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Mrs Lucy Windeler
Head of School
Endsleigh Holy Child VC Academy
Inglemire Avenue
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Dear Mrs Windeler

Short inspection of Endsleigh Holy Child VC Academy

Following my visit to the school on 25 April 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in November 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the inspection of the predecessor school. Your school, along with the trust, has been through a recent period of turbulence, which has affected the stability of the leadership and the teaching teams. Significant permanent leadership posts are all now in place, including both your head of school post and that of the assistant headteacher. Alongside this, you receive ongoing support from the executive headteacher who provides clear strategic direction.

Recent revisions to the trust's scheme of delegation have replaced the governing body with parish partners. The parish partners are responsible for the Catholic life of the school, including collective worship, and local safeguarding arrangements. The new trust leaders have created clear lines of responsibility through which they hold you and your leaders fully accountable.

The new leadership team demonstrates good capacity to move the school forward quickly. The executive headteacher provides effective support and challenge. She has been instrumental in supporting a succession of temporary headteachers until your appointment. During that time, weaker teaching was tackled and support put in place where required: consequently, the quality of teaching and learning is improving.

Your action plan through which you are driving improvements is detailed and the impact of actions is measurable. You have tight deadlines which you review termly to ensure that you are on track to make the required improvements. All leaders

contribute to driving improvements and you hold teachers to account for the progress pupils make. As a result, you know where your actions are effective and where more work is needed.

I looked at how you were improving outcomes for middle-ability pupils across the school and looked in detail at your work to improve reading. You had already identified these areas for improvement and your new tracking system helps you to monitor the progress of all groups. Your current progress information shows that more middle-ability pupils are on track to reach expected standards across the school. You have used a range of professional development opportunities to improve the teaching of reading; these have included visiting outstanding schools and putting in place staff training.

Historical outcomes show a rising trend in outcomes for the early years and key stage 1, with both now above the national averages. Current tracking information shows that an increasing number of pupils are on track to meet expectations at the end of each key stage. Outcomes at the end of key stage 2 were in line with those seen nationally in 2016.

Most parents are happy with the progress pupils are making and say their children are safe and well looked after. However, a significant minority have some concerns regarding the leadership structure of the school. This is because there have been so many changes over the past 18 months and some parents feel that they have not been kept well informed.

Safeguarding is effective.

You record all required checks on adults working at the school. New staff members all receive relevant checks before appointment. Staff receive regular information to ensure that they are up to date with any changes to policy. As a further check, all staff complete an annual questionnaire to ensure that they fully understand how to keep children safe and how to spot signs of abuse.

Pupils say they feel safe in school, and parents agree. Leaders take effective action to keep pupils safe, working with other agencies and professionals when needed. Staff follow the safeguarding policy and leaders regularly review the information on file.

Inspection findings

- You have taken effective action to improve outcomes in reading across the school. After visiting a selection of outstanding schools, you have implemented a raft of new reading systems. Each class of pupils study well-chosen reading books to develop their understanding. Teachers have received training on how to improve their questioning skills, so that they are now asking more challenging questions. Teachers have higher expectations about what pupils can achieve because they have improved their understanding. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic readers and make good progress.

- Pupils in key stage 2 demonstrate positive attitudes to reading and enjoy the challenge of more complex texts. Pupils read a wide range of texts and teachers demonstrate high expectations of the books chosen. For example, one Year 4 pupil explained how she had read 'Great Expectations' because her teacher had recommended it, and other pupils in Year 4 were looking forward to reading 'Macbeth'.
- Pupils now have access to online reading programmes, which they can complete at home. Leaders have introduced reading competitions and 'book awards' to encourage more pupils to read at home. Pupils enjoy reading at home and sharing their success at school.
- The new leader for mathematics has introduced more problem-solving, reasoning and explanation work after visiting an outstanding school. More in-depth work on problem solving is resulting in improved outcomes for girls. This is because the mathematics leader has used information from research and has listened to what the pupils have told him about how they feel about mathematics. More discussion and collaboration have improved the confidence of all pupils in how they tackle problems. Written mathematics work shows regular problem-solving activities, enabling pupils to apply their skills.
- Your work to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils has been particularly successful. Attendance rates for disadvantaged pupils have improved significantly and are well above those seen nationally.
- Your middle leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning and carry out checks to ensure the accuracy of assessment information. Regular meetings to share this information with all leaders provide a strong evidence base of where strengths and weaknesses lie across the school. Alongside this, you are tracking the progress of all groups of learners to ensure that the middle-ability group makes the progress required. Your tracking shows that the historical differences between girls and boys have diminished, and all groups of pupils are progressing at similar rates.
- Pupils draft their writing work regularly and write about a range of subjects. Teachers have introduced new assessment checks, which help pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their work. There are still some inconsistencies across the school, with lower expectations in some classes. Handwriting and presentation are not well developed.
- Early years outcomes have risen over time and are now above those seen nationally. However, the proportion of children who exceed expectations fluctuates significantly from year to year. This is because there is not enough challenge for the most able children.
- The high number of observations carried out by early years staff provide a snapshot of learning and parents value the information about what their children are doing. However, the information is not used effectively to analyse how children can be moved forward in their learning. Consequently, children's learning journals do not provide evidence of what children need next, and they do not inform parents about how to support their children at home.
- Although reading outcomes are improving in the early years, the match of books

for the most able children is not helping them to apply their skills. Children read the books with ease because they do not provide enough challenge. 'Tricky' words displayed in the classroom provide support for less-able readers, but not for the most able.

- The early years indoor learning environment provides a range of opportunities for children to practise and learn new skills. However, the adjoining room does not provide the same quality of provision as the main classroom. As a result, in this room, learning is not as effective. Further improvements to outdoor provision are identified on the action plan.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- provision in the early years improves by:
 - providing more challenge for the most able children to extend their learning to enable a higher proportion of children to exceed expectations at the end of Reception
 - ensuring that observations of children's learning record what children can do and what they need to do next, to extend learning for all groups
 - ensuring that all children, wherever they are working, have access to a high-quality learning environment
- parents are kept fully informed about any significant changes and they understand the management structure within the school and the trust
- the quality of presentation and handwriting across the school improves.

I am copying this letter to the chief executive of the trust, the executive headteacher, the director of education for the Diocese of Middlesbrough, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kingston upon Hull. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janet Lunn
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the executive headteacher, middle leaders and the chief executive of the academy trust. I heard a range of pupils read and spoke to them about the changes to the reading system. I took account of the views of staff and pupils from the online questionnaires. After reviewing the online questionnaire Parent View, I spoke to some parents in the playground. I made short visits with you to lessons in most year groups. I looked at pupils' work in books. I also evaluated a range of documents, including safeguarding information, school improvement work and current progress information. I received one letter from a parent and one from a third party during the inspection.