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Mr Andy Gamble
Executive Headteacher
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Belinda Street
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Dear Mr Gamble,

Short inspection of Low Road Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 May 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. You lead the school with vision, drive and conviction. You, your senior team and staff are dedicated to ensuring that all pupils do well and receive the very best. You know the community you serve well. You know that a broad education, rooted in the essential skills of reading, writing and mathematics, must be on offer to all. To this end, you have worked hard to ensure that your pupils have a broad and deep set of learning experiences during their time with you.

You have effectively developed leadership at every level of the school. You see this, quite rightly, as the key to ensuring further, sustained improvement. You have created an atmosphere of supported autonomy so that all the leaders of the key areas and subjects in the school feel well supported. They are also carefully trained and informed so that they can fulfil and develop their roles. You have extended this atmosphere by welcoming and encouraging initiatives from staff and pupils from all parts of the school. As a result, all staff feel part of, and key to, the school's continued improvement. They want the school and every pupil in it to do well.

You have identified reading as a key area for further development. You have used a range of imaginative approaches to develop pupils' skills in, and love of, reading across the school. Staff skills in the teaching of reading are regularly reviewed and extended. Reading has an increasingly high profile. There are interactive reading stations around the school. Pupils read more and relish the chances that they have to gain rewards for reading regularly. Pupils told me that they are very clear that

fluency and skill in reading are keys to success in school and beyond. You check pupils' progress, including that in reading, closely and regularly. You and your team of staff use the information gathered to identify gaps and help inform next steps in teaching. Teaching assistants are increasingly well trained and teach and support pupils of all abilities. They are well supported in developing their skills. You monitor the impact of their work and you ensure that they have access to the opportunities that they need to improve and develop further. You are realistic and thorough in your monitoring of the impact of the range of actions you and the team have put in place to ensure sustained improvements in reading. As a result, you are aware that insufficient time has passed for your plans to be fully embedded so that pupils attain the high-level skills in reading that they need.

Phonics are well and imaginatively taught. The phonics sessions are carefully supported by a range of reading texts that give pupils opportunities to practise their skills as readers. Staff underpin their teaching of phonics with a rich diet of talk and exploration of language so that children extend and develop their language skills. The links between reading and writing and spelling are made early. I saw examples of Reception children writing simple sentences. They were able to talk excitedly about their work. They formed their letters with care and increasing confidence. Staff record progress carefully and use the information that they gather to inform children's next steps. The early years team engages closely with parents to keep them informed about their children's progress. The parents I spoke with said that they welcomed this. Reception children are now, overall, well placed to get off to a flying start in Year 1. In key stage 1, phonics continues to be taught effectively. Those pupils who need more time to develop their skills as readers are provided with carefully targeted support so that by the start of Year 3 the vast majority are able to access the full curriculum.

Pupils read and enjoy an increasingly wide range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry as they move up through the school. Pupils told me that they had noticed an increase in the amount of time that they now spend reading and discussing books and texts. They welcome this. Pupils have a growing experience of a range of genres and how writers use language to create mood, tone and emotion. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are developing a wide range of comprehension and other skills, such as inference, through their reading. This is having a positive effect on their own writing, particularly for the most able pupils. Pupils are increasingly seeing the links between the range of devices that the writers in the books and texts that they read deploy and their own developing skills as writers. Staff are increasingly skilled at helping pupils make these links.

Your previous inspection report, in September 2014, identified the need to increase the numbers of pupils who reach the higher standards in writing and mathematics. It suggested that this should be done by raising teachers' expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve in lessons and making sure that these pupils were sufficiently challenged. You are addressing this effectively. Mathematics outcomes, including for the most able, are improving consistently across the school. This is because your staff are well trained and alert in addressing misconceptions. They are also adept at deepening pupils' mathematical skills and confidence. They do this

through a rich and varied diet that includes a particular focus on problem solving. Pupils welcome and enjoy this. Many pupils, of all ages, told me how much they enjoy the challenge and fun of mathematics at the school. Inspection evidence shows that pupils have many opportunities to write, in a range of styles, in a range of subjects. This is particularly the case as they move up through the school. Writing is well presented and generally accurate. Staff work effectively to identify and support pupils to improve their writing. Your most-able pupils have many opportunities to write at length, and in depth, in a range of subjects beyond English. However, I did note that worksheets often have boxes in which pupils write their responses. These boxes can restrict the amount pupils write and the detail of their answers.

Governors know the school and the community it serves well. They are well led. They gather information about how well the school is doing from a wide range of sources. They robustly analyse the information that they gather. This means that they are adept at identifying both strengths and areas that need further development. Governors are then effective at holding you and other leaders at the school to account. They draw on effective support from a wide range of external bodies, including the local authority. They are constantly seeking to improve and develop their skills.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are of a very high quality. They are regularly updated, checked and are meticulously kept.

There is a very strong culture of safeguarding at the school. All adults at the school, including governors, take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. Your designated safeguarding leaders ensure that regular and effective training is provided for all staff and governors. Because of this, all adults are up to date in their understanding and knowledge. Governors monitor safeguarding procedures and systems regularly and carefully. You are very well supported in maintaining a highly reliable safeguarding culture by Leeds local authority. Officers from the authority undertake regular and rigorous audits of the school's safeguarding arrangements. It provides high-quality training. You and your team have very strong links with outside agencies. The records of the school's dealings with these agencies are detailed. This shows the school's meticulous and determined approach to this aspect of its service to the community. Dedicated staff engage with the local authority promptly. The school follows up safeguarding issues tenaciously.

Inspection findings

- Children enter the school with language skills and experiences that are less developed than those normally expected for their age. Well-led early years staff engage with this well. They provide children with a language-rich environment where talk is encouraged as children explore a wide range of interesting activities. There is good, carefully focused provision for each child. The effect of

this provision is carefully monitored. The information gathered is used to inform the child's next steps. This helps them move on quickly from their different starting points. There are very good relationships between children and adults. Parents are fully involved. As a result of these strengths and the effective training you have put in place for staff, children's speech and language skills develop well.

- Staff morale is high. This is because of your vision and actions and the support of the governing body. Staff are highly motivated and want to do well. They are keen to improve. You and your senior team provide the whole staff with many opportunities to develop their skills. For example, staff are very adept at developing pupils' learning and confidence through careful, yet insistent, questioning. I saw many examples of both teachers and teaching assistants raising pupils' confidence and understanding through asking precise and well-judged questions. They used a range of techniques, such as asking other pupils to help out the original pupil being questioned. Such is the warmth and security of the learning atmosphere, other pupils were eager to help out their friends and add to the classroom debate. As a result, learning moved on swiftly and assuredly.
- The school's 'In Harmony' initiative, in partnership with Opera North, has a significant and positive impact on many aspects of pupils' learning and well-being. I have never heard a breaktime brought to an end by a brass and woodwind quartet playing Handel's 'Arrival of the Queen of Sheba'! The pupils appreciate it too. For them it is almost the norm. All pupils in Year 2 and key stage 2 learn a musical instrument. This music tuition, conducted by professional members of Opera North, is a significant strength of the school. It not only gives pupils skills in playing an instrument, but it also underlines the school's ethos of teamwork and sharing. I saw Year 5 pupils expertly taught and fully engaged in learning trumpet, trombone, clarinet and flute. Their staff learned alongside them.
- Your pupils are impeccably behaved. They enjoy school and are very eager to learn. They are delighted to talk about their learning, including talking about their favourite books and authors. They also talk fulsomely about their musical experience and expertise. Around school, they are polite and aware of the needs of others. They are appreciative of the work that adults do to keep them safe. Pupils told me that they are alert to potential dangers because the school regularly reminds them how to keep safe through lessons and in assembly time. This includes how to stay safe when online. At breaktimes, they play and talk well together. They relish the diversity of the school. As one pupil told me: 'There are loads of different cultures and we get to learn from each other.' They also welcome the opportunities that they have to take on roles of responsibility. They love coming to school. The overall attendance at the school, including that of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is consistently above the national average.
- In lessons, pupils show strong and well-developed learning habits. They take turns and contribute fully to class talk. Their books and folders are well presented. They treat the attractive and engaging learning environment with respect. There is no litter. They welcome and enjoy using the reading stations

around the school.

- Parents are very complimentary about the school. They welcome its openness and the ready access that they have to staff. They were particularly positive about the lengths to which staff go to ensure that their children are well looked after and well educated. The school has very strong structures in place to help ensure that parents have many opportunities to play a direct role in their children's learning. For example, I saw a stay and play session in the Reception class at the end of the school day. Parents came in to pick up their children early. Before they left for home they had one-to-one sessions with expert staff about how to help their child develop their skills as readers and writers. The session was particularly effective because staff knew both the children and their parents well. They used careful questioning to put the parents at ease. They then made particular and appropriately detailed suggestions of the ways parents could support and develop their children's learning and well-being. It was a very effective and positive experience for all concerned.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- further develop and deepen the whole-school approaches to the learning of, and pleasure in, reading so that pupils continue to make secure progress and attain well in reading
- further extend and develop pupils' skills in reading and enjoying a wide range of genres, including fiction and non-fiction texts, poetry and plays.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Evans
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I visited all classes during this short inspection. You accompanied me in all but three of these visits. During the visits, I observed learning and, where appropriate, I spoke with pupils about their work and attitudes to school. I looked at a wide range of their books and folders to judge their progress and the quality of their presentation.

During the day, I spoke with you and the federation headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the teachers who lead on English, mathematics,

science and safeguarding and three governors, one of whom was the chair. I also met with an officer from Leeds local authority who has been monitoring the work of the school. I observed and spoke informally with pupils during the day and at break and lunchtime. I observed two 'In Harmony' instrumental music sessions for Year 5 pupils run by teaching artists of the Opera North orchestra. This is part of the school's 'In Harmony' programme. I also spoke with parents as they brought their children to school. I joined a group of parents who attended a stay and play session in the Reception class at the end of the day. I met more formally with a group of Year 5 pupils to discuss their attitudes to learning and their views of the school. I also listened to, and discussed, reading with four Year 3 pupils. Their class teacher joined us for this meeting.

I took into account eight text messages from parents and the views of the five parents who responded to Ofsted's online facility, Parent View. I also took into account 25 results from staff to an online survey. I read a wide range of documents about the school's safeguarding systems, the quality and effect of staff training, governors' work and the minutes of their actions and the quality and effect of teaching.