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Mrs Claire Fielding  
Headteacher  
Melbourne Community Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Fielding

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

Following my visit to the school on 24 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 June 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

As headteacher, you are leading the school very effectively and have fostered, among staff and governors, a high commitment to ensuring that pupils achieve the best they can. While many members of staff are still relatively new to the school, since your appointment in September 2015, you have established a culture of high expectations from staff and pupils. Staffing issues hampered school improvement in your first year in the school, but with effective support from governors and other leaders, you have successfully stemmed the decline in pupils' outcomes in 2016 and the school is now well placed to move forward rapidly. You and your team have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weakness of the school. You have introduced effective assessment systems and ensure that staff use the assessment information gathered to plan work that meets pupils' needs and abilities effectively. You also take heed of any external reports and leaders' evaluations to inform any further improvement. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are making good progress. Increasing numbers are working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school.

Governors visit the school regularly and receive clear information from you and other key leaders, so they understand fully the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors have a wide range of skills and expertise to support the school's work and do so effectively. They, too, are ambitious for the school and are confident in asking searching questions about the school's performance, any proposed actions to make improvements and the impact of these actions to

accelerate pupils' progress. They are astute in recruiting high-calibre staff because they want the best for the school, and hold leaders to account effectively for the progress pupils make.

Members of your leadership team have clearly defined roles and talk confidently about their plans for improvement in their areas of responsibility and how this will feed into whole-school improvement. You have identified teachers who have leadership potential and have given them increased responsibility. For example, the new deputy headteacher is very adept at collating and analysing pupils' progress data so that you can quickly plan the additional support pupils might need to achieve well. The introduction of a new mathematics scheme has been a success in that more pupils are now working at greater depth and enjoying the challenge. Leaders have brought about greater consistency in practice within the school.

Leaders work as a cohesive team. For example, all subject leaders are working towards a common goal to improve the quality of pupils' comprehension skills in reading and their confidence in understanding subject-specific vocabulary, for example in mathematics. There is also a drive to ensure that pupils apply their basic skills in literacy accurately in all their written work, but this remains an area for further work. Leaders have improved the early years learning area to provide a rich learning environment for young children. Activities captivate their imaginations and promote a love of learning that is resulting in high outcomes. Leaders have also improved outdoor play areas to support pupils' physical development and exercise.

Most children begin school with skills and knowledge typical for their age. As a result of focused teaching, children make good progress through early years and most are meeting the expected standard when they move into Year 1.

The quality of teaching and learning in key stage 1 is also consistently good. Pupils continue to build on their prior learning and make good progress. The proportion achieving the expected standard at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics in 2017 was below the national averages, but a marked rise compared with the outcomes in 2016. The profile of the Year 2 pupils in 2017 was well below average on entry to Year 1 because a significant proportion of the 19 pupils was low attaining or had special educational needs and/or disabilities. As year groups are relatively small, the underperformance of just one or two pupils has a significant impact on pupils' outcomes overall when compared with national averages. Pupils' outcomes in Year 6 also rose in 2017, especially in mathematics. The proportion working at greater depth in reading and writing exceeded the national average.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

School leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Policies and procedures are reviewed and revised regularly, including updating training for staff and governors. Checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school are diligent and thorough. All staff and governors take their duty of care to safeguard children very seriously and take prompt action if any concerns arise about any child or their family. Leaders draw on

advice from external agencies appropriately to safeguard vulnerable pupils. The pastoral care team is tenacious and systematic in following up referrals to social care. They provide advice and guidance to children and families on how to stay healthy and safe, and about emotional and mental health.

Governors are mindful of their statutory responsibilities to keep children safe, and the designated safeguarding governor regularly visits the school. As a result of an audit by the headteacher and governors, procedures to lock external doors and tighten gate security were strengthened to safeguard pupils while in school. Staff are quick to follow up the absence of any child if the parents have not notified the school in advance.

Pupils consider the school to be a safe place. The pupils I spoke with said that they loved school and are very happy to be there. They explained that they feel safe because, 'Everyone here looks after you and teachers sort things if you tell them you are upset'. They explained how the school teaches them to stay safe near roads and about 'stranger danger' and know whom to go to if they are worried at school or home. They were particularly well informed about the dangers of social media sites and the internet generally, explaining that you should never post personal details or photographs on the internet because, 'bad people might try and find you and they might hurt you or your family'. Parents agree that their children are safe and well looked after in school.

### **Inspection findings**

- The first area we agreed to examine through the inspection was to consider the quality of reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and in mathematics at the end of Year 6, which declined in 2016 and did not entirely recover in 2017. The combined outcomes for reading, writing and mathematics at both key stages fell to below the national average.
- There were a number of extenuating circumstances, largely due to instability in staffing in 2016 and weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics that led to pupils making insufficient progress. As most classes in the school are of mixed age, this slow progress impacts often on two year groups. In the two years you have been in the school, you have appointed some high-quality staff who are now having a significant impact on accelerating pupils' progress rapidly. Standards are rising in all subjects and the proportion of pupils working at greater depth is now above the national average. This is because teaching is now consistently good across the school.
- The school's procedures to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and to check that teachers' assessments are accurate and reliable are highly effective. Leaders identify where teaching needs strengthening and provide appropriate training and support to help teachers improve their practice. Leaders analyse assessment data carefully, to make sure that pupils are achieving as well as they should. Outcomes are rising strongly, but pupils could be challenged even further to achieve more, particularly in making sure that they apply their basic skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling, not just in English but across all subjects,

accurately.

- The second area of focus for the inspection was to evaluate the impact of the school's actions to improve the teaching of mathematics across the school. In both 2016 and 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching or exceeding the expected standard in mathematics at the end of key stage 1 was below the national average, with no pupils working at greater depth. In key stage 2, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was below the national average, but a greater proportion than nationally reached the higher level. Inconsistencies still prevail in the 2017 outcomes, but the overall picture for mathematics is stronger.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. The new scheme, introduced last year, has already had significant impact on improving the teaching of number and the four operations, as well as placing greater emphasis on pupils' mental agility and fluency. Teachers encourage pupils to think systematically when solving multi-step problems that require a number of operations in the right sequence, and to explain the methods they have used. Pupils enjoy this challenge but a few still find it too difficult to think logically or explain their strategies with confidence. The curriculum has been redesigned, with greater emphasis on pupils applying their mathematical skills confidently in other subjects. This is helping pupils understand why logical thinking and reasoning are important skills to master.
- I also considered closely the capacity in leadership in the school to ensure that the school remains good. You have been an inspiration to all staff and have enabled them to raise their expectations of themselves and their pupils. You have appointed staff who are as committed as you are to what you want to achieve and you deploy them effectively. You trust them to lead in their areas of responsibility and provide good opportunities for all staff to develop their skills and expertise. Staff are highly positive about how you have enabled them to grow and flourish.
- All leaders, including governors, have the best interests of pupils at heart. They agree that primary education is crucial to pupils' future success and so have put into place a curriculum that inspires them to learn and extend their knowledge and skills. Pupils say that they, 'love school and that teachers make learning interesting'. You have established a behaviour and rewards system that pupils all understand fully and so strive to achieve their best. Parents are very positive about the school and the quality of education their children receive. While the curriculum supports pupils' personal and academic development well generally, pupils are not as clear as they might be as to what constitutes British values and how the society in which they are growing up is shaped and how this affects their lives day to day.
- Pupils' personal development and well-being are high priority and all staff are diligent in their care for pupils. Pupils' attendance has improved significantly since you joined the school because you make sure that staff plan activities that pupils want to be in school for and that they encourage good attendance. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. You have identified pupils who are at risk of absence and have implemented a strategy to promote and reward regular attendance among all. Punctuality has also improved and persistent absences have declined. Current attendance is above that found nationally.

- Pupils' behaviour is good throughout the school and pupils are quick to help each other in their learning, as well as at lunch- or playtime. They are very kind, considerate and mature in the way they manage themselves in and around school. Pupils busy themselves sensibly when left to work on their own. They show high regard for each other and are particularly understanding of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is mutual respect between staff and pupils and this underpins the school's well-ordered, safe and welcoming environment.
- Children in early years make a flying start to their education. In subsequent years, teachers build on the good level of development that most children achieve at the end of early years and so pupils are well placed to achieve well in all that they do subsequently. You have set ambitious targets for the school, but have the infrastructure to support rapid improvement. Leaders work hard to make sure that the school is inclusive and that pupils are safe and well cared for in school. Those facing challenges in their lives, including those who are disadvantaged, receive the support they need to achieve well and be confident in their learning.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers continue to challenge all pupils further, particularly those who find it difficult to think logically and express their understanding confidently, especially in mathematics
- pupils apply their basic skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling accurately, not just in literacy, but in their written work in other subjects
- pupils have a more secure understanding of what constitutes British values and how values generally shape people's lives.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for East Riding of Yorkshire. 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 and the vice-chair of the governing body, and spoke to one governor by telephone. I also met with senior managers and subject leaders and other staff and with a representative of the local authority. I analysed a range of documentation, including information about pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, and safeguarding checks,

policies and procedures. We discussed your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I observed pupils around the school, as they came into school and in their classes. Together we visited all classes and some small-group work. 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 took into account the 25 responses in the online questionnaire that pupils submitted. I considered the views of the 44 responses and the 40 text messages submitted by parents in Parent View, and the 12 responses to the staff survey submitted by staff.