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Mrs Tracy Burn-Smith  
Headteacher  
Kirklington Primary School  
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Nottinghamshire  
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Dear Mrs Burn-Smith

### **Short inspection of Kirklington Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 June 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 last inspection. You and the governing body have kept to the fore the school's strong ethos. You and the staff forge strong relationships with the pupils. Those relationships underpin the pupils' welfare and progress. That is apparent, for example, in the rapidity with which the many pupils who join the school at unusual times typically settle in and feel part of the school community.

Overall, the pupils make broadly average progress. This has been sustained over the time since the last inspection. The achievement of different groups of pupils varies from year to year, affected by the small numbers at the school and consequent major differences in the composition of each year group. Usually, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress similar to, and sometimes better than, their peers.

You have taken effective action to deal with the areas for improvement from the last inspection. Your work to monitor the work of the staff and the progress of the pupils is systematic. At the moment, this work is carried out by senior leaders. Subject leaders are not involved very much in checking on and evaluating the impact of the school's work in their areas of responsibility. That restricts the leadership and management capacity at the school.

You are astute in identifying subjects where the pupils have done less well than in

other subjects, such as phonics and mathematics. You take action to deal with any such matters, including through the way that you manage the performance of the staff. You ensure that staff have access to suitable training and development opportunities that help them to improve their work. That has led to major changes in the school's approach to phonics. The improvements in mathematics have resulted in this being a subject identified to me by several pupils as one that they enjoy learning the most.

The teachers identify the pupils' learning needs clearly. Individual needs are known well to you and to the staff. The teachers help the pupils to understand what it is that they need to learn and how they can know when they have achieved it. Through a well-conceived approach, you provide personalised support for any pupils who need it, including the most able. That support improves the learning of the pupils, including the high proportion who join the school part-way through their education and often at unusual times of the year. When pupils have not reached the required level in the Year 1 phonics check, you have provided them with effective support, so that they catch up by the end of Year 2.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of good quality. You and the governing body carefully identify potential risks to the pupils' safety and put in place measures to reduce these risks. The staff are trained regularly on the things to which they should be alert. They make appropriate use of the school's systems for registering any concerns they may have.

You know the personal circumstances of the pupils well. You take appropriate steps to check on the whereabouts of, and to support the education of, pupils who are persistently absent, working closely with the pupils' families. In particular, you have worked consistently to support the education of pupils with serious medical conditions who have been unable to attend school regularly. Your work to encourage good attendance among disadvantaged pupils has been less successful.

The pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe in a range of ways. They develop sensible and mature attitudes. Bullying is rare. Many of the pupils who join the school part-way through their education have struggled in other schools. They settle into Kirklington quickly. The school enjoys a high level of confidence among the parents.

### **Inspection findings**

- The literacy leader has overhauled the school's approach to phonics radically. This is leading to better learning by children in the early years provision, who are now given many and very frequent opportunities to develop their phonics skills. Also, the pupils in key stage 1 were able to explain to me convincingly and precisely what homonyms are and the meanings of some about which they had been learning.

- All of the subject leaders have taken up their roles recently. They are not involved sufficiently in checking on and evaluating the impact of the school's work on the progress of the pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are included well within lessons and helped to be fully a part of the school community. The pupils develop positive attitudes towards these fellow pupils, assisted, for example, by taking part in activities such as wheelchair basketball.
- The school uses additional funding, such as the pupil premium, flexibly to meet the pupils' learning needs. You and the governing body look carefully at the impact of things on which you have spent the funding, and change what you do when you are not satisfied that enough has been achieved.
- The pupils' attendance has improved this year after declining in recent years. It is currently above the most recent national average. The attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, in particular, has improved and is currently above the average for the school.
- The school's work to encourage good attendance has a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes. The 'special mention assemblies', in particular, make them aware of the importance of good attendance and keen to do so.
- Disadvantaged pupils attend less well than other groups of pupils at the school. Overall, their attendance is below the national average for all pupils.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the subject leaders are able to contribute fully to checking on and evaluating the impact of the school's work to improve the pupils' progress
- the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is improved, working with their families, so that it is more in line with other groups of pupils at the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, the designated leader for safeguarding, the early years leader and the literacy coordinator. I met with members of the governing body. I held a discussion by telephone with a representative of the local authority. I made a series of visits to lessons, jointly with the headteacher. I discussed the work of the school with the pupils formally, in a group, and informally during breaktimes and in lessons. I looked at examples of the pupils' work during lessons, including examples of their workbooks. I observed the behaviour of the pupils, including during breaktimes. I looked at the views of parents expressed using Parent View and in a letter sent directly to me, and looked at the results of parental surveys carried out by the school. I looked at the results of the inspection surveys completed by the staff and the pupils. I scrutinised various documents, including safeguarding records, a range of policy documents, and the school's information about the current progress of the pupils and their attendance.