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Mrs Lesley Norton
Headteacher
The North Hykeham All Saints Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mrs Norton

Short inspection of The North Hykeham All Saints Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 January 2018, 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. Teaching across the school is regularly monitored by you and is consistently good. You have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and you recognise the areas that are in need of further improvement.

Governance is effective. Governors receive detailed information on the quality of teaching and the progress and outcomes of all groups of pupils. The governing body performs its strategic role effectively, holding you to account and challenging and offering support as appropriate.

Staff know all pupils well and teacher–pupil relationships are strong. Pupils feel cared for and enjoy coming to school. They speak positively about their school. They say that they are well supported and that teachers make a big effort to create interesting lessons. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are friendly, polite and respectful, both to adults in school and to each other. Pupils display positive attitudes to learning.

You promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through a Christian ethos. Pupils have opportunities to explore other cultures and religions and to participate in a variety of experiences. These include residential trips and other visits to enhance their understanding and enjoyment of the curriculum. For example, key stage 2 pupils are soon to enjoy a caving trip to enhance their

understanding of a science topic about rocks and soils. Pupils enjoy the range of clubs that are on offer and appreciate other opportunities that are provided, such as forest school experiences and opportunities to take on wider school responsibilities. Examples of these include 'digital-leaders', who help with information technology issues, and playground leader training for some older pupils who help younger pupils resolve peer disagreements at breaktimes and lunchtimes.

Parents and carers speak highly of the school. They appreciate the 'good leadership, family atmosphere and dedicated staff'. One parent, who had recently moved into the area, spoke about the great welcoming atmosphere, and two other parents were complimentary about the school's quick and effective response when they had raised concerns.

Leaders have taken actions to address the areas identified at the last inspection. Teachers' input in English lessons is now concise and clear and more time is allocated for pupils to write. In classes, I consistently saw pupils engaging with their writing promptly after brief teacher explanations. Teachers routinely provide helpful developmental feedback. Time provided at the start of each day enables pupils to respond appropriately to this feedback. This they do, and teachers and pupils alike commented on how this process is starting to improve pupils' writing skills.

The school has taken strides to make writing more engaging for boys. Pupils are consulted on areas of interest to them and, where possible, these areas are considered for inclusion as writing stimuli. For example, one boy really enjoys writing about his family and so this topic is encouraged when possible, such as when he is asked to write a biography or a story. Some topics are chosen to be particularly appealing to boys, such as the current volcano topic in key stage 2.

Through asking pupils about their writing experiences, the school discovered that some boys found the writing process physically uncomfortable. The school has tried to address this through accessing writing programmes to help with holding and using a pen correctly, as well as by offering relevant clubs (such as art and Lego) to improve pupils' fine motor skills.

The school has also tried to make writing more appealing to pupils by reducing the expectation of how long pupils write for before they edit their work. This has affected the length of pieces that pupils are writing. Providing more opportunities for writing longer pieces would better prepare the older pupils for the demands of the key stage 2 writing test.

Specific writing foci, provided for key stage 1 pupils when they are engaged in cross-curricular topic writing, enable them to reinforce grammar and writing skills. This opportunity to improve writing is not in evidence in key stage 2.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding systems are robust. Staff know the procedures for reporting concerns and have a good understanding of their duties for safeguarding. Governors have a

good knowledge of safeguarding issues and receive the necessary training, including, for example, safer recruitment training, as well as regular safeguarding updates from you and the local authority. A safeguarding link governor undertakes periodic checks of the school's safeguarding records.

The curriculum provides skills that help pupils to keep safe, including, for example, road safety and e-safety. Pupils report that bullying is rare but are confident that staff would deal with it quickly and effectively should it arise. Pupils feel safe and well cared for.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- Leaders are aware that the progress of disadvantaged pupils is not as good as it should be. Leaders have put strategies in place to rectify this. The school has used its pupil premium funding to appoint new staff with the specific role of targeting this vulnerable group through relevant intervention work. In key stage 1, the focus is primarily on reading. In key stage 2, the focus is a mixture of reading, writing and mathematics. Interventions are tailored to each individual's needs.
- Leaders track the progress of all learners, including this vulnerable group, well. Spending on these pupils is carefully planned and support work is monitored closely to measure impact. Adaptations or different strategies are introduced if monitoring indicates that these interventions are not having the desired impact.
- Leaders in the school are providing regular weekly training for teaching assistants on how to support disadvantaged pupils more effectively. This has included focusing on improving skills such as the teaching of a new cursive handwriting script and phonics teaching. The training has also addressed and improved teaching assistants' specific subject knowledge and their knowledge of the associated age-related expectations. This has resulted in school support for disadvantaged pupils becoming more effective.
- The school has purchased new reading books that appeal to the interests of this group of pupils. Film clips and other appropriate methods of support, used at the start of writing lessons, help enthuse and motivate these pupils.
- The school has also organised regular family learning opportunities for parents, specifically targeting disadvantaged pupils' parents. Some school clubs also help to address the needs of these pupils. For example, a homework club is provided to support disadvantaged pupils and a lunchtime 'Service Superstars' club is provided to specifically support pupils from service families. This affords those who have similar family experiences an opportunity to chat to each other about common issues while engaged in art activities. Other whole-school motivational strategies, such as 'book bingo', are used to promote engagement and learning for these pupils.
- Evidence seen both in pupils' books and during classroom visits indicates that

disadvantaged pupils are making satisfactory progress; however, the school rightly acknowledges that not enough of these pupils are working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Another focus for the inspection was to look at the provision and outcomes for the most able pupils. The school rightly acknowledges that results for its most able pupils are not high enough. Leaders admit that, in the past, too much focus has been placed on pupils reaching age-related expectations rather than surpassing them and attaining at the higher levels.
- The school is aware of the pattern in results for its most able pupils being weaker than national comparisons and has started to address the issue. Most of this work has been, and is continuing to be, centred on professional development. This includes raising teachers' expectations and improving their subject knowledge, particularly with regard to the new, more demanding curriculum and associated age-related expectations.
- The school's actions are starting to have an impact. For example, some older pupils commented that they were enjoying the greater reading challenge provided to them through the school's recent purchase and introduction of more-taxing reading books.
- In classes, I saw the vast majority of high-ability pupils making good progress with their learning. However, some pupils reported that they would enjoy further challenge. For example, in discussions, two pupils commented that they wanted greater challenge in mathematics, with their current 'class challenges' being made harder.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to embed and monitor strategies put in place to accelerate the progress of pupils so that a greater proportion are working at the highest standards in all subject areas by the end of key stages 1 and 2
- the needs of the disadvantaged pupils are fully met to enable this group of learners to make faster progress, thus enabling a greater proportion to attain the higher standards at the end of key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

John Savage
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and the chair of the governing body. I also spoke on the telephone with a representative from the local authority and met with a group of pupils to gather their opinions regarding various aspects of the school. I visited classes with you to observe teaching and learning. I looked at a sample of pupils' work from different year groups. I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktime. I considered the views of the 23 parents posted on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, alongside the school's most recent published questionnaire results. I also met some parents at the start of the school day. I visited the breakfast club to check that pupils were safe. I read a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, your school development plan and your review of governance. I studied information related to attendance and examined safeguarding records and policies. I also examined the school's website to check that it meets requirements on the publication of specified information.