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Mrs Gemma Harvey  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Harvey

### **Short inspection of Longstone Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 5 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 November 2013.

#### **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 value the work of the school. Pupils explain the importance of respect and responsibility, which the school hold at the heart of its values. You have fostered positive relationships with the local community. Pupils told me they are happy to come to school and they are enthusiastic about the range of visits and wider opportunities planned to stimulate their interest, particularly through sport and music. One pupil said, 'The best trip of all was to the Space Centre.'

Pupils are confident, polite and articulate. They enjoy contributing to the smooth running of the school by arranging signage for the 'buddy' system and monitoring its effect at playtimes. They get on well together, work hard and enjoy socialising with each other. They are confident that concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils are proud of the different roles and responsibilities they take on, such as membership of the school council, representing their school at the cluster parliament and participating in local community projects. They are particularly proud of taking part in the Archbishop of York Community Project. Pupils feel well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Pupils are motivated learners. Classrooms are stimulating and engaging places in which to learn. Teachers provide displays which support pupils' learning effectively. In classrooms and around the school, pupils' work is celebrated and presented to a high standard.

You work closely with the team of middle leaders to continue to improve the school. You are developing the staff and leadership teams well through professional development. You have an enthusiastic and committed staff. You work well with local schools to share good practice.

Since the last inspection, you have identified the key priorities for improvement. You have ensured that staff have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons and over time. Senior and middle leaders meet regularly to check pupils' progress and use this information to improve the quality of teaching. The school's assessment information shows that leaders have been successful in ensuring that girls and boys progress equally as well in reading. They acknowledge that there is still work to do in writing and mathematics. Leaders of mathematics and English are relatively new to post and, while they are checking the impact of the initiatives they have introduced, very occasionally this is not done precisely enough to make sure it is consistent across the school. For example, very occasionally, teachers' checking of what pupils know and can do in mathematics is not sharp enough to address their misconceptions.

The governing body provides effective support to the school. Governors are enthusiastic and highly motivated to ensure that the school further improves. They have an action plan in place which links to the school's development plan. This enables governors to focus their visits to check on leaders' progress in meeting the priorities for improvement. Governors are well trained and have a thorough understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You are diligent and tenacious in your approach to safeguarding. You use your breadth of knowledge well to engage a range of external support services to meet pupils' needs. The school's systems and procedures are robust.

Leaders have developed a strong and effective culture of safeguarding. Staff receive regular, good-quality training. They are knowledgeable about their responsibilities. They are vigilant and confident about reporting any concerns they have that pupils may be at risk.

The school administrator ensures that all checks on staff, volunteers and visitors are made to support the safety of the school and its pupils.

Most parents spoken with, and most of those who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their children are happy to come to school and feel secure. Pupils say they are taught how to stay safe, including when using the internet. They feel safe in school and are confident about seeking help if they have fallen out with other pupils. They trust their teachers and know they can speak to them about any concerns they may have. During the inspection, skilled teaching assistants were seen to provide appropriate support for those pupils who need more

help with their behaviour.

## **Inspection findings**

- During the inspection, I looked at the quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics throughout the school. In 2017, there was a fall in the proportion of pupils matching the national average in reading at key stage 2. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils meeting expectations by the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 was below the national average, particularly for pupils who have high prior attainment.
- You have introduced a new programme to support adults to track and assess pupils' progress in phonics. Our observations showed that where phonics and spellings are taught effectively, adults use a range of resources to help pupils learn letter sounds proficiently. Adults ensure that pupils say and read sounds and words accurately. In a very few instances, teachers do not insist that pupils apply their phonics and spelling skills in reading and writing.
- To improve pupils' reading skills, you have made improvements to the library and to the book stock that include a range of interesting and challenging books for pupils to use to practise their phonics skills. The school's assessment shows that, for many pupils, progress is equally as strong in reading as it is in writing and in mathematics.
- During the inspection, we looked at pupils' work in books and on display. In key stage 2, pupils write regularly at length. Teachers use the curriculum well to engage pupils in exciting writing tasks. However, subject leaders do not check well enough that teachers use their knowledge of what pupils know in order to plan the next steps in learning.
- You and leaders are introducing a bespoke approach to the teaching of mathematics, with the development of reasoning at its heart. Teachers use the curriculum creatively to stimulate pupils' interest in mathematics. In one class, pupils used Stonehenge as a context for a statistics lesson. Observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work showed many examples of pupils applying reasoning to problem-solving. However, this new way of teaching is in the early stages of development and is not securely in place across the school. Pupils do not make consistently good progress in this subject.
- Published information shows that attendance overall is above the national average. You and the governing body keep a sharp eye on pupils' attendance and you have implemented a number of successful strategies to reduce the number of persistent absences and exclusions. You rightly challenge parents to make sure that their children attend every day, unless there is an authorised reason for them being absent.
- Recently, you have successfully introduced a system for teachers to assess pupils' attainment and progress at key points through the year. You and the leadership team have wasted no time in evaluating current provision and implementing strategies to bring about improvement. Your latest assessment figures show that the majority of pupils are achieving at least in line with age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. Discussions with subject leaders highlighted

that they need to develop their skills to ensure that the strategies they implement are fully successful across the school.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they refine the skills of all subject leaders so they are able to check with greater precision the implementation and impact of improvements in their areas of responsibility
- they improve pupils' progress in English and mathematics, by making sure that the new methods of teaching these subjects become established across the school and are effective.

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

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Moore  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you to discuss the school's self-evaluation and my key lines of enquiry. I met with a group of governors, including the vice-chair of the governing body. I met with subject leaders responsible for English, mathematics and assessment. I held discussions with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Derbyshire Diocesan Academy Trust. I spoke with pupils during a group discussion, and informally during lessons. I observed playtime. I spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Jointly, we visited all classes and sampled pupils' books. In addition, I checked the school's safeguarding arrangements and records, including the school's record of recruitment checks on staff. I evaluated the school's documentation about pupils' achievement, planning for improvement and attendance. I took account of the 36 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. There were 10 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and 36 responses from pupils for me to consider.