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Mrs June Lee  
Headteacher  
Roseberry Primary and Nursery School  
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Pelton  
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Dear Mrs Lee

### **Short inspection of Roseberry Primary and Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 4 October 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 under your leadership in December 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have continued to give loyal and dedicated service to your community. You have built a united leadership team that cares deeply about your pupils' learning and welfare. For example, you have recently reviewed the wider curriculum, matching it carefully to your pupils' needs. Teachers and other adults work hard to ensure that pupils make good progress and enjoy learning. Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are happy, and they feel safe.

During the last inspection, two areas were identified for improvement. One was to improve the quality of teaching to raise attainment further by ensuring that work is set at the right level of difficulty for all groups of pupils. Pupils' attainment has been variable since the last inspection, but the school continues to strive for consistently good results for all pupils. You are successfully tackling some weaker teaching, although, together, we identified that some of the work set in mathematics is not always hard enough for the most able pupils.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors also challenged you to improve pupils' attendance by working with pupils and their families. Leaders' actions have led to improvements in attendance, and the school's absence rates are getting closer to the national average. Leaders motivate pupils to come to school by offering rewards for pupils and classes. Governors have invested additional funds in the appointment of a parent support adviser who works closely with families to improve pupils' attendance. You rightly recognise that there is more work to be done, especially for

pupils who are persistently absent and those taking holidays in term time.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a well-established culture of safeguarding in your school. Staff at all levels are well trained in keeping pupils safe. Governors understand your checking procedures when you recruit staff, and they maintain thorough oversight of this area of work. You carefully check records from other countries for those staff who have previously worked overseas. Pupils told me that they feel safe in school, including on the playground. Leaders' detailed records show examples of cases where they have helped pupils get the extra support that they need at an early stage. Leaders work well with partner agencies, including the police, to make sure that the concerns that staff raise are fully investigated. The parent support adviser also gives additional support to families when it is needed, and the school signposts parents to additional crisis and support services when necessary. Leaders have robust procedures for checking that pupils who are absent from school are safe. For example, you and the parent support adviser often make home visits to check on this.

### **Inspection findings**

- Pupils' attainment at the end of each key stage has been variable in recent years. Leaders recognise that the recently introduced mathematics scheme has not been evaluated quickly, in the early stages of implementation, to gauge how well it is working. In my conversations with pupils in lessons and meetings, they told me that they sometimes find mathematics lessons boring and repetitive. Work in pupils' books and learning that we observed demonstrates that pupils are not consistently given sufficient opportunity to use and apply their skills to problem-solving activities. In some lessons, the most able pupils spend too long waiting when they understand, have finished and are ready to move on.
- As a result of teachers' high expectations of pupils' conduct, classrooms are calm and orderly. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and take pride in their work. In lessons, teaching assistants support pupils with additional needs effectively. Staff are well trained in helping pupils calm down when they are getting angry, and rates of repeated exclusion are reducing. The parent support adviser runs special therapy groups to help pupils feel happy and ready to learn. Pupils are proud of the responsibility that they are given to help resolve conflicts between their peers. Of the 19 parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View, three parents commented anonymously that they were unhappy with the school's behaviour management strategies. During my visit I found no evidence to support this view. Indeed, pupils themselves told me that they feel safe and that they believe there is no bullying in their school.
- Nine parents spoke highly of the good teaching that their children receive, including in the early years. One parent said that 'this is a brilliant school', and another said that 'the teachers are lovely and do a good job'. Teachers and teaching assistants give extra help to children entering Reception with lower than typical starting points in phonics so that they catch up quickly. Leaders monitor the effectiveness of these sessions and can show the difference that this extra

help makes to children's outcomes in communication, language and literacy.

- Governors have made substantial financial investments in staffing to provide extra support in learning and attendance across the school. Governors' and leaders' self-evaluation is accurate, and they have identified the barriers that some pupils have to learning. Governors know how additional funding such as the pupil premium is spent, but they have not evaluated the impact that this has on disadvantaged pupils' progress. This means that governors can't be sure that the things leaders are doing are really making a difference for disadvantaged pupils. Governors need this information to hold leaders to account and to help them make the right spending decisions.
- The school has tried hard to improve pupils' attendance since the last inspection. Absence rates are declining and getting closer to the national average. Individual and class rewards are given for good attendance and are celebrated in assembly each Tuesday. Leaders recognise that the cost of bus fares can be a barrier for families who live further away from school. The school funds some breakfast club places to help offset the transport costs for families. You closely scrutinise any requests for holidays to be taken in term time. The parent support adviser works well with partner agencies when parents' personal circumstances make it difficult for them to get their children in to school.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- review the impact of the new mathematics scheme to ensure that all pupils, particularly the most able, make the rapid gains in learning of which they are capable
- sharpen their monitoring and evaluation of the support provided for disadvantaged pupils to ensure that they make strong progress
- continue to improve pupils' attendance, especially for persistent absentees, and work with families to reduce the number of holidays taken in term time.

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

Yours sincerely

Tracey Ralph  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, you and I observed lessons together in all key stage 2 classes and in Year 1. Pupils' work from classes across the school was scrutinised alongside senior leaders, including children's records of achievement, known as 'learning journeys', from the early years. At leaders' request, pupils' work from the previous academic year was also reviewed. Meetings were held with you and the deputy headteacher, subject leaders, the chair of governors, administrative staff, lunchtime staff and the parent support adviser. Various documents were scrutinised, including the school improvement plan, the pupil premium strategy, governors' meeting minutes and the school's monitoring records. I met with a good number of pupils in lessons, on the playground, in the dining room and in a more formal meeting. I also listened to several pupils read. Safeguarding documents were reviewed, including behaviour and attendance records. The responses to Ofsted's questionnaires from 11 staff and seven pupils were considered. The 19 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View, were also taken into account along with comments made personally to me by several parents delivering their children to school at the start of the day.