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Mrs Alison Ruff
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Ruff

Short inspection of Congerstone 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 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. The school is outward looking. You make good use of a range of networks and links with other schools to provide effective training and professional development for the staff. This has been important in enabling you to improve, for example, the ways in which the teachers assess the pupils' progress. As a result, the teachers are able to plan activities increasingly for the pupils to meet precisely identified learning needs.

You have dealt with the areas for improvement from the previous inspection systematically. The level of satisfaction expressed by parents using Parent View for this inspection is notably higher than it was in 2012. Your own surveys show year-on-year improvements in parents' views of the school, including of the progress made by the pupils, the quality of the teaching, and satisfaction with the information that is provided by the school.

You and the staff have increased the level of learning challenge for the pupils. The pupils are motivated to do well, as a result of the ways in which you have done this. The pupils' books show care, effort and application to their work in a range of subjects. The increased level of challenge is apparent not only in the way that the teachers plan work for the pupils, but also in the questions that they ask and the way in which they respond to the pupils' efforts. The teachers ensure that the questions that they put to the pupils promote thinking and demand explanations for

the answers.

Your actions have improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This has been the case most recently in mathematics particularly. You have taken note of the limited progress in mathematics made by the pupils in recent years, especially in 2016. The subject leader for mathematics has taken effective action. That action has led to a consistent and coherent approach throughout the school now to teaching the subject. The pupils' progress in mathematics improved notably in 2017. This improvement has yet to be sustained. In particular, not enough of the pupils are currently achieving greater depth in their knowledge and understanding of the subject.

You have maintained the important strengths noted at the previous inspection. The children continue to make a strong start in the Reception Year. They settle at the school very quickly. The proportion of the children reaching a good level of development has risen year on year and is consistently above average. The children's good progress is evident as well in key areas of learning, such as mathematics.

You have a carefully constructed programme of activities to enable the children to get ready for the more formal demands of learning in key stage 1. The teachers share information about the children's knowledge, skills and understanding. Most groups of children continue to make good progress through key stage 1, but the school's current arrangements have not been enough to ensure that the children at the lowest stage of development by the end of the Reception Year make good progress through key stage 1.

The pupils understand the importance of good attendance, as a result of the work that the school does to promote it. This is reflected in overall levels of attendance that are consistently above average. You monitor the attendance of each pupil carefully. You know well the individual circumstances of the small number of pupils whose attendance is low. As a result of your work, typically, the attendance of these pupils improves, sometimes substantially.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The pupils told me convincingly, with conviction, that they feel safe at the school. They feel that the staff look after them well and are aware that the staff keep a close eye on them. This was the most important factor for the pupils. The pupils said that incidents of bullying are unusual. They have a high level of confidence in the staff to sort out problems of this kind.

The staff are kept up to date with safeguarding matters through regular training and more-frequent briefings and bulletins. They know what sort of things to look out for and what to do if they have a concern. They pay attention to things that may appear to be relatively small, but potentially significant matters, as well as more-obvious signs that a pupil may need help.

The pupils are enabled to feel safe by other things that the school does as well. They spoke to me about regular fire drills and other practices. As a result, they know where to go and what to do in an emergency.

You keep comprehensive records of steps taken to help any pupils needing support. You take appropriate action in the interests of safeguarding pupils whose attendance is low. When necessary, you consult with the local authority and follow the local authority's protocols for pupils who may be missing from education.

Inspection findings

- The governing body is astute and ambitious for the school, and challenges the senior leaders well.
- The pupils develop very positive attitudes to school, to learning and to life generally. They see the way that they look after each other as a strong feature of the school. They are thoughtful and reflective and quietly proud of the work that they do to support a range of charities.
- The pupils' work shows a lot of attention to editing, re-drafting, identifying and correcting errors. This is supporting secure gains in the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, including in mathematics.
- In mathematics, the teachers emphasise problem-solving and reasoning skills. The pupils are now used to having to explain the things that they do. They said that the recent changes have made mathematics lessons more interesting. They described the lessons with some enthusiasm. They confirmed that, usually, the work that they are given is hard enough, but not too hard. The improvements have yet to result in more pupils achieving greater depth in their learning of the subject.
- The children in the Reception Year are introduced gently to the changes that will happen when they move into key stage 1. Their social and emotional development is managed well at the point of transition. The change happens smoothly for them.
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. Events such as the World of Work week help the pupils to think about the ways in which their learning at school matters for their futures. The pupils spoke to me, for example, about how the requirement for them to explain their answers in lessons and in their workbooks is helping them to develop a skill that will be useful in the workplace.
- The pupils respond enthusiastically to the wide range of sporting activities that the school offers.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the recent work to develop the pupils' reasoning skills is secured and extended, so that more pupils are able to reach greater depth in their learning, particularly

in mathematics

- the arrangements for the children to move from the Reception Year into key stage 1 enable the teachers to rectify gaps in the knowledge, skills and understanding of children who did not reach the expected level by the end of that year.

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

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior staff at the school and the designated leader for safeguarding. I met with members of the governing body. I made a series of visits to lessons, jointly with you. I discussed the work of the school with the pupils formally, in a group, and informally during lessons and at breaktime. I looked at examples of the pupils' work during lessons and reviewed examples of their workbooks. I looked at the views of parents expressed using the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and at the results of parental surveys carried out by the school. I looked at the results of the inspection survey completed by the staff. I scrutinised various documents, including safeguarding records, a range of policy documents, a self-evaluation report and improvement plans, examples of support plans for individual pupils, the latest attendance figures for the school and your records of checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. I discussed by telephone the school's work to improve itself with a representative from Forest Way Teaching School Alliance.