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Mrs Kim Leach
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Leach

Short inspection of Western Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 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 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.

You and colleagues have high aspirations for the pupils in your care. Those parents I spoke with and those who submitted free-text information in response to Ofsted's online questionnaire were all unequivocally positive about the school and the success their children achieve there. You, your staff and the governors put children at the heart of everything you do to make improvements and, as a result, pupils make good progress from their often very low starting points. You are particularly receptive to pupils' individual needs and accommodate pupils who join you from other schools, even as late as Years 5 and 6. To you, every child does matter. Staff go the extra mile to include all pupils in everything that the school does to support pupils' learning and personal development. You are very ambitious for your pupils. You lead and manage the school very effectively. Staff and governors all trust your good judgement regarding school improvement and support you fully in initiating changes that benefit pupils. The calm, welcoming and industrious environment you have established in the school helps pupils feel safe, happy and valued at school. They trust their teachers and know that everyone at the school is there to help them. They learn from the way staff support them how to show kindness and respect to others, and are particularly sensitive to those pupils who sometimes face challenging circumstances at school and home.

Your expectations of all staff are high and you provide the support, guidance and training that they need to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Staff say that are very proud and happy to work at the school, because they feel cared for and valued. Following a decline at both key stages in pupil outcomes at the end of 2016, pupils' performance

improved to above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, in 2017. The school's assessments for current pupils convincingly indicate that pupils are making good progress and are on track to achieve well in the national tests this year. A rising number, including among the disadvantaged pupils, are working at greater depth in their learning. Pupils say that they enjoy learning because teachers make lessons interesting and fun. You and your leaders ensure that teaching and learning are at least good. You evaluate the school's performance accurately and know where action is required to improve further. Subject and phase leaders take effective action to bring about improvements in their areas of responsibility. They check pupils' progress closely and instigate extra support where pupils are at risk of falling behind their targets. Teachers' assessments are accurate and reliable. Leaders ensure that teachers use this information to plan work to meet pupils' needs. Most pupils are challenged well but expectations could be raised further at key stage 1, particularly in reading and mathematics.

Following the dip in outcomes in 2016, you have taken effective action to make improvements to accelerate pupils' progress. The increased focus on extending pupils' mental arithmetic skills is proving successful. More pupils are working at a greater depth of learning, especially in their mental agility in arithmetic. Pupils know how to work methodically when tackling multi-step problems. Outcomes in writing at both key stages are consistently good, because pupils write regularly in all subjects. They know how to compose a formal letter, write up scientific investigations, reflect on what life was like in ancient times and debate the long-term impact of pollution on our planet. While the teaching of phonics is good to support pupils' reading and pupils say they enjoy reading, a few explained that they do not read much outside school. Leaders have introduced books to motivate boys, for example about superheroes, because boys lag behind the girls in reading. The school could do more to gain the support of parents and carers in helping with their children's learning at home by, for example encouraging them to read regularly. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good and pupils have a secure grounding at the end of Year 2. Errors do occur in pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling, when pupils at both key stages fail to apply their skills correctly in their writing and reading.

Through regular visits to school to observe learning and talk with pupils about their work, governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They understand that many pupils and their families face immense challenges in their lives. Governors have the best interests of pupils, parents and the school at heart at all times. They have the skills and expertise to support developments and ensure that funds are maximised to accelerate the progress of all pupils. They examine information from the headteacher regarding pupils' progress, and challenge leaders if pupils are not achieving as well as they should.

Children start in the nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age. A high number are disadvantaged or have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Also, a number join the school at key stage 2, often having had many interruptions in their learning. You and your staff accommodate the needs of all pupils very effectively; they all make good progress. The proportion of pupils that meets the expected standard at the end of their Reception year and at the end of Year 6 is above the national average. Good teaching throughout the school ensures this good progress. Many pupils achieve at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6, including disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Governors and staff all understand their statutory responsibilities to keep children safe and take these roles seriously. They are all particularly vigilant in safeguarding the well-being of the increasing number of disadvantaged pupils, who are often the most vulnerable. Governors ensure that the checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school are thorough. Leaders responsible for safeguarding ensure that all procedures are followed diligently, that any concerns are recorded fully and that prompt action is taken where necessary to alert other authorities. Staff provide guidance to children and families on how to stay healthy and safe, and about their emotional and mental well-being. Leaders follow up pupil absences urgently and instigate legal action if required, to ensure that pupils attend regularly. Leaders review policies related to keeping pupils safe regularly, and ensure that parents understand the school's safeguarding procedures to act promptly if any concerns arise about any child or their family. While all staff and governors undertake the required training to carry out their duty of care roles effectively, staff do not renew any mandatory training as promptly as they should or check that information on the school's website is updated regularly.

Staff take good care of all pupils. Pupils say that they feel safe at school and love being there, because teachers are kind and help them learn. They say that teachers tell them how to stay safe in school and outside, with talks on internet safety and the risks posed by social media sites and cyber bullying. They know not to disclose personal information or post photographs on the internet, because this could be dangerous. A few admitted that they have access to social media sites at home, despite knowing through school that they should not use these facilities. Younger children talk about not talking to strangers, and explained that 'They might want to hurt you or make you do things that were bad.' Pupils know that any form of bullying is unacceptable and teachers will deal with any bullying very firmly. As one pupil explained, 'It is unkind to bully people. If we have any worries at school or home we should tell teachers, so they can help us.' Parents agree that the school's care arrangements are effective and that staff would alert them, if they had any concerns about their child, and would contact other agencies if necessary.

Inspection findings

- Following the decline in pupil outcomes in 2016, I examined pupils' performance data from 2017 to confirm that the school's actions to accelerate pupils' progress were sustained. Current pupils are making good progress. In 2017, pupils at the end of both key stages did better than in the previous year. Pupils in Year 6, including disadvantaged pupils, performed better than pupils nationally at the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' outcomes in writing at the higher level were above that of pupils nationally. The school's combined score for reading, writing and mathematics, at 64%, was higher than the national average. Outcomes at the end of Year 2, in 2017, were in line with national averages in writing but below in reading and mathematics, mainly because too few achieved at greater depth in their learning. The school's current pupil progress data and work in pupils' books show that pupils are making good progress at both key stages. Occasionally, a few of the less confident learners at key stage 1 find the transition from the curriculum in early years to key stage 1 a challenge; too few achieve at the higher levels. Outcomes for

children in the early years are rising rapidly, and from low starting points, children now leave early years in line with children nationally. Leaders are reviewing provision for pupils in Year 1, so that they achieve more at the end of key stage 1.

- I examined the progress of disadvantaged pupils who, in 2017, failed to achieve as well as non-disadvantaged pupils in the school, but outperformed all pupils nationally. These pupils are making progress in line with non-disadvantaged pupils in the school. The school is particularly effective in providing high-quality support to address pupils' individual needs, especially for those at risk of underachieving. The school uses its pupil premium funds to good effect and as a result, these pupils, who form the majority in the school, are achieving well in all year groups. Many of these pupils have considerable gaps in their learning due to the disruptions in their schooling over time. From their invariably low starting points, they make good progress.
- The school's records of pupils' achievement show that pupils at both key stages consistently perform better in writing than in reading and mathematics. As writing is entirely teacher assessed, I checked whether teachers' assessments were accurate and reliable. Teachers are skilled in assessing pupils' work and moderate pupils' writing regularly. Senior leaders check pupils' work closely and seek external verification to confirm that the school's assessments are correct. I looked at pupils' workbooks and found that pupils write with confidence; they borrow vocabulary and features from their reading to embellish their writing. Pupils achieve at greater depth simply because they like to express on paper what some struggle to articulate when talking. Pupils' writing content is consistently of high quality. However, a few pupils make frequent errors in their spelling, punctuation and grammar. This is because they do not apply their basic literacy skills and their knowledge of phonics and spelling rules accurately enough.
- The school's monitoring of teaching and learning is effective. Leaders undertake regular classroom observations, check teachers' planning and examine pupils' books to ensure that pupils continue to make good progress following the positive outcomes in 2017. You and your deputy spent considerable time with me observing pupils at work. We agreed that we saw effective learning in all classes and found that pupils were well engaged, trying their best and keen to learn. Even those who find learning a significant challenge were industrious and delighted when they were successful in their efforts. Through regular discussions with pupils about their learning and staff about their teaching, you have an accurate picture of pupils' progress. Where you find that teaching needs improving, you provide staff with the training and support they need to improve their practice. While pupils overall are achieving well, you agree that pupils at key stage 1 are capable of more. With this in mind, you are reviewing the provision for pupils when they move from the early years to the more formal setting in Year 1.
- Pupils enjoy a well-planned and engaging curriculum that captures their interest and supports effective learning. Teachers plan activities and tasks to extend pupils' skills and knowledge effectively. Staff use relevant resources to support teaching and learning, including visitors to enhance and enrich pupils' experiences. Topics that link different subjects help pupils make better sense of their learning, as they explore life in Victorian times and how factories changed the landscape and the world in which they are growing up today. They know that many people from other countries have settled here over time and this diversity exists across the world and should be

celebrated. Visits to museums, historical landmarks and the world beyond Grimsby, for example a farming community in Gloucestershire and campsites closer to home, broaden pupils' experiences and promote their independence effectively. Visitors and a wide range of extra-curricular activities, clubs and sporting events all contribute to pupils' good personal and academic development and their well-being effectively.

- Parents are very positive about the school and say that their children enjoy being there. Those who help in the school enjoy their involvement. The school's calm, happy environment provides pupils with a safe and secure place to learn and grow. Most attend regularly; they know that coming to school regularly is very important if they want to learn. They are polite, friendly and well behaved at all times, and form strong friendships. Staff treat all pupils with kindness and respect and pupils, in turn, follow their good example by helping each other if teachers are busy with others. Even those pupils who find managing their emotions and behaviour difficult respond positively and conduct themselves sensibly, if supported appropriately. Pupils take any responsibilities they are given very seriously; they regard helping around the school as a privilege. As one pupil expressed with passion, 'I love school. It's the best place ever.'
- The actions you have taken to improve provision are having the impact they should on accelerating pupils' progress. You have the support of governors, staff and parents to improve the school further. Teaching and learning are consistently good and pupils achieve well. Children in the early years make a strong start to their education; a high number attain a good level of development at the end of their Reception year. This firm foundation gives pupils the resilience they need to make good progress in subsequent years. Pupils are safe, happy and well looked after at school and all are valued equally. Through effective support, pupils facing difficult challenges in their lives, and those who are disadvantaged or have SEN and/or disabilities, all make good progress. They are prepared well for secondary schools.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils make the move from early years to Year 1 more confidently and teachers challenge these pupils throughout key stage 1, so that they achieve more
- pupils apply their knowledge of phonics when reading unfamiliar words and their basic literacy skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar more accurately in their writing
- information on the school website is updated regularly and staff renew any mandatory safeguarding training promptly
- they do more to engage parents in supporting their children's learning at home.

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

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and all your staff, the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and three other governors. I also met with senior leaders, including some subject leaders and other staff and a representative of the local authority. I reviewed documentation relating to pupils' progress and achievement, the school improvement plan, and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. We discussed your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and examined the evidence therein. I observed pupils around the school, including in the playground and the dining hall, and in classes. Together with your deputy headteacher, we visited all classes and discussed these observations. I looked at books, spoke to pupils about their work and listened to them read. I also met with pupils to get their views of the school and took into consideration the views of the 11 pupils who submitted responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire. There were too few responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, to generate a report, but I took into account the school's own survey of parents' views from November 2017 and the eight text messages submitted by parents to Ofsted. I also considered the 39 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.