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Mrs Jan Harazdiuk
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Harazdiuk

Short inspection of Millfield Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 November 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 February 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 continue to lead the school exceptionally well and are ably supported by your deputy headteacher and leadership team. You have maintained Millfield's highly inclusive ethos. Pupils told me that 'Whoever comes here, we are ready to welcome you.' This includes pupils who come to the specialist resource base and who are integrated into the main school at all opportunities.

You have successfully addressed the issues from the previous inspection report. One of these was to develop pupils' independence in learning. I saw that in classes the majority of pupils work well on their own and with each other when working without adult support. You are keen to develop further pupils' attitudes to learning and their resilience in the face of difficulties and have made this an area of priority this year.

You and your team are highly ambitious for all pupils and determined to ensure that when they leave Millfield Primary School, they are well prepared for high school. You responded swiftly and to good effect when results at the end of Year 6 dipped in 2016. By carefully analysing the reasons for this, you ensured that by 2017 results had risen so that they matched or exceeded national averages. Since then, you have taken effective action to improve pupils' progress by the end of Year 6. You did this by carefully addressing those areas where pupils had gaps in their knowledge as they

moved from the former curriculum to the revised curriculum.

Teaching is good across the school because teachers plan lessons which engage pupils in their learning. They ask questions which make pupils think. I saw this, for example, in Year 6, where the teacher asked pupils to think about the relationship between two fractions and what this might mean for their task. Teachers establish positive relationships with pupils and pupils told me that they enjoy their lessons and like their teachers. As a result, behaviour is very good across the school. Those pupils who have difficulties with behaviour are managed very well and do not disturb the learning of others.

Governors provide support and challenge in equal measure. They have confidence in you but are not afraid to ask difficult questions when needed. They visit regularly and ensure that they know what is working well and where further improvements are needed. For example, they check that money provided for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively and is benefiting those pupils for whom it is intended. Governors' commitment to the school is evident in the number of members of the governing body who have continued in their role for many years in their drive to move the school forward.

Pupils benefit from a broad and interesting curriculum. Pupils told me, for example, that they enjoy science, music and art. They talked about the extensive range of clubs available for them, commenting that there is something for everyone's interests. Pupils' work in a range of subjects is often of a high standard. I saw examples of pupils' science work where pupils had carried out experiments and reflected on the scientific concepts that they had learned. I also saw pupils enjoying making clay pots, talking with authority about the best way to join clay and get a smooth finish. Occasionally, however, in some classes, pupils do not produce work in topic books of the standard they could.

Parents are very supportive of the school. Almost every parent who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said that they would recommend the school to another parent and every parent who responded said that their child is well looked after in school. Typical of many comments was one from a parent whose children joined from another school, who said, 'I really could not sing their praises strongly enough to reflect just how amazing this school has been.' Another parent echoed this view, saying: 'Both my children find their education at Millfield engaging and the school gives them a fantastic range of opportunities over and above the regular lessons. They are both progressing well and communication from the teachers has been brilliant.'

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that very clear and robust systems keep pupils safe. All checks on staff are carried out rigorously and in line with statutory requirements. You make sure that staff training is regular and effective. This is shown by the concern forms completed by staff. They know what to look for that may indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. Pupils' files, where there are concerns, are well maintained. It is evident from

these that you take action in response to concerns raised and that you are tenacious in ensuring that outside agencies act when necessary.

You teach pupils about how to keep themselves safe online and pupils were able to tell me very clearly what they should and should not share online. You acknowledge that it would be timely to carry out further work with parents to make sure they know the potential risks of new technology and how to protect their children at home when online.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed that I would look at whether the most able pupils are making good progress in mathematics. This was because in 2016 and 2017 in mathematics, the progress measure at the end of Year 6 for this group was low.
- We discussed the school's recent introduction of a greater focus on reasoning and problem solving in mathematics. I looked at examples of these in pupils' books and in lessons. I found that this approach was providing a good level of challenge for the most able pupils. They are given opportunities to explain their thinking, using mathematical language. They explore different ways of solving problems and evaluate which way is best. This is particularly evident in Years 5 and 6.
- I spoke with pupils specifically about whether those who are particularly strong in mathematics are extended. Pupils told me that 'in this school everyone expects you to aim high'.
- I looked at the school's own assessments which show that the most able pupils in most classes made good progress last year and continue to do so. However, you recognise that there are some inconsistencies between classes and that some of the most able pupils are not making as much progress as they should.
- I spoke with middle leaders about mathematics. They are enthusiastic about the innovations in mathematics teaching. However, leaders have not yet checked the impact of changes on pupils' progress. Previous checks on teaching and learning had not looked closely enough at how effective teaching was in accelerating pupils' progress.
- The next line of enquiry that I looked at during the inspection was whether boys and girls make equally good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This was because there were indications in previous school-published data that girls tended to do better in reading and writing than boys, and boys did better in mathematics.
- I looked at pupils' writing in their books for English and other subjects. I found that teachers have equally high expectations of boys and girls. I saw examples of high-quality writing by both boys and girls and that pupils are making good progress in their writing across the school.
- In the early years, staff are aware of the need to motivate boys to read and write. They build tasks into activities that boys enjoy. For example, boys who had made models were encouraged to write labels for them; another boy was reading a

story so that he could take part in a puppet show.

- You have ensured that reading books used in classes appeal to both boys and girls. You have promoted reading for pleasure, for example making sure that every teacher shares a high-quality story with their class regularly. You have invited authors into school to motivate pupils, with a particular eye on capturing the imagination of boys. As result, boys told me that they enjoy reading. The school's assessment information shows that boys are making equally good progress in reading as girls.
- I looked at pupils' mathematics books and spoke to pupils about their mathematics. Most work in books showed that girls make good progress in mathematics. However, there are still some classes where fewer girls achieve the higher standards in mathematics that they could. We discussed that this is because, in the past, they seemed to be less motivated by mathematics than by reading and writing. This is being addressed through the changes introduced. A number of girls told me that they like the greater emphasis on reasoning and problem solving in mathematics.
- The final area that I looked at was whether pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported in school. The school includes a specialist resource base (SRB) for pupils who have autistic spectrum disorder in addition to pupils within the main school who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- I found that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities within the SRB and the main school make good progress from their starting points. This is because leaders are very knowledgeable about pupils' needs and how to meet them. Leaders provide regular training for staff in how to meet pupils' needs.
- Good systems help pupils develop increasing independence as they go through the school. Pupils from the SRB are all integrated into the school in the afternoons and some at other times when appropriate. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities build friendships and develop their social skills well.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well supported in class and through careful interventions which are well matched to pupils' needs. However, you recognise that leaders need more opportunities to check provision in class and in interventions first hand to ensure that pupils make even better progress.
- You plan exceptionally carefully for pupils who are disadvantaged. You keep track of what support is provided for each of these pupils and are knowledgeable about how this support is helping to overcome any barriers to learning. As a result, the majority of disadvantaged pupils are making good progress across the school.
- You make providing early support for disadvantaged pupils a priority so that you can help them before the difference between their achievement and that of their peers widens. As a result, disadvantaged pupils get off to a good start.
- You recognise that, in the past, few disadvantaged pupils reached the higher levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. You identified that some of these pupils needed help to raise their self-esteem so that they felt capable of greater challenge. You have addressed this by: putting in place nurture support; providing opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to join the children's university; and

ensuring that disadvantaged pupils are selected for particular activities, such as surfing, and responsibilities, such as house captains.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- Leaders establish systems to check that:
 - reasoning and problem solving are embedded in all classes so that pupils, including the most able, make better progress in mathematics by the end of Year 6
 - good-quality provision and interventions are enabling pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to make even better progress.
- Across the school, all pupils produce work that fulfils their potential in topic books.

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

Yours sincerely

Maria Curry
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the deputy headteacher, some middle leaders and four governors. I met with a group of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6. I scrutinised a range of documents, including information on pupils' progress, safeguarding, development planning and the school's self-evaluation. I visited all classes and evaluated pupils' work. I took account of 30 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. I checked the school's website and found it to meet requirements on the publication of specified information.