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Mrs Alison Ackrill
Headteacher
Great Steeping Primary School
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Dear Mrs Alison Ackrill

Short inspection of Great Steeping 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 December 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 have recently made changes to the structure of key stage 1 and the early years. Teachers and teaching assistants work together across classes and year groups to support pupils' learning throughout the two key stages. Pupils in key stage 1 are grouped carefully to ensure that they are challenged to achieve. The shared use of teaching assistants across the early years and key stage 1 ensures that pupils are familiar with all the adults who may teach them.

The use of the 'Achievement for All' programme has been particularly effective in supporting pupils who would otherwise have fallen behind. As part of the programme, you work closely with families to develop parents' and pupils' attitudes to learning and to explore how to enable pupils to reach their potential. The school's assessment information shows that these pupils make quicker progress.

In the last inspection report, you were asked to make sure teachers make use of other adults to help pupils to progress further. Teaching assistants are highly skilled in supporting pupils' learning, and are confident to intervene and prompt when necessary, as well as stand back to allow pupils time to think. Teaching assistants work very effectively with small groups, ensuring that individual pupils are given the support they need to make good progress.

You were also asked to develop more opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum and to write longer pieces of work. Pupils present their work in one workbook so they are able to look back at what they have previously learned and

use this in other subjects. These workbooks show that pupils are given many opportunities to write at greater length in different subjects. Teachers use writing guides to develop pupils' writing across subjects.

Teaching at the school remains good. Teachers use their knowledge of what pupils can do well to set tasks that challenge them. You have a secure understanding of the overall progress of pupils at the school. The subject leaders, however, do not have a comprehensive overview of the progress pupils make in their subject. While the curriculum meets the requirements of the national curriculum, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of different races, cultures and faiths.

Parents are positive about the school and the support their children receive. They believe that the school has a family feel and that their children are well looked after. They know that they can talk to a member of staff if they have a concern, and feel that problems are dealt with well.

Pupils speak very highly of their school. They enjoy the many different opportunities they receive and are keen to take part in the different clubs and trips on offer. Pupils said they know how to keep themselves safe. The junior police community support officers (JPCSO) provide support for pupils on the playground as well as leading assemblies in diversity and how to keep safe on the road. Pupils have an awareness of how to ensure they are safe online. They appreciate the dangers that they may face when playing games online. One pupil said about social media, 'never post anything online that you would be afraid to wear on a t-shirt'.

Pupils said that the staff are the best thing about the school. They said that teachers take an interest in them, and always have time to talk. One pupil said that it was 'less like a school and more like a family'. Others I spoke with said that the behaviour in the school is good, and that learning is not disrupted by poor behaviour. They also said that bullying rarely happens, as adults are quick to sort out any problems when they happen.

You regularly provide the governing body with assessment information so that they can hold you to account. Assessment information is used to allocate additional funding to support the progress pupils make, including the progress of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Governors are well aware of the school's priorities, and understand what leaders are doing to bring about improvements. Governors regularly monitor the progress towards targets in the school's development plan to check that improvement actions are having the desired impact.

Safeguarding is effective.

The designated safeguarding leads are tenacious in following up concerns and ensure that cases are followed through to an appropriate conclusion. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The safeguarding governor completes regular checks of safeguarding procedures.

Staff have a thorough understanding of safeguarding issues. They know how to report a concern to the designated safeguarding leads and know that it is important to pass on any concerns, however small. Staff believe that as they are a small school with a family atmosphere, they know families well and spot issues quickly. Staff know that 'anything could happen, anywhere'.

Inspection findings

- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics in 2017 at the end of key stage 2 was well below the national average. Due to the small number of pupils in the cohort, each pupil counted for a substantial percentage; therefore, individual attainment affected the overall figures significantly. The progress these pupils made was in line with the national average. The school's assessment information shows that this was an 'unusual' cohort, with many additional needs. You provided support for targeted pupils through the 'Achievement for All' programme and these pupils made faster progress.
- You identified that the progress pupils made in mathematics was lower than in reading and writing, although still in line with the national average. The mathematics leader has focused on developing pupils' fluency and rapid recall of multiplication facts. Assessment information shows that pupils are making good progress in mathematics compared with progress in previous years. The mathematics leader knows what to do to make improvements in the subject. However, they do not have a secure understanding of how their actions have affected pupils' progress throughout the school.
- In 2017, some pupils did not make enough progress between the early years and key stage 1 in reading and writing. The school's assessment information shows this was due to pupils arriving at the school late in key stage 1. You have recently developed a more comprehensive system for tracking pupils' progress from the early years to Year 6. You have extended the 'Achievement for All' programme to enable you to target more pupils who have fallen behind or have additional needs.
- You and the leadership team are aware that the locality of the school provides pupils with little cultural diversity. While you have taken some steps to broaden pupils' horizons, such as involvement with the local Rotary Club Christmas shoe box project, and the input of the JPCSOs, pupils have a limited understanding of other races, cultures and faiths. Pupils' workbooks show a lack of opportunities to explore diversity across the curriculum or develop learning about other cultures.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- subject leaders make more effective use of assessment information to check improvements in their subjects

- the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of different cultures, races and religions.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Williams
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the mathematics teacher and the early years teacher. I held a meeting with a governor. I spoke with the school's business manager, teachers, teaching assistants and a lunchtime supervisor. I met with seven pupils. You and I observed learning taking place during the morning, including English and mathematics.

I scrutinised a selection of pupils' workbooks. I examined a range of the school's documentation, including its self-evaluation document, its improvement plan and documents relating to safeguarding.

I considered the view of parents by speaking with some of them before school. I also analysed the 22 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.