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Mr J Grant  
Headteacher  
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Dear J Grant

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

Following my visit to the school on 17 October 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 promote a caring culture where every pupil is highly valued and known well by you and your staff. Pupils are happy in school. Many of the parents speak highly of the caring staff and the quality of education that their children receive. For example, one parent stated, 'My children love going to school. The staff are approachable at all times. I am more than confident my children are receiving the best education possible.'

Staff have created an encouraging climate for learning in this very small school. As a result, pupils said that they enjoy coming to school. They are respectful and behave well because of good relationships with their teachers and other staff. One Year 5 pupil told me that 'Fulstow Primary School is a small school and we are like a family. We look after one another but we are good at welcoming new people. Everybody new brings something different and that's special.'

Pupils are enthusiastic learners. They enjoy learning through topics that motivate and inspire them. They particularly appreciate when these experiences can be shared across the school. For example, during my visit, pupils excitedly told me about their plans to make soup and bread for the harvest festival.

The governing body provides you with effective support and challenge. Governors are knowledgeable and regularly check the actions taken by leaders to secure

improvements. They know the strengths of the school and the areas for improvement. Governors have a particular focus on the school's support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for disadvantaged pupils. They ensure that funding for these pupils is used effectively.

You have dealt effectively with the areas for improvement that the inspector identified at the last inspection. Teachers plan appropriate work that consistently provides challenging opportunities for most-able pupils. When looking in pupils' books, I could see that teachers give pupils precise feedback to improve their literacy skills in a variety of subjects. Pupils respond well to the feedback, and time is given to enable them to edit and improve their work. Pupils have good opportunities to write for different purposes across different subjects.

The majority of parents I spoke to during the inspection are happy with the school and feel well consulted and informed. You make sure that you are available to parents whenever possible so that they can voice any concerns. Your acting deputy headteacher is available for parents in your absence. Parents said that they know staff well and feel they are 'approachable and friendly' if they have concerns about their children. However, you are aware that some information is not communicated to parents as well as it could be. Consequently, you are updating your website and looking at more effective ways of keeping parents well informed.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders have ensured that there is a good culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff and governors keep up to date with training. They know what to do to keep pupils safe. You work actively with external agencies and refer concerns in a timely manner. You and your staff are vigilant and are prepared to take decisive action, when needed, to secure pupils' well-being.

Pupils are safe and happy in school. They said that poor behaviour is rare but when it does happen staff deal with it well. Pupils feel well cared for by staff in school. They are taught about potential risks and how to stay safe in different situations. These include using the internet safely, understanding fire safety precautions and understanding dangers from strangers.

### **Inspection findings**

- You and your governors have a clear understanding of the school's current strengths and areas that need improving. You have developed clear strategic plans for what is required to shape and drive the future of the school. Your self-evaluation accurately informs your policies, actions and staff training. You check pupils' progress rigorously and take action when it is needed, so that achievement remains good.
- You have successfully secured strong and effective links with the Little Ducklings nursery. As a result, children make a better start to school life and plans to increase the number of pupils attending the school are looking promising.
- You were recently asked by the local authority to become executive headteacher

of another local school. You feel that this has been beneficial for Fulstow Primary School because staff from both schools are able to share training, expertise and planning. This has improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment as a result. The Learning Partnership has helped you in this role by providing good-quality support. You acknowledge that this is improving your practice as a headteacher. It has also enabled you to improve the quality of leadership in the school so that a senior member of staff is able to act confidently as a headteacher in your absence.

- Most-able pupils, including the most-able disadvantaged pupils, are well challenged. As a result, they make accelerated progress. From my scrutiny of a sample of pupils' books, I could see that teachers plan learning to meet appropriately the needs of individual pupils.
- Leaders make good use of the additional funding that the school receives. They provide extra teaching to individuals and small groups. This is having a positive impact on improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school's information shows that these pupils make similar overall progress to other pupils in the school.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the Reception and key stage 1 class has remained strong since the last inspection. Following a change in staffing, you acted swiftly and appointed additional adult support. This support is rightly focused on securing improvements in teaching and learning and further developing good-quality provision, particularly for the Reception children.
- Pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics have historically been strong. You have ensured that pupils are challenged well and provide good-quality additional activities, including English and mathematics booster clubs. As a result, outcomes remained good in 2017. Nevertheless, from my scrutiny of pupils' mathematics books it was clear that across all year groups pupils do not have regular opportunities to develop their reasoning skills.
- The quality of reading and writing throughout the school is effective. Leaders' recent introduction of a new approach to teaching phonics is having a positive impact on pupils' early reading and writing skills. Teachers skilfully encourage pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects and for different purposes. However, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to practise and apply their skills in longer pieces of writing so that more pupils exceed age-related expectations.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching in mathematics better promotes pupils' reasoning skills in order to extend their learning
- pupils are given more frequent opportunities to write at length, to further develop their skills in writing.

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

Stephanie Innes-Taylor  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, your English leader and your special educational needs coordinator. I had two telephone conversations: one with the locality leader for the local authority and the other with the chair of the governing body. I spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day and I met with a group of pupils.

We visited classrooms together and I looked at a range of pupils' work. We discussed the progress of different groups of pupils and the school's plans for improvement. I considered the responses of parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I scrutinised evidence from a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance, procedures and records for safeguarding and behaviour, information on how the pupil premium is spent, an analysis of attendance and a number of policy documents, including those for safeguarding and behaviour. I examined the school's website to check that it meets requirements on the publication of specified information. I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and out on the playground.