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Miss Caroline Breslin  
Executive Headteacher  
Goxhill Primary School  
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Dear Miss Breslin

### **Short inspection of Goxhill Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 September 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 November 2012.

#### **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 your staff and governors, have high aspirations for the pupils in your care and you clearly want the best for them. Along with your passion to help pupils achieve well, you take good care of them and ensure that school improvement priorities are met effectively. Parents and pupils value the supportive and protective culture that permeates the school. Pupils feel safe and secure at school and thrive as a result, in both their learning and personal development. At the end of Year 6, when they leave your school, pupils are well prepared for secondary school and have the personal attributes to be good citizens in the future.

The school is a calm and welcoming environment; pupils' efforts are valued and their work celebrated through attractive displays that inspire others in their learning. Although a number of pupils need additional support, all pupils know that, if you try your best, teachers will help you to achieve well. Pupils trust all staff in the school and know whom to go to should they experience any difficulties at school or at home, be they concerns about their personal well-being or their learning. As one pupil explained most confidently, 'I love my school. I feel safe here and that makes me happy. The teachers are here to help us and they do.'

Despite considerable staffing issues in the last school year and a brief decline in pupils'

achievements in 2016, the commitment to school improvement has been diligent. All staff have a clear understanding of what you and other leaders want to achieve and of the responsibilities placed upon them to play their part in supporting school improvement. You are unequivocal in your expectations of pupils and staff; only their best is acceptable. To this end, you ensure that staff have access to good training to extend their skills, for example, regarding the new assessment procedures you are establishing in school and the challenges these present. Staff feel valued; they enjoy working at the school and are proud to be part of it.

Governors are highly committed to the school and have, among them, the expertise to oversee the school's work effectively. They share the staff's passion for pupils' success. Governors hold you and other leaders to account effectively for the school's performance. Hence, they have ensured rapid improvement this year, placing the school in a good place to move forward quickly.

You have a clear vision for school improvement and you are implementing actions effectively. Your senior management team is clear about its responsibilities to support staff and monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Senior leaders do this well. You all have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of further improvement; clear plans are in place to address these. The focus on improving teaching to accommodate changes in the curriculum, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, has realised higher outcomes for all pupils, particularly among those able to work at greater depth. The checks on pupils' progress, while generally strong and accurate, are not used as effectively as they might be to identify, as early as possible, where lower attaining pupils are at risk of falling behind.

The school offers pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or who are disadvantaged, very effective support. Regular reviews of pupils' progress ensure that teaching, including individual programmes of support, is well suited to meet these pupils' needs. Consequently, they make good progress. Parents appreciate this inclusive approach to meeting the needs of every child. Occasionally, pupils who join the school late in key stage 2, particularly disadvantaged pupils, are not always in the school long enough to benefit from the good things it offers. You and other leaders know this is an ever-increasing issue, as new families move into the area. You are already taking steps to improve ways to find out what pupils already know when they come to the school and how to help them close any gaps in their learning.

An area for improvement from the previous inspection was to increase the challenge for the most able pupils. This has been addressed well; a greater proportion of pupils are now beginning to achieve at greater depth. You are quick to plan additional support for any pupils who are gifted and talented so that they achieve well. Work in pupils' books and around the school shows that all pupils enjoy working on projects and topics that fire their enthusiasm. Your expectations of pupils are high and teachers plan appropriate activities to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.

**Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team ensures that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Keeping pupils safe is a high priority and every member of staff is made aware of their duty of care. Secure systems are in place, for example to check that pupils arrive safely each day, and records are comprehensive in their detail. Staff manage pupils' well-being meticulously, noting any concerns they may have and reporting these appropriately. Leaders work with outside agencies and liaise with them promptly to keep pupils safe and to meet any needs that arise. You make sure that issues are managed sensitively and effectively. Staff training is up to date. All staff, including those who are newly appointed, have a secure knowledge and understanding of current safeguarding guidance and procedures. Pre-employment checks on adults working at the school meet statutory requirements.

Pupils know what to do and whom to go to if they are worried or upset. Staff make sure that pupils know how to stay safe at home and at school and what to do if emergencies arise. Pupils are particularly well versed in the dangers posed by social media sites and the internet generally. For example, they explained in detail that posting personal details or photographs online is not sensible because anybody can use that information to, as they said, 'cyber bully you'. Governors conduct appropriate checks on safeguarding regularly.

### **Inspection findings**

- The inspection focused on key lines of enquiry that we agreed at the start of the inspection. The first of these was checking on the quality of the school's procedures to monitor pupils' progress to ensure that all pupils have the support and opportunity to achieve well, irrespective of their starting points. Leaders explained that in 2016, pupils' outcomes were not as good as the school had expected because staff were still coming to grips with revisions in the curriculum and new procedures to assess pupils' progress.
  - Following extensive training, including coaching by senior leaders to support individual staff, there is a growing confidence among teachers to make more accurate checks on pupils' progress over time and to increase challenge for all pupils. You and your senior leaders have an accurate awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school. Through effective support and training, the quality of teaching is improving rapidly. Staff have clear targets, which they are supported to achieve. As a result, all pupils, including children in early years, are now making good progress. However, the progress among lower attaining pupils, and among those who are disadvantaged, is not always as rapid as among other groups, because some of these pupils lack confidence in their learning.
  - Regular pupil review meetings help leaders, including governors, to check that pupils are on track to make good progress. Additional support, for example for Year 6, is effective in helping pupils, especially the most able, to make faster progress. The impact of such support in the past has not been as effective in helping lower attaining pupils and disadvantaged pupils to make rapid progress.
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- In the light of the school's results in 2016 and 2017, I looked closely at the progress

and achievement of the lower attaining pupils and disadvantaged pupils. While the numbers in these two groups are low, they have a significant impact on the school's overall performance over time. These pupils did not make the progress they should have in the past. This was mainly because their needs were not identified quickly enough to put into place the help they needed to make better progress. You have taken necessary steps to address this and, as a result, the progress of these pupils is accelerating and is good in English and mathematics.

- Additional individual support in basic literacy and numeracy skills, and taking time to listen to pupils read, have resulted in disadvantaged pupils making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is reflected in the work that I saw in pupils' books and in the school's information about pupils' progress. The difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils is diminishing steadily. You and other leaders acknowledge that you still need to keep a close check on the impact of additional support for these pupils.
- I also looked in depth at pupils' attendance and rates of persistent absence, particularly among disadvantaged pupils. In 2016, disadvantaged pupils had attendance that was in the lowest 10% nationally; persistent absence was in the highest 10% nationally. Poor attendance contributed to the lower than expected progress. The school's data for 2016/17 shows that attendance rose to slightly above average this year and persistent absence fell to being in line with the national average. The school is rigorous in its monitoring of attendance, punctuality and cases of persistent absence. Regular newsletters remind parents to make sure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Pupils value the rewards they receive to encourage good attendance.
- I looked at the teaching of reading because pupils' outcomes in reading in 2016, at the end of Year 6, were not as strong as in previous years. Phonics teaching is systematic and effective. Children in early years and key stage 1 learn to read quickly through regular and intensive phonics lessons. Leaders and teachers in all classes have focused on the importance of developing pupils' understanding of texts and vocabulary, as this was a weakness, particularly among lower attaining pupils. Teachers model good reading skills and probe pupils' precise understanding of words and phrases. Pupils enjoy reading and love to discuss the characters and plots of stories they like.
- The teaching of writing, while generally lively and engaging, and often of high quality, for example in Year 6, still needs further improvement. In 2017, provisional outcomes in writing at the end of both key stages were not as high as those in mathematics and reading in the school. This is largely due to pupils making errors in their basic skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling that frequently go unchecked. Coupled with poor handwriting and untidy presentation, these factors detract from the quality of writing pupils produce not just in English but in other subjects. For example, some high-quality in-depth work on the Romans, which pupils in lower key stage 2 have enjoyed, was marred by careless errors that had not been addressed quickly.
- The focus on developing children's handwriting and letter formation in early years is not strong enough. Some pupils, even as late as Year 2, have poor pencil control and cannot form letters accurately or write fluently and at speed. As a consequence, lower attaining pupils in particular, do not always complete work to a good standard.
- Learning in mathematics is strong. Pupils develop skills systematically and staff make sure that pupils understand their learning well enough to apply it confidently when

working on their own. For example, I saw pupils in Years 5 and 6 solve multi-step problems in a logical sequence and tackle algebra with confidence using the limited information they had to find missing numbers. Pupils make good progress and the most able are challenged well to work at greater depth.

- Teachers enhance pupils' learning through the many clubs, trips and residential visits that raise their awareness of the world beyond school and of different cultures and traditions. Pupils and parents value highly the range of sporting activities and music tuition you offer to pupils.
- Pupils behave well, with a few becoming restless only when the learning does not engage them enough. Pupils are very polite, courteous and friendly. They are very mature in their outlook and explain the role of playground mediators with eloquence, saying, 'We make sure arguments get sorted quickly and people make friends if they fall out'. Some explained that the school caretaker makes sure that the grounds are safe to play on, because, 'The school is next to the park and older kids throw litter and cans into our school and they shouldn't because it could be dangerous for us'. Pupils also praised lunchtime staff, explaining, 'They don't force us to eat things we don't like, but they do encourage us to try new things and explain what good, healthy food is'.
- Relationships in the school are trusting and respectful. Staff treat pupils with respect and value their ideas and opinions in discussions. Pupils speak highly of all staff. Parents who presented their views during the inspection said that the school was a happy place and teachers did a very good job. A few parents agreed: 'We have no complaints – couldn't wish for a better school. Our children love coming and would come in the holidays if they could – please can you arrange that!'

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils who are lower attaining, including those who are disadvantaged, are identified early and receive high-quality support to help them make more rapid progress in all subjects
- they monitor the impact of the support for low-attaining pupils and those who are disadvantaged
- handwriting skills are taught effectively and that pupils apply their basic skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling accurately in their writing in all subjects.

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 Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison

**Ofsted Inspector**

**Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher, the chair of the governing body and four other governors, senior managers and staff. I also met with a representative from the local authority. I analysed a range of documentation, including information about pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, safeguarding checks, and policies and procedures. We discussed your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I observed pupils around school, as they came into school and in their classes. Together we visited all classes and some small-group work. I observed two longer teaching sessions with your senior leaders. I looked at books, spoke to pupils about their work and listened to them read. I also met with pupils to get their views of the school and I took into account the 26 responses to the online questionnaire pupils submitted. I spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day and considered the views of the 50 responses submitted by parents in Parent View.