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Mrs S Smith
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Dear Mrs Smith

Short inspection of Wincle CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 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 October 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school is at the heart of the community and members of the community respect the school. Parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online parent survey Parent View were very positive about the school. A large majority of parents say that, 'It is a fantastic rural school. It is one big happy family.'

At Wincle CofE Primary, pupils' academic and personal development are equally important. Leaders ensure that pupils' skills develop well across the wider curriculum. For example, pupils become highly skilled at cookery and organising events where they produce the food. These diverse learning opportunities engage pupils and foster their love of learning. Pupils value their education. As a result, their behaviour is excellent.

Since the previous inspection, governors have promoted you to the role of headteacher. You wasted no time in bringing about improvements across the school. No stone is left unturned in your quest to make the school the best that it can be. The school is in capable hands. You understand well the needs of the community, the staff and especially the pupils. Governors, pupils and parents value your dynamic and passionate leadership.

The previous inspection highlighted a few areas for the school to work on and you have responded positively to these. Teachers now provide more opportunities for pupils to assess and challenge themselves in their learning. Pupils understand how to improve their work because of the consistent feedback that they receive. You

have also placed a high priority on improving pupils' spelling across the school. There has been training to improve teachers' subject knowledge and parents have attended spelling workshops to support their child at home. Pupils across the school receive a separate daily lesson focused on spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Finally, middle leaders have improved quality in their areas of responsibility by making their plans more precise. As a result, the success of their actions can be more easily measured. Action plans produced by subject leaders clearly show specific and measurable priorities. Leaders rigorously check these plans and hold staff to account for their success. We agreed that published results show that a lower proportion of children achieve the highest standard in Reception compared with the proportion nationally. You acknowledged that at key stages 1 and 2 too few pupils achieve the higher standard in writing. We agreed that these areas would form the key lines of enquiry for this inspection.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders, governors and staff undertake regular, up-to-date training on safeguarding and child-protection issues. Consequently, all staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities to ensure children's safety and well-being. This contributes to a strong and vigilant culture of safeguarding in the school. The checks that leaders undertake on the suitability of adults to work with children are robust.

Pupils say that they feel safe and that teachers help them to be safe. There are many opportunities provided for pupils to learn about staying safe, especially when they are online. Parents also receive useful information about how to ensure that their children are safe when using technology. Those who responded to Ofsted's online survey Parent View say that their children are safe and happy.

Inspection findings

- As part of this inspection, I looked at how well the most able children in Reception are challenged in their learning. Although the proportion of children that achieve a good level of development in the early years is consistently above the national average, this has not been the case for the proportion working at the highest standard. You have identified that this is an area of weakness in the school and are implementing many changes to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers complete detailed assessments when children start at the school and these inform their individual targets. You ensure that staff track the progress that all children make, especially the most able. Teachers use this information to plan relevant learning opportunities. Consequently, children's individual needs are met and the most able are now challenged in their learning. Current school assessment information indicates that a greater proportion of children in Reception are now working at the highest standard.

- I also focused on the quality of teaching in key stage 1 and the progress that the most able pupils make. This is because, over the last two years, pupils' outcomes at the highest standard have been below the national average. This mirrors the outcomes of the most able children in Reception. You have supported teachers admirably during this period of change and led by example. You track the progress that the most able pupils make and analyse this information with great precision. Teachers rise to this challenge and adapt their approaches to meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, the school's current assessment information and the work in pupils' books demonstrate that a greater proportion of pupils are now working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics. However, despite the recent improvements in teaching and learning in Reception and key stage 1, you acknowledge that further time is required to ensure that the achievement of the most able continues to rise. Even though you are addressing these issues, your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and your plans to improve the school have not identified these concerns. There is a lack of analysis of performance information in leaders' checks to identify priorities for improvement. We agreed that this is an area for improvement.
- Finally, we considered how well key stage 2 pupils make progress in writing. This is because pupils' achievement in writing at the highest standard in 2017 was below the national average. You have acted swiftly and identified the barriers that were stopping pupils from achieving. Pupils now use a range of texts that they find interesting, enjoyable and challenging. There are daily opportunities for pupils to review and improve their learning, for example through editing and drafting. Teachers plan exciting learning opportunities for pupils, which are appropriately differentiated across year groups and abilities through the use of challenges that pupils select. Pupils agree that they enjoy their learning because, 'Teachers make it fun and make us think harder.' Pupils were keen to add that they never found their learning too easy. As a result of the heightened focus on challenge, the progress that the most able pupils are making is rising rapidly. Current school assessment information and the work in pupils' books show that a greater proportion of pupils are now working at the highest standard across key stage 2 in writing.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the progress of the most able pupils continues to accelerate in reading, writing and mathematics so that a greater proportion achieve the highest standards in key stage 1 and by the end of Reception
- actions identified in the school improvement plan are precise and informed by school performance information.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education

for the Diocese of Chester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cheshire East. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Julie Barlow
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I observed teaching and learning and scrutinised examples of pupils' work. I met with you, spoke with pupils informally in lessons and around the school and met with a teaching assistant. I also spoke with three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and met with the representative of the local authority and six pupils in key stage 2. I evaluated the 27 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View and took account of the 19 free-text responses from parents. I reviewed a range of school documents. These included: the school's self-evaluation; the school's development plans and assessment records; minutes of the governing body meetings; safeguarding documentation; and records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance. I also considered information posted on the school's website.