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Mrs Liz Pollard
Headteacher
Beverley St Nicholas Community Primary School
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Dear Mrs Pollard

Short inspection of Beverley St Nicholas Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 June 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.

Beverley St Nicholas is a warm, welcoming school. The move into a new building has further established an ethos of togetherness and high expectation. You, and your leadership team, are ambitious for your pupils. You have organised the leadership team well and each member of the team has clear roles and responsibilities. The staff that you lead are proud to work at the school. You have detailed plans in place that accurately identify what it is the school needs to do to improve. Your actions are swift and decisive and this ensures that teaching and learning continues to improve.

As pupils move around the school, they are polite and courteous and this is supported by the good relationships that they have with their teachers and other adults. Staff and pupils have high levels of respect for one another and pupils say that they enjoy coming to school. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms is excellent. They listen attentively to adults and are quick to focus on their work. Pupils are keen to contribute to discussions and, as they move through the school, become skilled in offering useful ideas to help peers to improve their work. You provide effective support for vulnerable pupils and the staff are clear that the needs of these pupils are of the highest priority. The large majority of parents feel that their children are taught well and are safe in school. You have worked hard to encourage pupils to believe that they can succeed. One parent stated, 'My child has grown in confidence and resilience.'

The leadership and management team has changed considerably since the last inspection. You have developed a team that works well together and has the skill to help teachers to improve. The previous inspection report identified that teachers' marking did not always give pupils the information that they needed to improve. Leaders have worked together to ensure that teachers use your marking policy more consistently. When we looked at books, we could see that pupils regularly respond to the comments that they receive to correct their work.

During the last inspection, inspectors found that in writing, the most able pupils were not always given work that allowed them to do their best. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher standards in writing in key stage 1 and in key stage 2 has increased in the past few years. This is now above the national average. However, there is still more work to do. When we watched lessons and when we looked in pupils' books we could see that the most able pupils were still not always sufficiently challenged. Too often, the most able pupils complete the same work as other pupils. This means that the most able pupils can find tasks too easy. In addition to this, sometimes the curriculum plans being used by teachers in different year groups are the same. This means that pupils, for example in Year 4, can find themselves completing the same tasks as pupils in Year 3. This means that the pupils are not always working at an appropriate level.

During the last inspection, inspectors found that sometimes expectations of older pupils' handwriting and presentation were not high enough. This has improved, but there still remains some inconsistency across the school. Pupils now have greater opportunity to apply their writing skills across the curriculum. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to develop longer pieces of writing, and these are often linked to a range of other curriculum areas, such as history or geography. However, pupils do not always present their work carefully enough or use the school's handwriting approach with precision. Sometimes, pupils do not use punctuation that is appropriate for their age accurately enough in their daily work. There can be a tendency for pupils to rely on editing their work to ensure that they are accurate rather than trying to get it right first time.

Safeguarding is effective.

The safeguarding of pupils is of a high priority in your school. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are regularly updated with the information that they need to keep pupils safe. They know what to do should they have any concerns about the welfare of pupils. The appropriate checks are taken to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. All statutory training is in place and this supports a strong culture of safeguarding within the school. Governors receive timely information about the school's safeguarding procedures and provide leaders with challenge to ensure that all policies are followed closely.

Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and say that it is rare in school. They are confident that adults will deal with any issues that they may have and they enjoy coming to school. They have a good understanding of how to

stay safe when using the internet. The curriculum provides a range of opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe in different situations. One pupil said, 'We can always rely on our teachers. They have plans in place to make sure we are safe.'

The proportion of pupils who were persistently absent increased last year. This was due to a small number of pupils. You have worked hard this year to identify these pupils and work with their families to ensure that attendance improves. As a result, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has decreased.

Inspection findings

- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading at the end of key stage 2 has not been high enough in recent years. You have accurately identified this as a priority for the school. You have revised your approach to the teaching of reading and this is being consistently applied in all classrooms. As a result, more pupils are working at the standards expected for their age. Pupils are making good progress this year, particularly in Year 2 and in Year 6.
- Teachers provide lots of opportunities for pupils to practise their comprehension skills in English lessons. A broad range of high-quality books are used to promote a love of reading and to provide a rich source of vocabulary. The need to develop pupils' vocabulary was identified through your analysis of assessment information. It is clear that this is being addressed by teachers who discuss unfamiliar and interesting words with pupils. Pupils use these new words to improve their writing. The questions that adults ask prompt pupils to think more deeply and challenge any misconceptions that they have. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with additional needs. Sometimes, the activities planned for pupils are not sufficiently challenging. Sometimes, it is not clear what pupils need to do to complete a task successfully. This means that sometimes the activities that teachers plan are not well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils.
- I wanted to check whether middle prior-attaining pupils were being sufficiently challenged in their English lessons. In 2017, not enough middle prior-attaining pupils reached the expected standards in reading and writing by the end of key stage 2. They made slow progress across the key stage. You have identified this as a priority for the school and you have put strategies in place to address this this year. Middle prior attaining pupils have made good progress this year and a much higher proportion are reaching the standards expected for their age. Leaders carefully check the levels of progress that these pupils make throughout the year. You have robust systems in place to ensure that the assessment information that you gather is accurate. Leaders plan a range of effective programmes of support for groups of pupils to ensure that any gaps in learning are identified and addressed. This assessment information now needs to be used more precisely by teachers to plan tasks that accurately match the needs of different groups of pupils within the classroom.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers use assessment information more carefully to plan activities that provide enough challenge for all groups of pupils
- the content of the revised English curriculum is organised so that it is challenging for all pupils in each year group
- there are higher expectations of pupils to apply the handwriting, spelling and grammatical skills that they have learned to every lesson.

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

Yours sincerely

Jaimie Holbrook
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met you and other senior leaders and shared my lines of enquiry. I also met with members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, the subject leaders for English and the designated safeguarding leader. I considered the responses of 29 parents from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 28 free-text comments. I scrutinised the responses to Ofsted's questionnaires for staff and pupils. We visited classes together in key stage 1 and key stage 2. I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, met with a group of them and looked at samples of pupils' work. I viewed a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance and its plans for further improvement. I considered a number of policy documents, including those for safeguarding. I examined the school's website to check that it meets requirements on the publication of specified information.