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Mrs Emily Eyre  
Acting Headteacher  
Burton-upon-Stather Primary School  
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DN15 9HB

Dear Mrs Eyre

### **Short inspection of Burton-upon-Stather Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 20 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 December 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. There have been several staffing changes since the last inspection, with some new teachers and a careful handover of responsibilities from senior to middle leaders. This has strengthened the skills within the school and has resulted in strong and effective teaching. You have also developed your knowledge and leadership capacity and have taken swift action to address underachievement and make improvements. In a period of transition, you have fostered a strong team spirit, and staff feel supported and are proud to work at the school. Staff value the range of professional opportunities they have been given to develop their teaching further. Your coaching and mentoring programme for new leaders is helping them to become more established in their roles, and they feel well supported under your leadership. As a result, the leadership of the school has been strengthened.

The school has a warm, friendly and welcoming feel. There is a wide range of exciting opportunities for pupils to learn through, to develop their life skills and to find out about the local community. The outdoor learning area is well used and children regularly go into the yurt to listen to stories and to spend time with your 'reading dog'. Pupils are encouraged to support each other by becoming 'class experts', developing confidence and a 'can do' attitude in themselves and others. Through this, pupils are building important life skills of self-reflection and understand the importance of supporting others. You have improved the links with the local community and as a result pupils take an active role in local sports and charity events. The great majority of parents and carers were enthusiastic in their

praise for the school. However, a small minority of parents expressed concerns about the updates they received concerning changes within the school.

Pupils behave extremely well, both in class and around the school when going to assemblies and breaktimes. They are polite, respectful and supportive of the learning of others. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations. The pupils reported how much they enjoyed school, because 'teachers find a way to make learning fun'. As a result of your recent reading initiatives, pupils find work more challenging, in particular in guided reading. Although pupils said bullying was rare, they know what to do if they have any concerns. They described being able to use the class 'worry bear', post a concern on the special part of the school website or speak to 'Burton Buddy' if they needed to, and that they would receive a quick and helpful response.

Governors fully understand their strategic role and have a broad range of expertise that enables them to carry out their responsibilities effectively. They are ambitious for the success of every child in the school. Governors visit the school regularly, gathering evidence to inform their understanding of the school's strengths and the improvements that are currently being worked on. As a result, governors provide robust challenge and support to you and other school leaders.

Following the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve the quality of teaching further. You have addressed this by offering training, support and mentoring to teachers, so that they can learn from others and understand how to make improvements to their own practice. Regular monitoring and scrutiny of pupils' work also helps all leaders to see where teaching is working well and where further guidance is needed. For example, new ways of teaching reading and higher expectations of what pupils can achieve are starting to have a positive effect on pupils' progress in reading. As a result, there has been an improvement in reading outcomes at key stage 1 and key stage 2. Teachers apply the school's assessment policy effectively, so that pupils are clear about how to improve their work. Work is planned so that it better matches the needs of all pupils, including the most able. For example, challenge tasks are used in a range of subjects, so that the most able pupils quickly move on to activities that will develop and extend their thinking. In previous years, very few pupils in the early years attained the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This year, a higher proportion of pupils are on track to attain in each. A higher proportion of pupils are set to attain the higher standard in writing at the end of key stage 1 and in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 than previously. However, in 2017, from their different starting points at the end of Reception, the proportion of pupils who attained the expected standard in writing at the end of key stage 1 was below average.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The business manager is thorough in ensuring that all the necessary checks of suitability to work with children are in place for staff and volunteers. Staff receive regular child protection training. Consequently, they are knowledgeable and know who to speak

to and what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. There is professional knowledge and expertise in safeguarding within the governing body that contributes to the school's effectiveness in keeping children safe. As a result, there is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. In the school, pupils behave extremely well and are pleasant and polite. Pupils reported that they feel safe in the school, that bullying is rare and that they learn about e-safety and cycling proficiency which helps them to stay safe outside of the school. Inspection evidence and the views of staff and parents support this.

## **Inspection findings**

- Prior to this year, pupils' attainment in reading at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 was strong, but they were not making the necessary progress from their different starting points. In 2017, pupils' progress in reading was below average. Reading has been a priority for the school this year, and teachers have introduced a new guided reading system. Teachers are now using tracking information carefully to ensure that all pupils are making the required progress. Teachers can quickly see if any children are falling behind in their learning and put strategies into place to ensure they get back on track. The pupils I listened to read had good comprehension skills, read confidently and knew what to do if they were unsure of a word. Teachers help pupils to read sections of a text more effectively, by helping them identify the key sections of what they are reading and quickly move on, to ensure that no time is wasted. Teachers provide guidance on how to answer comprehension questions in a detailed, but succinct way. This has enabled pupils to approach the requirements of assessment tests better. Consequently, school assessment information indicates improvements in pupils' attainment and progress in reading this year.
- The link between letters and sounds is taught daily in the early years and key stage 1 and the majority of pupils are able to use their phonic skills well to read and write new words. Strategies to support pupils' development in phonics further, such as them identifying the phonemes and graphemes in words using dots and dashes, have recently been put into place, but it is too early to see significant impact on outcomes. Currently, pupils who perform well in reading at the end of the early years do not make sufficient progress to the required standard in the phonics progress check in Year 1. Year 2 pupils currently do not develop the skills, knowledge and understanding they need so that they are prepared for the academic rigour of key stage 2. You agreed with me that leaders need to do more work in this area.
- In 2017, pupils' attainment and progress in writing was a strength of the school in key stages 1 and 2. However outcomes in reading and mathematics highlighted that the most able pupils did not make the progress they were capable of or attain higher standards in reading and mathematics. Leaders have supported teachers to identify the current most able pupils and to make sure that the work they do is challenging. Inspection evidence demonstrates that teachers now provide work that meets the needs of the most able pupils, so that they can now develop their problem-solving and comprehension skills further. However, some pupils at the end of key stage 1 this year have not reached the expected standard in writing. Despite being capable of doing so, some pupils at the end of

key stage 2 have not reached the higher standard in writing. Further improvements are needed in how pupils consistently use a range of punctuation in their writing. Leaders acknowledge that further improvements are needed in this area.

- Pupils have the opportunity to learn a wide range of subjects including science, history, religious education and French, in accordance with the national curriculum. This helps to ensure that pupils have the range of scientific skills to enable them to investigate and analyse features of the world around them. Inspection evidence and scrutiny of the work in pupils' books indicate that pupils also use their skills in writing effectively in their work in other subjects. Although mathematics is evident in some work, it is not currently as well developed as writing.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- by the end of Year 1 and Year 2, a greater proportion of pupils meet the expected standard in phonics
- a greater proportion of pupils achieve at the expected standard in writing by the end of key stage 1 and at the higher standard in writing at key stage 2.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, 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

Helen Hussey

**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, your senior and middle leaders, a group of teachers and governors. I also met with your local authority school improvement partner. You and I jointly visited a range of lessons in all key stages. Together with senior leaders, we scrutinised pupils' work from a range of year groups. I met with a group of children and listened to some pupils read. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and documents relating to safeguarding. I spoke with parents and took account of the 47 responses to Parent View.