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Mr Tristan Revell
Malcolm Sargent Primary School
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Dear Mr Revell

Short inspection of Malcolm Sargent Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 September 2018 with Sarah Fielding, Ofsted Inspector, 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 October 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Since the last inspection, you have worked with governors to address key areas for improvement and continue to improve the quality of education for pupils. As a local leader of education, you have developed strong links with a range of local schools. You have also made significant investment in local training partnerships and this has ensured strong recruitment and retention of staff. Together with your senior team, you have accurately evaluated the school's progress and have developed effective systems for moving priority areas forward. A programme of well-focused research has contributed to the identification and implementation of a number of innovative approaches to teaching and learning. Pupils learn in mixed-ability classes and benefit from teachers' firm emphasis on self-and peer-assessment. Comparative analysis of the outcomes of children born at different times of the year has resulted in specific targeting of resources with a number of extremely positive impacts. Leaders have also developed a clear focus on emotional well-being and are working on equipping pupils with the tools to become emotionally resilient. Parents report high levels of satisfaction, suggesting that the 'love to learn' motto is at the heart of the school community.

Detailed analysis of the progress and performance of pupils is undertaken at key

intervals. Where pupils are identified as requiring extra support, appropriate interventions are subsequently designed and implemented. High levels of scrutiny and accountability at key stage 2 have contributed to a marked improvement in the progress and attainment of pupils. Over the last two years, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics has placed the school in the top 20% of schools. The introduction of mastery approaches to learning has also enabled the school to deepen pupils' knowledge and skills. As a result, the proportions of pupils exceeding the expected standards are also greater than the national average. At the end of key stage 1, the progress and attainment of pupils across all of the key subjects has also risen steadily, exceeding the national averages for the last three years.

A number of initiatives for developing pupils' skills in reading have been implemented, including the well-received book club and whole-class reading approach. The school has developed a highly effective and well-stocked library facility and pupils are keen to talk about their many reading opportunities. Pupils take pride in their work and books are well presented. The use of the writing journal ensures that pupils focus closely on the development of a range of literacy skills. Writing is imaginative and is at the appropriate level of difficulty. Visits to classrooms suggest that pupils are making good progress in developing their skills in writing. There is also strong evidence of a range of questioning strategies used effectively by teachers to check for misconceptions at both word and sentence level. Effective 'working walls' are in place in every classroom and teachers use a range of resources to promote independence and accelerate pupils' learning.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have developed an effective culture for safeguarding pupils at the school. The child protection policy is comprehensive and includes reference to the latest guidance and referral protocol. Staff receive appropriate training at frequent intervals and are clear about their statutory responsibilities for keeping children safe. Training includes specific reference to the importance of vigilance for signs of abuse, as well as identification of the threats posed by extremism.

The single central record is comprehensive, compliant and securely maintained, and safer recruitment practice is robust. The governing body includes a link safeguarding governor who conducts regular visits to the school. The school works closely with relevant external agencies to ensure that children are kept safe. Where necessary, the school uses support from specialist professionals, including educational psychologists and counsellors. The school has implemented a robust attendance monitoring system and leaders are fully aware of their responsibilities with regards to children missing in education. A dedicated pastoral team works closely with pupils and their families to ensure that pupils attend school. The 'meet and greet' policy has been particularly effective in enhancing communication with parents and carers. As a result of this work, the levels of attendance of pupils at this school are very strong.

Pupils consider that the school provides a safe and welcoming environment, with

anti-bullying messages clearly communicated. A range of issues are explored and managed through the school's curriculum and assembly programme. The school also demonstrates a clear commitment to the principles of inclusion and diversity. Expectations of positive learning behaviours are clearly defined in the school policy and promoted through displays in classrooms. The 'Malcolm Sargent Way' is regularly referenced by classroom teachers and well-understood by pupils, and, as a result, behaviour is exemplary across classrooms and in social spaces. E-safety work also has high visibility and pupils are clear about the principles of safe engagement with digital technologies.

Inspection findings

- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium do not progress as strongly as their peers in school. However, in key stage 2 in 2018, in comparison with other pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils made significant gains in attainment and progress in reading and writing, as well as in terms of progress in mathematics. Across all three subjects, disadvantaged pupils also progress strongly from the early years foundation stage into key stage 1. In this key stage, leaders have introduced a reading stamina project. A range of initiatives have also been implemented to raise the profile of reading among parents. Classroom-based teaching assistants are well-deployed and work closely with teachers to ensure that pupils can access every task. Scrutiny of pupils' books during the inspection did not suggest that vulnerable pupils were making less progress than their peers, although leaders recognise the importance of continuing to diminish gaps in performance.
- Plans for the use of additional funding are carefully considered and resources appropriately targeted to remove barriers to learning. Highly trained pastoral staff are carefully deployed to meet the social and emotional needs of children. Sensory development work is used with some pupils at the start of the day to support the development of motor skills. A team of social integration coaches are also in place during social times to promote healthy relationships between pupils and to ensure that a range of activities are on offer.
- The school has developed a wide range of initiatives designed to improve the progress and attainment of less-able pupils. Staff have introduced a range of strategies for increasing self-esteem and motivation. The whole-school focus on developing a growth mindset also promotes resilience and independence in learning. Effective phonics displays also ensure that pupils' skills in reading and writing are constantly in focus. Question level analysis test papers support teachers to ensure that curriculum planning is targeted and tasks are well designed. Current school performance information suggests that lower prior-attaining pupils are making strong progress across key subjects.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are supported well by the school. Pupils who have specific needs are identified early through the transition out of Nursery. Pupil profiles are detailed and frequently updated and leaders have an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the quality of provision for these pupils. Leaders work with a range of external agencies to ensure that the progress of children on Education and Health Care is regularly

reviewed and tracked. Appropriate training is delivered at regular intervals and pupils are well-supported by highly trained and specialised support staff. In 2018, by the end of key stage 2, the progress scores of pupils in this group were above the national average in reading and writing. Current school performance information suggests that performance is rapidly improving across both key stages. Nevertheless, a more detailed action plan would help to drive improvement more swiftly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- outcomes for the most vulnerable pupils continue to improve at pace
- plans for the development of key areas are closely reviewed and effectiveness of actions frequently evaluated.

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

Yours sincerely

Emma Hollis-Brown
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, we met with you and shared our lines of enquiry. We also met with the subject leaders for English and mathematics, representatives of the governing body, and the special educational needs coordinator. We considered the 51 responses of parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, along with some free-text comments, and met with parents at the start of the school day. Together with you, we visited classes in both key stages and considered pupils' work in books. We observed pupils' behaviour and met with a group of them to discuss their experiences of the school. We viewed a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance, their plans for further improvement and information on pupils' current progress. We considered a number of policy documents and records, including those related to safeguarding. We also considered recruitment checks in order to confirm the robustness of practice in this area.