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Mr Wilhelm De Neve  
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Dear Mr De Neve

### **Short inspection of Cromer Junior School**

Following my visit to the school on 20 June 2017 with Heather Yaxley, Her Majesty's Inspector, 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.

Cromer Junior School is a happy and welcoming school where pupils and staff enjoy good relationships. You and senior leaders form an effective team and have complementary skills which are used to good effect. You have taken effective action to improve areas identified at the previous inspection including improving mathematics and the use of pupil premium funding. You are well supported by governors, who take a keen interest in everything the school does and ensure that the plans for improvement are appropriate and effective.

The school is very inclusive; pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are integrated into the main school well and play a full part in the school community. Pastoral support for pupils is used effectively: for example, the way the parent support adviser works with families, and counselling and therapeutic art teaching for pupils with emotional problems. This ensures that pupils are ready and able to learn.

Teaching is good because teachers know their pupils well. They plan lessons which meet pupils' needs and which pupils say are interesting and fun. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, especially in English and mathematics, and encourage positive attitudes to learning. For example, pupils told me about the 'three before me' rule where pupils need to draw on their friends for help before coming to a teacher.

Pupils like school. They said that their teachers are kind and helpful. They also told me about the interesting trips they enjoy, the clubs they attend and the subjects they like such as learning about the Greeks and the Second World War in history. Teachers provide a broad curriculum which is enriched by events such as drama productions, poetry recitals, and art and musical events. Pupils learn about other countries and cultures and were able to tell me, for example, about learning about Islam and other religions. Pupils recognise that 'we are all different' and know that they need to treat people with respect.

Pupils behave well, particularly during lessons. They respond to adults' direction swiftly and concentrate well on their tasks. Pupils enjoy working in pairs and groups and listen to each other well. Outside, the majority of pupils play together sensibly and pupils told me that they enjoy playtimes.

Parents are mostly very supportive of the school. A relatively small proportion of parents responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire, but the large majority of these were very positive about the school and the support provided by staff, especially for pupils who have particular needs. Comments included, 'Such care shown by the school's management', 'The school is fantastic', and 'There is a tangible sense of pride within each class for every child's effort and progress no matter what their ability.' Parents particularly commented on the high-quality pastoral support and the broad range of interesting activities that you and your team provide for pupils. A small number of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire were concerned about behaviour at school and some felt that aspects of communication could be improved, for example so that they receive notices of events more swiftly. You have put in place lots of opportunities to develop links with parents further, for example by inviting them in for reading cafes and other curriculum events, as well as to enjoy whole-school events and assemblies.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Keeping pupils safe is central to the work of Cromer Junior School. You and all adults are regularly trained to ensure that you know the signs that may indicate a child is at risk. This training is effective, as shown by the concerns forms completed by staff. You act swiftly on any of these concerns and make sure that external agencies also play their part when needed. You maintain clear records of concerns and actions taken so that nothing is missed. You make sure that all necessary checks on staff are carried out according to requirements and that these are recorded appropriately. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online because they are taught about this regularly. Pupils told me what information they should and should not share when online. Some pupils are on the e-safety council and take responsibility for disseminating messages about online safety. Pupils know what bullying is and are confident that any incidents are dealt with by adults in school. As a result, pupils say that school is a safe place to be. The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire agreed that the school is a safe place.

## Inspection findings

- The first area that we agreed we would look at during the inspection was the progress that pupils are making in mathematics. This was an area for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Progress of pupils in Year 6 in mathematics has lagged behind progress in reading and writing, although in 2016 the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in mathematics was above that found nationally.
- I found that a range of strategies to improve mathematics have been put in place which are proving effective. For example, you and the subject leader for mathematics have changed the approach to planning mathematics, improved the calculation policy and introduced an online homework programme which pupils told me they really enjoy. A greater emphasis has been placed on developing pupils' arithmetic skills and this is helping pupils to be more fluent in calculations and in using their skills when solving problems.
- Leadership of mathematics is very effective. Leaders carry out a careful and detailed analysis of pupils' achievement to really understand what is working well and what is less effective. For example, the longer-term impact of additional support given to pupils in mathematics is checked to see what skills pupils have retained. However, your leader for mathematics does not have sufficient opportunities to observe the teaching of mathematics so that leaders have a clearer picture of what is working best in day-to-day practice and where further improvements may be needed.
- Mathematics is promoted across the school. For example, the 'chocolate challenge' encourages pupils to try different mathematics problems in their spare time and a 'number of the week' board invites pupils to record the possible questions that could produce this answer. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics.
- Teachers identify where pupils have gaps in their mathematics knowledge and plan lessons to address them, checking afterwards that this has been effective. Where pupils are still having difficulty, further support is provided to help them overcome these problems quickly.
- Pupils' books, together with your assessments of pupils' progress, show that most pupils are making good progress in mathematics because of the range of improvements that have been introduced. However, in some classes, teachers do not move pupils on swiftly enough when it is clear that they have grasped the concepts being taught.
- We also agreed that I would look at the progress of particular groups of pupils, those who are disadvantaged and the most able pupils.
- In previous years, disadvantaged pupils have not achieved as well as others in the school by the end of Year 6. You have made sure that your plans for the use of pupil premium funding are detailed and clearly identify how any underachievement is being addressed and how you check that action is proving effective.
- You showed me how you track the progress of each disadvantaged pupil very carefully and discuss these pupils as a priority in your pupil-progress meetings.

You also showed me how you plan support to meet pupils' individual needs. For example, we looked at some case studies including one for a most-able disadvantaged pupil. You explained that the support provided was to develop this pupil's leadership skills and confidence so that they would maintain and increase their good progress and achievement.

- You are drawing on the effective model of parental engagement used with other parents, such as those of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, to give parents a greater input into what support will best help their child. You have also worked effectively with parents to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, attendance for this group is now almost the same as that found for all pupils nationally.
- Pupils' work and assessment information indicate that the majority of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making good progress so that more pupils are achieving or exceeding the standard expected for their age.
- Teachers provide work for the most able pupils which challenges them in mathematics and in English and many of these pupils are achieving above the standard expected for their age. For example, the most able pupils in Year 6 were producing high-quality writing using a range of vocabulary, and in mathematics were grappling with challenging problems.
- Enrichment opportunities are provided, for example for those pupils who are particularly talented in music, drama and sports. However, in some subjects, such as science and history, while opportunities for extension are provided, pupils' learning is not always recorded effectively. As a result, teachers cannot always check that the progress of the most able pupils in these subjects is as good as it should be and use this information to plan subsequent learning for these pupils.
- During the inspection, I looked at how you and your governors have responded to the school's identification as a coasting school by the Department for Education. I found that you clearly identified that improving pupils' progress is key to moving the school forward and drew up further plans to address this. These plans are clear and detailed and are having a positive effect.
- You and your leadership team drill down into the detail of pupils' assessments, asking detailed questions of teachers about how progress can be accelerated further. You check the quality of teaching regularly through observations and looking at pupils' work, providing teachers with helpful feedback. You acknowledge, however, that you have not given some subject leaders sufficient opportunities to observe teaching as well so that they can also help teachers to improve their practice when needed. Your assessments and pupils' work showed that pupils are making good progress across the school and many are making better progress than this.
- We looked at the provision made for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school provides specialist provision in its autism base and these pupils are taught well within the base and in classes. Pupils are supported sensitively and so are enabled to learn and socialise with increasing independence. Pupils are integrated into the main school whenever appropriate so that they feel fully included as part of the school.

- Leaders for special educational needs have improved the individual plans for pupils so that there is greater involvement of pupils and parents. They know pupils' individual needs well and ensure that class teachers take responsibility for ensuring that pupils' needs are well met.
- As a result of the effective support provided and the high expectations held by you and other leaders, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities within the base and those within the main school make similar progress to others in the school.
- You are aware that the attendance of some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is too low and are working with parents to improve this.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all teachers move pupils on more swiftly in their learning in mathematics
- subject leaders have more regular opportunities to check on teaching and learning so that they know where teaching is most effective in promoting pupils' progress and where more could be done
- learning in some subjects such as history and science is recorded more effectively so that teachers take account of this when planning subsequent tasks, including for the most able pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Maria Curry  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with you, with other leaders and with the chair of the governing body. Inspectors met with a group of pupils from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including information on pupils' progress, safeguarding, development planning and the school's self-evaluation. Inspectors visited all classes and evaluated pupils' work. Inspectors checked the school's website and found it to meet requirements on the publication of specified information.