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Elizabeth McCaffery
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Dear Mrs McCaffery

Short inspection of Scotter 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 February 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You lead the school well. You and your leaders have an accurate view of the performance of the school through your regular checks of the quality of teaching and analysis of pupils' progress. As a result, you have improved areas of the curriculum, particularly writing, to enable more pupils to make better progress. However, you recognise that more improvements are required to improve the teaching of mathematics in Year 2.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched by extra-curricular opportunities. The school has an allotment garden that pupils help to maintain. They grow vegetables and have cooked carrot soup using their own produce. There is a range of peripatetic music lessons, and pupils have opportunities to go to the theatre. The school competes against other local schools in a range of sporting competitions. Pupils undertake roles of responsibility. These include being school councillors, playground buddies, librarians, prefects and being part of the 'Tech. Team'. The latter group promotes internet safety very well. As a result, pupils are confident and articulate and are well prepared for their next stage of education.

The school is a purposeful environment where teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and work. Pupils respond well to their teachers' instructions. Most pupils can be relied on to work independently without adult supervision. For example, in Year 6, pupils enthusiastically worked in groups to write a commentary for a game of quidditch. They were able to discuss each other's contributions in a

mature way without adult support. Pupils said that they are happy at the school and that teachers set them work which they can find tricky. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they are challenged well and are making good progress.

Pupils' progress and attainment are improving. In 2017, pupils made broadly average progress from key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils who attained the expected standard in all three subjects is higher than the national average. This was a marked improvement from 2016. In 2016, pupils made significantly less progress than others nationally in all three subjects by the end of key stage 2. The rapid and effective action that you and your teachers implemented to improve pupils' progress has impacted positively. Current information shows that pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 is likely to rise again this year because they are making faster progress.

The large majority of parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, said that they would recommend the school to other parents. Most parents who spoke to the inspector were also complimentary about the school and feel that communication between the school and parents is good, and that the school is well led. However, a minority of parents who completed Parent View have concerns about the leadership and management of the school. Inspection evidence did not raise similar concerns.

A minority of parents also said that they do not find the information they receive about their child's progress valuable. Parents receive very detailed progress sheets about how well their child is progressing in reading, writing and mathematics twice a year, as well as an annual report. Following this inspection, I have asked you to consult with all parents to check that they find the progress sheets useful.

At your last inspection, inspectors asked you to improve pupils' mathematical skills. The curriculum for mathematics is comprehensive, and most pupils are developing their reasoning skills to become more effective mathematicians. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher standard in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was nearly double the national average. However, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher standard at the end of key stage 1 was less than half the national average. Following this inspection, I have asked you to increase the challenge and the opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical reasoning skills in Year 2.

Also at the last inspection, the inspectors asked you to increase the challenge for the most able and to improve boys' writing. At the end of key stage 2 in 2017, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher standard in reading and writing was above the national average. The most able are achieving well. Boys made better progress in their writing last year than in 2016. However, they did not make as much progress as the girls. Throughout the school currently, boys' progress in writing is improving.

Safeguarding is effective.

You lead safeguarding well. The process for recruiting new members of staff is rigorous. All the necessary checks on adults who work with the children have been completed.

Confidential files are stored securely. When a concern has been raised about a child, you take prompt action. You work well with families and external agencies. All actions are recorded and logged. Staff training is up to date.

Internet safety is promoted well. The 'Tech. Team' leads assemblies to promote e-safety and provide a thought or question of the week and the answer. This week, the team gave the pupils a dilemma: Your friend is texting and making calls to a person they do not know. What do you do?

Pupils informed me that they believe behaviour is good in the classrooms and on the playground. They know how the behaviour policy works. I agree that behaviour around the school is good. Pupils' attendance is very high. Very few pupils are persistently absent.

Inspection findings

- The key lines of enquiry for this inspection focused on leaders' actions to improve pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics, the progress of children in the early years, and the progress of disadvantaged pupils through the school.
- Pupils are now making good progress in their reading through the school. Last year, fewer pupils than nationally made good progress in reading through key stage 1, and few attained highly. Teachers have organised Year 6 pupils to act as reading buddies for pupils in Year 1. This has encouraged the younger pupils to read fluently and use good expression when reading aloud. The proportion of Year 2 pupils who are on track to attain the expected standard or higher in reading is higher than previously and above the national average in 2017.
- Pupils' writing is improving, including that of the boys. Teachers in key stage 2 have provided opportunities for pupils to study how authors build tension into their writing, and support pupils to achieve the same aim. In addition, pupils have been encouraged to expand their vocabulary. Over time, it is noticeable that pupils are expanding their written vocabulary. One Year 6 boy wrote, 'Oli slowly unwrapped the greasy packaging and nibbled on the chocolate.' In the mixed Year 1/2 class, pupils write imaginatively. One pupil wrote, 'The petals are as pink as candy floss.'
- The leadership of mathematics is very effective. The skilled coordinator has lead several training sessions for all staff and moderated pupils' work to check that teachers' assessments are accurate. Pupils in Year 1 and in key stage 2 are regularly answering challenging mathematical reasoning questions to improve their skills. In Year 1, pupils were asked to name the shape that has three faces and two edges. Year 3 pupils were given three building blocks with the dimensions in millimetres. They were asked how many different ways they could

build a tower with a height of 56cm. The challenges make pupils reason. Although the pupils in Year 2 are answering problem-solving questions in mathematics, the opportunities to develop their reasoning skills are less evident than in the other year groups.

- Children enjoy a good start in the early years. Children enter school with skills typical of their age. The proportion of children expected to reach a good level of development is expected to be higher than the national average. The children have opportunities to learn both inside and outside the classroom, and most children are curious and engage in the activities set. Children are encouraged to say the sounds of letters before writing words and make good progress in forming written sentences. Outside, children have the opportunity to learn about capacity, and they were confident at pouring water into containers to see which had the largest capacity. Occasionally, some boys were not engaged in learning, and adults were too slow to redirect them towards a purposeful learning activity.
- The assistant headteacher responsible for assessment closely tracks the progress of disadvantaged pupils. The pupils' work is scrutinised regularly, and any gaps in their attainment are focused on. Teachers and teaching assistants provide the targeted intervention. As a result, more disadvantaged pupils are currently on track to make expected progress from their starting points.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils in Year 2 have more opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning skills to enable more pupils to attain highly at the end of key stage 1
- they consult with parents about the assessment information that you provide about their child's progress to ensure that it is meaningful for them.

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

Martin Finch
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the assistant headteachers and the coordinators of English and mathematics. I spoke with parents and observed pupils at breaktime. I visited all the classrooms with you and looked at pupils' work. I met with the chair and two other members of the governing body. I met with a group of pupils and heard pupils read. You and I reviewed records about keeping children

safe. I studied your school development plan and your self-evaluation documentation. I considered the 52 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, the 25 responses to the Ofsted free text service for parents and the 17 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.