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Mrs Yvonne Reeson
Headteacher
St Peter's CofE Primary School
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DN10 4QT

Dear Mrs Reeson

Short inspection of St Peter's CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 18 July 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 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 your appointment, in January 2016, you have provided conscientious and determined leadership. You know your school well and are accurate in your judgement of what needs to be further improved. You have well-focused and detailed plans in place to bring about the improvements identified.

You lead a very harmonious and welcoming school. The learning environment is pleasant and stimulating. You have established a kind and caring ethos throughout the school. Pupils develop the skills that they need to become enquiring and confident learners. They have positive relationships with staff and pupils appreciate what their teachers do for them. Pupils told me that they are very proud of their school. Staff are also proud of their school and their morale is high.

Pupils are well behaved and polite. They are cooperative with adults and each other, in their learning and during their social time. Pupils listen attentively to adults' instructions and guidance. They welcome the many enrichment activities that you provide to enhance their learning. Pupils told me how much they enjoy the golf club, Spanish lessons, guitar lessons and residential visits. Parents were also positive about the different activities provided for their children.

Teachers have high expectations for pupils and plan work that matches their learning needs. They use questioning effectively to support and challenge pupils in their learning. Teachers provide pupils with individual improvement targets. This

helps pupils to focus their learning on the most important aspects. Pupils talk confidently about their learning and listen respectfully to each other's views. They say that teachers make learning enjoyable and fun.

Children in the early years make good progress. By the end of Reception, a higher proportion of children than seen nationally achieve a good level of development. Pupils make good progress by the end of key stage 2. In 2017, pupils' progress in reading and mathematics was well above average. During key stage 1, however, pupils' progress has not been strong enough and these pupils have not attained the standards they should.

Your governing body is a strong and effective team. Governors are ambitious for the school and they work well with you and your staff. They are knowledgeable and carry out their roles with confidence. Members of the governing body make regular, well-planned visits to the school to verify the information that you share with them. They have a good understanding of pupils' assessment information. Governors use this effectively to challenge you and improve the effectiveness of the school.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. In particular, they expressed their confidence in the headteacher. They also acknowledged the high level of commitment shown by staff.

Following the school's last inspection, inspectors recommended that leaders improved pupils' achievement in reading and made better use of their phonics skills. Since your appointment, you have put in place a range of approaches to ensure that the teaching of phonics and reading has improved. In 2017, Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading rose to above the national average. Pupils who read to me during the inspection did so with enjoyment and confidence. They used intonation effectively to show expression in their reading. Pupils told me that they read frequently, both in and out of school.

You understand that, although pupils in key stage 1 are reaching higher standards than in previous years, not enough pupils make strong progress to build on their achievements in the early years. You also recognise that although pupils' progress in writing is good, it is not as strong as the progress pupils make in their reading and mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders have meticulously carried out all the necessary checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. Staff are caring and know this small school and community well. As the designated teacher for child protection and safeguarding you keep staff well informed about, and trained in, safeguarding matters. You access any extra support or care pupils may need effectively. Staff explained with confidence the action they need to take if they have a concern.

Pupils told me unanimously that they feel safe in school. They explained that this is

because their teachers help and reassure them. Pupils understand about different forms of bullying and report that there is none of this type of behaviour in their school. All the parents who responded to Parent View said that their children feel safe. They made a particular point of saying that their children are happy and explained how their self-esteem and well-being are nurtured.

Inspection findings

- At the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve and extend the teaching and use of phonics. Until 2017, the school's phonics screening check remained below the national average. In 2016, the new headteacher took decisive action to change the school's approach to the teaching of phonics. This entailed moving to a different teaching programme and focused training for staff. Teachers now provide learning better-matched to pupils' specific needs. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who reached the national standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check rose to average. The improved teaching of phonics, now embedded, has led to the current Year 1 pupils all reaching the pass threshold.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils' progress by the end of key stage 1 has not kept up with the good progress children have made by the end of the Reception Year. This has been especially true for boys. Leaders have taken effective action to improve this. Pupils are developing fluency, solving problems and using their reasoning skills more effectively in mathematics. Different books are motivating the boys in their reading and practical, hands-on learning tasks are engaging all pupils in their learning. Current Year 2 pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has improved. Leaders acknowledge, however, that standards, by the end of key stage 1, should be even higher.
- Although good, pupils' progress in writing, by the end of key stage 2, is not as strong as the progress they make in reading and mathematics. Leaders' actions have been effective in increasing the proportion of pupils who make good progress. They have placed a sharper focus on helping pupils to become better writers. Leaders have introduced new teaching approaches to writing and updated the learning resources. Both leaders and teachers have also supported some pupils in making strong progress. A higher proportion of pupils this year have reached standards similar to those seen nationally in writing in 2017. Standards in writing, however, continue to remain below the high standards reached in reading and mathematics. Furthermore, not enough boys make strong progress to reach standards similar to others boys nationally.
- Pupils' attainment in grammar, punctuation and spelling, by the end of key stage 2, dipped in 2017. Leaders have quickly rectified this. Leaders have introduced spelling lessons for all pupils. Teachers have also focused more on targeted teaching of grammar and punctuation. They now provide pupils with individual improvement targets to improve their accurate use of grammar and punctuation. The current Year 6 pupils have reached higher standards again in their grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Since the last inspection, pupils' attendance has declined. At times, it has fallen below the national average. The proportion of persistently absent pupils has also been above the national average. Leaders have raised the profile of good

attendance. They have worked effectively with parents and pupils to increase pupils' attendance. Both attendance and persistent absence are now average again.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils in key stage 1 make accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics and sustain the high standards that they reach by the end of Reception
- they increase the proportion of pupils who make strong progress in writing, especially boys.

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

Yours sincerely

Vondra Mays
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, the senior teacher, and members of the governing body. I observed pupils' learning in several lessons. I observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around the school. I spoke with pupils informally and met formally with a group of pupils. I also listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 read and examined samples of pupils' work.

In addition, I considered a range of documents. These included the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and records relating to pupils' progress, attainment and attendance. I considered the parents' responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as pupil and staff survey responses. I reviewed the school's safeguarding practices. The school's website was also checked to confirm whether it meets the requirements on the publication of specified information.