Current assessments indicate that the proportion achieving greater depth will be well above the 2016 average in the 2017 tests.
- Teaching in phonics is well planned and pupils are making strides in their reading skills. For a good few years, every pupil in Year 1 has achieved the phonic standard and a larger than average proportion of pupils are on track to reach the expected standard in the phonics screening test this year too. This is borne out by effective teaching observed during the inspection.
- There are very small numbers of disadvantaged pupils and, similarly, very small numbers of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They generally achieve at least in line with other pupils nationally and in some areas they achieve more highly than others nationally. Disadvantaged most-able pupils' achievement is particularly strong. However, there are typically only one or two disadvantaged pupils in each year group. The school tracks their progress and attainment assiduously on an individual basis and their progress is good.
- You have supported subject leaders very well, by modelling how rigorously you expect their monitoring of teaching and pupils' learning to be. You rightly judge that some require further development to develop their skills across the federation, and you have thorough plans in place for this.
- Pupils understand British values and recognise their importance. They are aware of the diverse nature of society and fully understand that they have a key role to play in ensuring that all pupils are treated equally. The exciting curriculum pupils follow is organised effectively and provides very well for their spiritual, moral,

social and cultural development. They develop a good understanding of their local heritage. Pupils also have a wider understanding of the world through links with a multicultural school in Leeds and a children's hospital in Malawi.

- Pupils generally behave very well and exhibit a real zest for learning. They enjoy school and this is reflected in their regular attendance which exceeds the national average. Pupils spoken to during the inspection commented upon how they are well looked after and feel safe.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- you share good practice so the teaching of writing is as effective as the best seen in the school, enabling pupils to gain a deeper understanding of the subject and apply their skills at a high level.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Church of England Diocese of Leeds, 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

Stephen Bywater
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, your senior teacher, other teachers and three members of the governing body. I also spoke to an officer from the local authority.

You and I made short visits to lessons to observe pupils' attitudes to their learning and to look at pupils' work. I listened to readers to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching of reading.

A wide range of documentary evidence was considered, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and information relating to pupils' current achievement and progress. I also checked the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements and attendance information.

I spoke with pupils during lessons and at other times during the day. I took into account the 15 responses from parents to the Ofsted online survey 'Parent View' and considered additional comments received via text message from parents.