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20 April 2018

Mrs Jacqueline Poustie
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Poustie

Short inspection of John Harrison CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 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 July 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 have built a culture and environment in which pupils learn positive values, build strong, respectful relationships, and develop open minds. Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy learning.

You and your team have evaluated where the main strengths and weaknesses are. You have identified the most important improvement priorities. Leaders know each child's needs. However, evaluations of the progress of key groups of pupils from different starting points in all year groups, such as the disadvantaged and the most able, could be more thorough. Finer analysis would help leaders to identify objectives that are more precise when planning improvements.

At the last inspection, inspectors identified some areas for improvement. One of these was to ensure that teachers challenge all groups of pupils. The work in pupils' workbooks shows that teachers generally match work to pupils' abilities. However, the degree of challenge is not entirely consistent across subjects and in all year groups, particularly for the most able pupils. I saw some especially strong examples of the demands teachers make on pupils, but also saw some less challenging work. We discussed how targets for some pupils could be more challenging. Furthermore, the activities in which children in the Reception class, especially the most able, engage independently, do not place sufficient demands on them.

Inspectors, at the last inspection, also identified the need for teachers to give pupils more opportunities to write at length across a range of subjects. Pupils do indeed have plenty of opportunities to write for a range of interesting purposes in most subjects. This builds their confidence and stamina in writing. Inspectors also asked leaders to make sure that pupils have opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge in a range of contexts. I saw some examples of this, for example in pupils' science books, but not nearly enough. You recognise that this remains an area to develop. Nevertheless, the teaching of mathematics has improved. Teachers give pupils daily opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning abilities and to attempt tricky mathematical problem solving.

The final area for improvement identified at the last inspection was to improve further the role of middle leaders. Subject leaders fulfil their responsibilities and understand the main strengths and weaknesses in each subject. They make sure that their colleagues teach the agreed and required curriculum content. As a result, pupils across the school receive a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum. They complete work in all national curriculum subjects, broadening their general and subject-specific knowledge. Pupils enjoy many opportunities to participate in activities beyond the classroom, for example visits to places of interest, sports and music clubs.

The governing body is well organised and fulfils its statutory duties. For example, a safeguarding committee meets regularly to review the arrangements to keep pupils safe. They check the impact of this work by speaking with groups of pupils often. Governors collectively have a range of skills and experience that equips them well for their roles. Governors both support and challenge leaders. They recognise the main strengths and weaknesses. However, the governing body would benefit from even better quality information about the progress from starting points of key groups of pupils currently in the school. This would help governors to interrogate assessment information more deeply and be more tenacious in the way they challenge leaders.

Safeguarding is effective.

Adults teach pupils how to stay safe. The pupils I spoke with showed a well-developed understanding about how to stay safe online. The way leaders and teachers teach pupils about diversity helps pupils to show respect for people who may be different. For example, pupils demonstrated open-minded and respectful attitudes to aspects of gender identity I discussed with them. All of this, along with exceptional behaviour, strongly contributes to pupils feeling safe. Pupils told me that bullying is rare and that adults deal with it effectively.

You have ensured that safer recruitment guidelines are followed properly and that a record of these checks is kept. I identified a small amount of information missing from the record that was, nevertheless, available elsewhere. The record was corrected quickly. I am satisfied that you and other persons responsible know the pupils' needs well and take action to ensure that pupils who are at risk of harm receive help. Adults are well trained in their duties, including, for example, in how

they might identify child sexual exploitation or exposure to extremist views.

Inspection findings

- Over three quarters of the pupils left Year 6 in 2017 having met the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined. This figure is above the national average. This is an improvement on the previous two years. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard or greater depth in their learning was above average in reading, but broadly average in mathematics and in writing. Over the last few years, pupils have generally made broadly average progress from their starting points. Rates of progress have improved in mathematics and declined a little in writing. There is scope for hastening the rates of progress through more consistently strong teaching.
- The percentage of children by the end of Reception reaching a good level of development has been broadly average over the last few years, though a little above average in 2016. Most children reach the early learning goals in most areas of learning. Children benefit from a broad range of experiences and enjoy playing, exploring and completing their activities. However, from broadly typical starting points when they enter the Reception Year, the proportion of children exceeding the early learning goals across the areas of learning has been variable. Most children sustain interest in their activities. However, the planning of independent activities and the arrangement of resources does not always result in sufficient demands being made on children, especially the most able.
- The weaker outcomes in key stage 1 in 2017 were not typical of outcomes over time or of the progress of pupils currently in key stage 1. Pupils are generally making at least average progress from their starting points at the end of the Reception Year. However, while teachers mostly plan work that is suited to pupils' abilities, this is not consistent across all subjects, particularly for the most able pupils. This includes pupils who had high prior attainment at the end of the early years, but also pupils who had average prior attainment but who ought to be attaining more highly, given greater challenge.
- Leaders set targets for pupils' attainment that would generally be consistent with average progress for pupils nationally. These targets are often not sufficient to bring about the faster rates of progress needed to raise attainment to above the national average. This is especially so for the most able pupils who earlier in their schooling did not reach the higher levels of which they ought to be capable. In addition, there is a small minority of pupils in some classes, who despite achieving expected standards earlier in their school career, have fallen behind and still need to catch up.
- Leaders and teachers actively and effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders are preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain. Adults help pupils to understand such principles as justice and equality. Pupils learn how to influence others positively, developing leadership skills. Adults train pupils to be diligent 'buddies', digital leaders, sports ambassadors, school councillors and collective worship leaders.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they analyse and evaluate the progress of groups of pupils in each year group more thoroughly, and ensure that this analysis more precisely informs school improvement plans and enables governors to better judge the progress of groups of pupils from their starting points
- independent play in the early years is more consistently demanding and that more children exceed the early learning goals across the areas of learning
- targets are more challenging for the most able pupils, especially pupils with mid prior attainment but who are capable of better achievement, increasing the rate of progress so that more pupils reach higher standards
- the small minority of pupils who have fallen behind in their learning make sufficient progress to catch up and meet the expected standard.

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

Yours sincerely

Philip Riozzi
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

You and I briefly observed teaching together in most classes. Along with the deputy headteacher, we looked at a sample of pupils' workbooks. I met with a group of pupils to ask them what it is like to be a pupil at the school. I considered the responses of more than half the pupils to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire. Two pupils read aloud to me. I met with a representative of the local authority and three governors, including the chair and vice-chair. I examined documents, including the school self-evaluation document, the school improvement plan, notes of visits from local authority officers and governing body minutes. I examined pupil assessment information. I looked at the responses of 27 parents to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, and considered a number of written responses from parents. I also took into account the views of 33 members of staff through Ofsted's staff questionnaire.