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14 June 2017

Mrs Heather Conroy  
Headteacher  
Hensall Community Primary School  
Church Lane  
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DN14 0QQ

Dear Mrs Conroy

### **Short inspection of Hensall Community Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 16 May 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 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You know your school well and you are determined to provide the best education possible for every pupil. Your vision statement 'High expectations for all, by all' is widely shared; leaders, teachers and governors work effectively together to achieve it.

You have promoted a calm, warm and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils are happy, are ready to learn and achieve well. Parents are fully supportive of the school and value the work of you and your team. As one parent commented to me, 'My child has come on in leaps and bounds since joining Hensall, this is a fantastic school.' Every parent who shared their view using the online survey would recommend the school to others.

You have strengthened your leadership team through the appointment of an assistant headteacher which has enabled you to have a sharper focus on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. You have increased the rigour of your checks to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently strong and that all pupils are making good progress in all areas of school. You ensure that the progress of all pupils is closely tracked and you quickly identify groups and individuals who are falling behind, working with teachers to plan how to address gaps in pupils' learning. As a result, standards at the end of the early years, in the Year 1 phonics screening check and at the end of key stage 1 have continued to rise over the last few years. By the end of key stage 2, pupils make progress that is in line with

national averages in reading and writing and well above the national average in mathematics. You rightly identified that the progress made by boys in writing needed to improve further and you have already taken action to address this.

At the time of the last inspection you were asked to ensure that teachers allowed pupils enough time to think of ways they could improve their own work. Pupils enthusiastically told me how much they enjoy using their teacher's comments to improve their work at the start of lessons and regularly edit and redraft their work. As we observed lessons and looked in pupils' books, we saw that teachers routinely encourage pupils to do this. You were also asked to improve pupils' presentation of their work. Through looking at pupils' books it is clear that pupils' presentation of their work and the quality of their handwriting are now strengths. Pupils take great pride in their work and aspire to be awarded the weekly award for handwriting and presentation.

Governors are committed to the continued success of the school. They regularly visit the school and offer a healthy balance of challenge and support to you and your team. Governors value the training they receive and use this to suggest further improvements which benefit the school. Leaders and governors have worked together effectively to make sure that any weak teaching is addressed.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose and records are detailed and up to date. Leaders and governors ensure that robust recruitment procedures are in place. They fulfil statutory requirements when appointing new members of staff, ensuring that all relevant checks are undertaken.

Leaders, including governors, ensure that staff receive high-quality training and, as a result, staff know how to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse. Staff are very clear about the school's procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they have regarding the safeguarding of pupils.

Parents and pupils feel that the school is a safe place to be. Pupils told me that bullying very rarely happens in school. They are confident that an adult would deal with it for them, swiftly and successfully, if it did occur. Pupils confidently told me how they keep safe on the internet and showed a very mature understanding of cyber-bullying.

### **Inspection findings**

- Assessment information and evidence gathered during the inspection show that children in the early years make strong progress from their often below-typical starting points. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception has risen over the last three years. In 2016, the proportion of boys achieving a good level of development was lower than that of girls. You identified this quickly and now provide more opportunities for boys to

develop their writing and mathematics skills indoors. However, you agree that opportunities for boys to develop these skills outdoors should be increased further.

- You have made changes to the way phonics is taught across school which has had a very positive impact. Recent whole-school training led by the English leader has resulted in clearly planned phonics sessions. Teachers tailor activities well to meet pupils' needs and more regularly check pupils' progress. Consequently, the proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the expected level in the phonics screening check improved significantly last year and is now above the national average.
- Relationships throughout the school are warm and friendly. Leaders and governors make sure that spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is actively fostered. Pupils know that everyone must be treated with respect and tolerance. As one pupil told me, 'We are all unique, but together we are a masterpiece.'
- A school-wide focus on grammar and spelling is already having a positive impact on pupils' writing. Teachers enable pupils to develop their understanding of grammatical features and routinely encourage them to use these in their writing. Pupils confirmed this in their discussions with me and told me about the recent 'Spelling Bee' competition, which had motivated them to learn the spellings of as many words as they could. Displays in classrooms provide helpful reminders of grammar and spelling work which supports pupils in their daily writing.
- Reading has a high focus across the school. Pupils spoke to me about how much they enjoy reading, and regularly choose books from the school's library.
- Previously, low- and middle-ability boys had made less progress in writing than they had in reading and mathematics. Work in pupils' books shows that they are now making good progress and using their skills to good effect. For example, one boy in Year 6 had written, 'Peering through the darkly tinted window, I became mesmerised by the sheer beauty of the elegant cars shining and gleaming upon the ruby red carpet.'
- Opportunities for pupils to write at length and to apply their skills in a range of other subjects are evident in some classes. However, as we discussed, this needs to be more consistent across school.
- The sports premium funding is spent well. Pupils take part in a range of extra-curricular sports activities and festivals such as football, athletics, cross-country and uni-hock. Sports coaches regularly work with teachers to develop their skills of teaching physical education.
- You are aware that the school's website is not fully compliant and some information is not as up to date as it could be.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's website meets statutory requirements and is kept up to date

- all teachers plan more regular opportunities for pupils to write at length in different subjects
- teachers in the early years plan more opportunities for boys to develop their writing and mathematics skills outdoors.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, 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

Mark Randall  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I met with you, five parents, two members of the governing body, including the chair, and a representative from the local authority. I held meetings with the school's assistant headteacher, early years leader and English leader. I talked with small groups of pupils informally in lessons and during lunchtime. Along with you, I visited all classes and looked at current writing, science and topic books from pupils in all year groups. I also listened to some pupils read.

I examined a range of documentation, including documents relating to attendance and safeguarding. I took account of the minutes of the governing body meetings, reports written by the local authority adviser, the school's evaluation of how well it is doing, the school's improvement priorities, the school's assessment information and the school's sports premium action plan. I reviewed the school's website. As part of the inspection, I considered the 34 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, along with seven responses to the staff questionnaire and six responses to the pupil questionnaire.