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Mr Garth Hicks
The Bardney Church of England and Methodist Primary School
Henry Lane
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Dear Mr Hicks

Short inspection of The Bardney Church of England and Methodist Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 8 February 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 January 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Typically, the pupils make good progress and do well in the national tests at the end of key stage 2. Their progress in reading is particularly strong.

You have tackled the areas for improvement from the inspection systematically. You have extended the opportunities for the pupils to write in a range of subjects. You, the staff and the governing body convey a strong sense of commitment to the continuous improvement of the school. You have increased the opportunities for the staff to share practice and to learn from other schools.

Working closely with the staff and the governing body, you reflect on the school's work frequently. You identify accurately things that can be improved. You make sure that the school's priorities, for example to improve the teaching of writing, are understood and acted upon by everyone. You consider very carefully the initiatives that you take. Consequently, new ways of working become routine and have a positive effect over time on the pupils' progress.

You have revised your approach to tracking how well the pupils are learning. As a result, you and the other leaders have a more-precise picture now of the pupils' progress, from the early years and on through the school.

Your approach to checking on the quality of the school's work is broad-based. You

focus systematically on the priorities for improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As result, you, the other leaders and the governing body are well informed about how well the pupils are doing and what is making a difference for them. You seek out and make good use of the views of professionals from outside the school. Those views make an important contribution to the well-balanced decisions that you take.

The pupils are making better progress in writing currently than was the case recently, even though their progress has been good. In the early years, the children have made good progress in writing this year, from a low base. Previously, there had been a decline in the levels reached by the children at the end of the early years foundation stage.

You have, appropriately, increased the emphasis on the teaching of writing, as a result of your analysis of information about the pupils' progress in that subject. You have made changes to classrooms and to the curriculum, particularly to encourage boys to write more, including in the early years. The changes are leading to more-positive attitudes to writing, including among the boys who are more reluctant writers. Sometimes, the pupils are not helped enough to extend their writing skills.

You have put in place new approaches to teaching the pupils English grammar, spelling and punctuation. Some of these approaches are still relatively new and are not all being implemented as consistently, or with as much vigour, as they might be.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of good quality. The staff, including the mid-day supervisors, know and understand the school's policies and procedures for reporting any concern that they may have.

The staff understand their responsibilities. They are vigilant with regard to potential concerns, whether seemingly minor or obviously important. The school records information carefully, so that a picture can be built up over time for each pupil. As a result, the pupils' needs and circumstances are known very well. The school's family support worker works closely with families and with other local services, so that pupils who need it get the appropriate help.

The pupils feel safe and happy at the school. There are very few reported incidents of bullying. The pupils' behaviour is predominantly good. You are alert to the pupils' mental health needs. For example, pupils who may benefit from seeing a counsellor, whatever the nature of the problem, have access to one.

Inspection findings

- You have been creative, adapting what you have learned from changes to improve the teaching of mathematics to develop a whole-school approach to teaching writing.
- You have exploited a link with another school well to provide professional development and training opportunities for the staff at Bardney. Those opportunities are leading to improvements in the ways of working and teaching.
- You have introduced new topics in the early years, such as superheroes and dinosaurs, which are getting the boys, particularly, more interested in writing.
- The teachers help the pupils to use technical terms and subject-specific vocabulary accurately. They question the pupils thoroughly, drawing out the learning and helping the pupils to think more deeply or more widely.
- In the early years, the staff make good use of a range of opportunities to develop the children's ability to use phonics. The proportion of the pupils reaching the required standards in phonics in Year 1 is consistently above average. I saw examples in other year groups of the teachers referring back to phonics to help the pupils to write better.
- The work in the early years to improve the children's writing has focused very effectively on identifying the very particular learning needs that the children may have. For example, the staff assess the pupils' skills in using a pencil very precisely, so that the children are given 'tailor-made' help.
- You have ensured that the teachers have had good opportunities to develop their skills in assessing the pupils' work, including in the early years. As a result, the teachers are able to identify the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding accurately.
- Some of the initiatives that you have introduced to improve the pupils' skills with English grammar, spelling and punctuation are not used as effectively as they might be.
- Overall, the pupils do not have enough opportunities to correct errors in their writing, to redraft their work, or to rephrase the language that they have used.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's chosen strategies for improving the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of English grammar, spelling and punctuation are implemented consistently
- the pupils are given sufficient opportunities routinely to correct errors in their writing, to redraft their work and to rephrase the language that they use.

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

Clive Moss
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspection focused on the school's work to improve the teaching, learning and assessment of writing, the effectiveness of leadership in the early years, and the effectiveness of leaders and managers in evaluating the impact of the work of the school. During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior staff at the school, the leaders responsible for English and for the early years, and the designated leaders for safeguarding and the school's family support worker. I met with members of the governing body and discussed by telephone the work of the school with a representative of the local authority. I made a series of visits to lessons, accompanied by you and the deputy headteacher, visiting almost all classrooms. I discussed the work of the school with pupils during lessons. I looked at examples of the pupils' work during lessons and reviewed examples of their workbooks. I looked at the views of parents and carers expressed using the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and in the school's own survey. I looked at the results of the inspection surveys for the pupils and the staff. I scrutinised various documents, including safeguarding and behaviour records, a range of policy documents, a self-evaluation report, and other reports on the work of the school, the school's latest assessment information, records of governors' meetings, and records of checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.