

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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14 July 2017

Miss H. Duckett  
Headteacher  
Winchelsea Primary School  
Ruskington  
Sleaford  
Lincolnshire  
NG34 9BY

Dear Miss Duckett,

### **Short inspection of Winchelsea Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 20 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 since the previous inspection. You have fostered an extremely strong team spirit, with the result that all members of the school community feel valued. Members of staff and governors are highly supportive and are committed to doing the best they can to ensure that pupils succeed. The parents I spoke with and those parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were full of praise for the quality of education that their children are receiving. They appreciate and value greatly the way in which teachers provide advice as to how they can support their children's learning. Among other very positive comments, parents described the school as being 'superb' and 'brilliant'. One parent told me that her daughter was 'unbelievably happy' at the school.

You are keen to ensure that the school curriculum provides the opportunity for pupils to gain wide-ranging and rich learning experiences. Pupils take part in sports, learn a foreign language and take part in visits outside of the school. During the inspection, younger children spoke excitedly about the trip they were due to undertake to Belton House.

Winchelsea Primary is a school that is very much at the heart of the community. You work closely with the neighbouring church and ensure pupils' involvement in local activities, including the Christmas market. The members of the school choir are particularly excellent ambassadors. You have received the International School Award in recognition of the work done to develop pupils' cultural and global

awareness. One boy told me that when he goes home after school, he can't wait to come back the next day.

Since the previous inspection, you have continued to ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Staff receive good training and have the opportunity to learn together and share their expertise. They know what highly effective teaching and learning look like. During the inspection, I saw children enjoying their learning and working purposefully on appropriately challenging tasks.

Pupils spoke excitedly about the many creative challenges that their teachers set for them, including building bridges across an 'imaginary river' and investigating the origin of the 'mysterious egg'. Such approaches serve to ensure that children continue to make good progress and are enthusiastic about learning.

Improvement in the teaching of phonics was an area identified for improvement at the previous inspection. You have moved swiftly to address this issue. Standards have improved. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics was above the national average in 2015 and in 2016.

Subject leadership has also improved since the previous inspection. Subject leaders now have the dedicated time they need to check that their work is supporting pupils to make the progress that they should. They undertake subject audits and regularly review pupils' work in books in order to plan for future developments. Leaders at all levels have an accurate view as to strengths and the areas that require further development. Their actions have had impact and have improved the provision for pupils.

Governors have now undertaken appropriate training in the use of school data. They have a secure understanding of the school improvement priorities and the actions that leaders are taking to address these. They speak with confidence about the impact of pupil premium spending on the progress of eligible pupils. They check regularly to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve similarly to their non-disadvantaged peers. This group of pupils make good progress.

You are aware that there remains work to do to ensure that more pupils achieve the highest standards in reading and writing by the end of key stage 2. This is a priority for the school. Much has happened to adapt the curriculum in order that pupils study at a greater depth. Evidence in pupils' books indicates that pupils are now challenged appropriately. We discussed the elements of pupils' writing and mathematics in both key stage 1 and 2 that still require attention. Some pupils' work is still not as accurate or as well-presented as is needed.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that the arrangements to safeguard pupils' welfare are fit for purpose. Safeguarding records are detailed and of high quality. The school business manager makes sure that necessary vetting takes place when new staff are appointed. All staff are well trained. They receive updates to their training and have regular opportunities to discuss any safeguarding issues. Safeguarding policies are

appropriate and up to date. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding has considerable appropriate professional expertise. He undertakes checks to ensure that safeguarding procedures are consistently applied. You undertake an annual, highly comprehensive safeguarding audit in order to make sure that all processes are secure. Children learn about the importance of staying safe in their lessons and during assemblies. They say that bullying is not a problem in their school. If they had any problems, they would know who to speak to in order to receive help and advice.

### **Inspection findings**

- Historically, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics has been high. In 2016, however, pupils did not achieve the higher standards they were capable of in reading and writing. You have rightly identified this as an area for improvement. When we looked in pupils' English workbooks, we agreed that their work was sometimes marred by grammatical inaccuracy and poor presentation, including handwriting.
- Over time standards in mathematics have improved. Children are now learning to calculate difficult problems independently. However, work in pupils' workbooks shows that, at times, pupils' mathematical accuracy needs to improve further.
- In 2016, results in mathematics indicated that middle-ability pupils did not achieve at the levels they were capable of at the end of key stage 1. Leaders' information from the assessment of pupils' progress and the work in pupils' workbooks suggested that pupils are on track to achieve as they should in mathematics at the end of key stage 1 in 2017.
- Pupils' attendance is good. Pupils attend school more regularly than the national average. They are keen to come to school, really enjoy their lessons and benefit from the caring environment that the school offers. The amount of persistent absence is reducing. Although better than the national average, those pupils entitled to free school meals are still more regularly absent from the school than other pupils are.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers ensure that pupils' work in mathematics is technically accurate and well presented
- teachers ensure that pupils' writing is technically accurate and well presented.
- a greater proportion of pupils achieve at the higher standards in reading and writing by the end of key stage 2
- disadvantaged pupils attend school as regularly as others do.

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

Yours sincerely

Phil Drabble

**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, with your business manager and with members of the governing body. I had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority and met with three middle leaders and three other members of staff. I also spoke to a group of children, attended a school assembly and heard two children read. I spoke to parents as they brought their children to school and I undertook a tour of the school to see the learning that was taking place in all classes. I also undertook two lesson observations.

I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and documents relating to safeguarding.

I took account of the responses to the online parents' survey and reviewed the results from your own parent and staff surveys.