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Mr Rob Cook  
Headteacher  
Winthorpe Primary School  
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Dear Mr Cook

### **Short inspection of Winthorpe Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 20 March 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 September 2014.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Parents and carers, pupils, staff and governors support the ethos of high expectations, coupled with the care that is at the heart of all the school does.

Over the 18 months in the post of headteacher, you have maintained a clear and continual focus on getting the best outcomes for every pupil. You have a detailed understanding of the school and have used this thoughtfully to make changes that will make a difference in the long term. Your thorough understanding of the strengths of your staff has allowed you to share leadership roles effectively. You have been particularly successful in drawing together the whole staff team to continue to move the school forward.

Governors are well informed. You ensure that they have an accurate understanding of the school. They check what is reported to them. They use their skills effectively to challenge and support you and other leaders who have responsibility.

At the time of the previous inspection, leaders were asked to improve some aspects of teaching and learning. You have provided staff with effective training and resources. You have successfully secured funding to significantly improve the learning environment. This includes an inspiring outdoor area for Reception children, which is being used well to extend and enthuse their learning. These

facilities are used effectively to encourage children to write. Teachers regularly work with colleagues from other schools to compare approaches and share good practice. The teaching remains good, with some particularly strong teaching in key stage 1 and upper key stage 2.

The small numbers and different characteristics of pupils in cohorts limit the reliability of comparing the school's results in national tests and assessments with national averages. However, it is possible to say that outcomes in reading and mathematics have been consistently strong over time. Writing outcomes have not been as strong but are still in line with national averages. Writing is a high priority in the school's plans for improvement.

Pupils behave well and show positive attitudes and mutual respect throughout the school day. They are proud of their school. Pupils told me everybody is friendly. Pupils relish the challenges in their learning, which 'get the best out of us – take us beyond our limit in the best way'. Older pupils enjoy the opportunities to take on roles such as head boy and girl, school councillors and sports captains. They support younger pupils well as good role models. Pupils appreciate the wide range of opportunities they enjoy, such as annual residential visits and many sporting opportunities.

Also at the previous inspection, leaders were asked to improve information for parents. You ensure that parents receive regular communication, and parents value your approachability.

Parents I spoke to and the vast majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their children are happy, looked after well and safe. They are also highly positive about how well their children are taught and the wide range of opportunities provided by the school. They value the careful induction for their children as they join the school, which ensures that they make a confident start. Parents appreciate the before- and after-school childcare provided by the school. Pupils enjoy the activities and additional time with friends.

You ensure that pupils and parents are reminded of the importance of attendance. Rates of attendance are at least in line with national averages. A number of parents choose to take term-time holidays. However, you are consistent in only authorising this in exceptional circumstances.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You make sure that all the appropriate vetting checks take place before an adult starts working at the school and that staff receive up-to-date training in keeping children safe. Staff are clear about how to report a concern about a child's welfare, should one arise. Governors also receive appropriate training and regularly check school procedures.

You keep clear and detailed safeguarding records securely. You and the leader for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are quick to seek

support from other agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get help when they need it. You and your staff regularly discuss matters of safeguarding and pupils' welfare, keeping this important aspect of the school's work at the forefront of everyone's mind.

Pupils said that behaviour is good in school. On the rare occasions when there is inappropriate behaviour, pupils trust adults to help them deal with it. Pupils are taught about different aspects of safety, such as fire safety and keeping themselves safe online.

## **Inspection findings**

- At the start of the inspection, you and I agreed aspects of the school's work that I would consider closely. We looked together at how effectively writing is being taught. Across the school, teachers are using similar approaches to teaching handwriting skills, in line with school policy. We saw in books and displays that pupils take pride in the presentation of their work across the curriculum. Training for teachers and changes in how phonics is taught have resulted in teachers building more effectively on what pupils already know. In the Reception Year, the teacher is now increasing children's stamina to write and helping them to extend their phonics skills more quickly to writing sentences.
- Teachers, particularly in key stage 1 and upper key stage 2, are skilfully supporting pupils to use grammar and punctuation to structure and improve their writing. They also use carefully chosen texts or experiences to extend pupils' vocabulary. This is leading to faster progress for some pupils. For example, a Year 5 pupil's writing grips the reader with carefully crafted sentences such as 'My heart was pounding as I inched closer to the glistening, golden idol.' In Year 2, pupils confidently identify and write well-chosen adverbs and extended noun phrases. A pupil was also able to correctly explain to me that she had chosen to use a simile and had used the word 'hazel' to describe a monkey's fur, as it was 'neither brown nor orange'.
- You identified that assessment for tracking pupils' ongoing progress was not sufficiently coherent, especially in light of changes to national assessments. You have recently introduced a new system for tracking. Information on the tracking system is accurate and consistent with the evidence in pupils' books. Teachers are more confident in using improved information to identify what pupils need to learn next. This year, they have improved their understanding of how the progress of pupils within their class fits into overall school outcomes. You are working closely with middle leaders to analyse the barriers to learning for less-confident pupils and those who have more complex needs. This is starting to improve the accuracy and impact of adjustments to teaching for these pupils, although leaders recognise that there is more to be done to accelerate their progress.
- You ensure that interesting topics are used effectively to link learning across subjects. Teachers carefully plan visits and learning experiences to bring projects alive, in line with the school's curriculum policy, such as Class 2's local airport experience and role-playing as travel agents. You recently added the tracking of

pupils' progress in other subjects to the school's tracking system, alongside English and mathematics. However, you recognise that the overall framework of knowledge and concepts which you want pupils to learn is not as well developed as it is in English and mathematics.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the information resulting from revised assessment procedures is used to plan activities to increase the rate of pupils' progress
- the knowledge and concepts to be taught across the school for other subjects are mapped out as clearly as those in English and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Mandy Wilding  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you and shared my lines of enquiry. I also met with teachers with leadership responsibilities, including those in charge of inclusion, mathematics and English. I met with the chair and vice-chair of governors. I spoke to a representative of the local authority. I spoke with pupils informally in class and held a more formal meeting with pupils from Years 5 and 6.

We jointly visited classes to observe pupils learning, speak with them and look at their books. We examined a range of pupils' books from across the school.

I viewed a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance and its plans for further improvement. I considered a number of policy documents, including those for safeguarding. I examined the school's website and checked on the publication of specified information. I spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day and considered the responses of 29 parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 29 free-text responses. There were no responses to Ofsted's questionnaires for staff and pupils to consider.