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Andrew Raistrick  
Executive Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Raistrick

### **Short inspection of Spalding Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 24 April 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 January 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since then, the school has developed federated arrangements with two local primary schools and made changes to the executive leadership. With the governors, you have executive responsibility for the standards and effectiveness of education in the school and work closely with the head of school to evaluate and improve provision. The school population has remained stable, although there has been some turbulence in staffing due to a number of promotions and leaves of absence. Parental satisfaction with the school is generally high, with the majority keen to recommend the school to other families. Leaders respond well to areas of parental concern and seek opportunities to extend consultation on issues such as the shape and frequency of homework.

Together with the school's senior leaders, you have accurately evaluated the strengths and areas for development of the school and have developed appropriate, well-focused plans to move the school forward. As a result of the implementation of new initiatives for improving teaching in the core subjects, the school has achieved success in improving outcomes across both key stages. Governors have reshaped their core number and are clearly focused on their core responsibilities for holding leaders to account for driving standards for the benefit of all pupils. Significant investment in the development of the school site, including outdoor areas for sports and early years play, demonstrate the vision and commitment of all leaders to securing the future success of the school.

Leaders have responded to the areas of improvement identified in the previous

inspection report by implementing robust systems for quality assurance of teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers have warmly welcomed the introduction of a new marking and feedback policy which places specific focus on the value of live feedback in lessons. In the most effective teaching, this is making an impact on the pace of pupils' progress. Leaders at all levels regularly review the quality of pupils' work in books and analyse information about pupil progress. The newly developed assessment system is now firmly embedded and well understood by members of the school community. As a result of this detailed scrutiny, leaders have been able to identify barriers to learning in the development of knowledge, understanding and skills. Across the school, pupils are taught in groups which have been shaped with reference to this information and are adapted to meet the specific needs of pupils in different areas of the curriculum.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of sporting opportunities, including competitive team sports and tournaments which promote the participation of entire year groups. Reporting on the use of the physical education and sport premium is detailed and includes reference to investment in the 'change for life' lunchtime club, designed to enhance pupils' levels of activity. Levels of satisfaction among pupils is audited alongside the impact of participation in sport on their physical well-being. It is clear that pupils enjoy the many opportunities to take part in clubs, teams and the daily 'minute mile'.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders have developed an effective culture for safeguarding pupils at the school. The child protection policy is comprehensive and includes reference to the latest guidance on current issues of public concern. Where pupils require higher levels of support from external agencies, leaders engage in appropriate communication and pursue the progress of agreed actions. The single central record is comprehensive, compliant and securely maintained, and safer recruitment practice is robust. The governing body contains a designated lead for safeguarding who conducts regular visits to the school and maintains an overview of any live cases.

Responsibility for safeguarding is shared across members of the school leadership team. Training is provided for all members of staff at regular intervals, raising awareness of the full range of statutory responsibilities for keeping children safe, including identifying and tackling the threats posed by extremist groups. The school has made a significant investment in the development of a safe online environment. Leaders have conducted rigorous self-evaluation of the risks presented by the use of digital and mobile technologies and developed a range of strategies to inform parents, carers and pupils. The team of well-trained e-cadets enables pupils to take ownership of their own e-safety.

Expectations for high standards of behaviour and conduct are made clear, both within the school values and around the school site. Pupils say that the school provides a safe and welcoming environment and understand where to go if they have any concerns. Anti-bullying messages are communicated through assemblies and incidents of challenging behaviour are dealt with swiftly by senior staff. Pupils

are clear about the use of the school's shooting stars and smiley face rewards and sanctions systems. The school takes seriously its commitment to promoting pupils' mental health and well-being, accessing support from a range of therapeutic professionals, including a school counsellor.

Leaders have implemented a robust attendance monitoring system and are clear of their responsibilities with regards to children missing in education. Incidents of absence are followed up by school staff and in communication with local authority officers. As a result, attendance of pupils at the school is above the national average.

### **Inspection findings**

- The leader for mathematics demonstrates clear understanding of the demands of the national curriculum programmes of study. Plans to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics are detailed and include reference to problem solving and reasoning. Question-level analysis of test results identifies precisely where there are gaps in pupils' learning and enables teachers to plan activities to improve pupils' skills in these areas. The school has invested significantly in appropriate resources. Leaders demonstrate innovation and creativity in cross-curricular planning across mathematics and physical education. A week dedicated to the various applications of mathematics is well received by pupils and celebrated in colourful displays around school. Current progress data suggests that the school is continuing to improve outcomes for pupils in mathematics.
- Leaders for English have developed a wide range of initiatives designed to improve pupils' engagement with reading. Plans for a newly developed library sit alongside a reading for pleasure strategy and the development of text-based schemes of work which include reference to a diverse range of media. Creative classroom displays celebrate pupils' imaginative responses to a range of literary texts. As a result of this work, pupils achieve well in reading in both key stages.
- The introduction of independent writing portfolios across all year groups has placed enhanced emphasis on the skills required to write at length and in depth. Pupils take pride in the quality of their work in these portfolios, writing in a range of formats and with a good command of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Teachers routinely model the features of effective sentence construction and promote the benefits of an extended vocabulary. Presentation of pupils' work in books is of good quality and displayed around school. Teachers have developed a range of effective working walls, signposting pupils to the use of strategies to improve phonics understanding and spelling skills. As a result of this work, current progress data for pupils in key stage 1 suggests that a decline in the outcomes for pupils in writing is being addressed. Nevertheless, ensuring more rapid improvement in pupils' progress in writing continues to be a priority for the school.
- Pupils are presented with a range of opportunities to undertake topic learning which incorporates a range of curriculum subjects and is appropriate to their age and stage of learning. In key stage 2, pupils learn about the ancient Egyptians while, in key stage 1, they explore the features of the universe. Pupils enjoy the

opportunity to engage with current topical events, responding recently to the significant loss of a celebrated physicist by composing biographical tributes.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities at the school is broadly average. The coordinator for this group of pupils has oversight of the development of pupil learning plans which include specific learning targets. The frequency of review of the quality and effectiveness of these targets does not always ensure that progress in removing barriers to learning is sufficiently rapid. There is, however, clear evidence of well-planned, highly appropriate targeted teaching of pupils with additional needs. Leaders also closely monitor the progress and attainment of vulnerable pupils, adjusting planned interventions to ensure that the most appropriate forms of support are available.
- The most able pupils are not always provided with appropriate opportunities to enable them to move rapidly to the next stage in their learning. Increasing the numbers of pupils exceeding the national standard in all areas of the curriculum is a key priority for the school.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the progress and attainment of key stage 1 pupils in writing improves more rapidly
- systems for monitoring and promoting the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are sharpened
- there are further planned opportunities for pupils to move more swiftly to greater depth in their learning.

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

Emma Hollis-Brown  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and the head of school and shared my lines of enquiry. I also met with the subject leaders for English, representatives of the governing body, and the special educational needs coordinator. I considered the 39 responses of parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, along with some free-text comments, and met with parents at the start of the school day. Together with leaders, I visited classes in both key stages and considered pupils' work in books. I

observed pupils' behaviour and met with a group of them to discuss their experiences of the school. I viewed a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance, its plans for further improvement and information on pupils' current progress. I considered a number of policy documents and records, including those related to safeguarding. I also considered recruitment checks in order to confirm the robustness of practice in this area.