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Mr Stuart Richardson
Headteacher
Skidby Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
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Dear Mr Richardson

Short inspection of Skidby Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 24 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 in February 2014.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

You have made significant changes to many aspects of the school and show a real commitment to moving the school forwards. You have also formed good links with the local community. You have begun to support other staff to take on new leadership roles and they now have time to carry out their duties. It is clear to me that you know the pupils well and work closely with staff to identify their needs and provide them with support. However, some of the actions you have taken to improve the school have not yet had a chance to improve outcomes for pupils, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Parents are supportive of the school and say that their children enjoy learning. They feel that the teachers provide good support for their children and that the children are safe. Pupils are well behaved. Their behaviour around the school is good and they are keen to join in discussions within the classroom. Pupils support each other well in lessons and, from the earliest age, they listen carefully to instructions and focus on their work. Pupils say that they enjoy lessons. Adults have positive relationships with pupils and lead by example. They display the manners and respect that they expect.

During the last inspection, Inspectors identified that leaders should ensure that the quality of teaching is at least good by identifying any weak teaching and providing

opportunities for teachers to share good practice within school. There have been significant changes to staffing since the last inspection. Since your appointment as headteacher, you have formed good links with a local school that have provided opportunities for staff to learn from one another. Teachers now have time to look at work with colleagues from other schools and check their own judgements about pupils' work. Staff appreciate this support and feel that it has helped them to improve their teaching. However, when we watched lessons and looked in books, we found that teachers do not always plan lessons well enough to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Sometimes, staff are unaware that pupils need further support or challenge within lessons. This means that, sometimes, the work they complete does not meet their needs.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have worked hard to ensure that all safeguarding requirements are fit for purpose. You and your staff team place a high priority on ensuring that pupils are safe and their welfare is protected. The checks you make when recruiting staff are thorough. New staff are given training as soon as they enter the school so that they are aware of the school's safeguarding procedures. You provide a broad range of training for staff and ensure that all statutory training is up to date. Leaders provide staff with regular safeguarding updates so that they are kept aware of the latest guidance on dealing with national issues. Governors provide leaders with challenge and visit the school to check that everyone adheres to the agreed procedures.

Pupils are aware of who they can talk to, should they have any concerns. You have planned opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe through lessons and assemblies. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that staff will act quickly, should they have any concerns. Pupils say that behaviour around the school is good and that instances of bullying are rare.

Inspection findings

- Published outcomes for children in the early years indicate that, in recent years, the proportion reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception has been well below the national average. In 2017, only half of the pupils reached a good level of development. During the previous inspection, inspectors found that the quality of teaching in the early years foundation stage (EYFS) needed to improve so that it matched that found in other phases of the school. They also found that the activities planned for the outdoor area did not match the quality of those planned in the classroom. Therefore, I wanted to find out what leaders have done to improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement by the end of EYFS.
- Children enter the school with skills that are broadly typical for their age. In 2018, outcomes improved and the proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development was in line with the national average. The classroom environment is well organised and children are encouraged to develop their independence. Children work well together, talking about their activities and helping each other

to solve problems. For example, two boys spent time planning and then building a hedgehog shelter to keep hedgehogs warm in the Autumn. Teachers share information with each other when children join the school so that they are aware of their individual needs. Leaders check children's progress throughout the year and use this information to adapt the activities they plan.

- However, when we visited the early years, we found that the activities planned did not meet the needs of different groups of pupils. There are a range of abilities evident in the classroom, including pupils who are in Year 1. Often, activities in the classroom lacked a clear purpose or did not provide sufficient challenge for pupils. The outdoor area has not yet been fully developed despite this being an area for improvement identified in the previous inspection. While the outdoor environment provides opportunities for children to experience a broad curriculum, again, some of the activities planned lacked purpose or challenge. When adults worked with groups in the classroom, they were not able to support or extend learning in the outdoor area. This meant that children who were outside lost focus and did not always carry out activities appropriately. Despite improved outcomes in 2018, you recognise that improving the quality of provision in the early years remains an area for development.
- Published outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 indicate that very few pupils have reached the higher standards in recent years. Published outcomes for pupils in key stage 2 improved in 2018 and were above the national average. I wanted to find out whether teachers provide sufficient challenge to enable more pupils to reach the higher standards in key stage 1 and sustain the successes of 2018 at the end of key stage 2.
- When we visited lessons, we found that some tasks that teachers plan provide appropriate challenge for pupils. For example, pupils in Year 6 grappled with a difficult task, attempting to identify mistakes in calculations using factors of numbers. However, we also found that sometimes tasks do not provide sufficient challenge for all groups of pupils. We observed occasions when adults were not aware that pupils needed to be extended. Consequently, pupils spent too long doing work that was too easy. When we looked at mathematics books, we recognised that the most able pupils were not always sufficiently challenged. Sometimes, work is not planned carefully enough to meet their needs. Provisional outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 indicate that more pupils reached the higher standards in 2018. Despite this, work needs to be done to ensure that these improvements are sustained.
- You have recognised that the planning of subjects other than English and mathematics needs to be reviewed. You have started to provide teachers with the information they need to plan lessons in a range of curriculum subjects. However, this work is not yet complete. Curriculum plans do not yet enable teachers to plan activities that meet the needs for the range of year groups they have within their class. When we looked at books, we found that work did not provide appropriate challenge for pupils of differing ages in the class. For example, the work planned for Year 6 pupils in history, was the same as that planned for Year 4 pupils. The leadership of subjects other than English and mathematics is developing. You correctly recognise that making sure that the curriculum is well planned and well led is an important area for improvement.

- I wanted to find out what leaders have done to improve the teaching of mathematics. Published outcomes showed that pupils made slow progress across key stage 2 in recent years. Too few pupils reached either the expected, or higher, standards.
- You have taken clear steps to support teachers to improve the teaching of maths. The opportunities you have provided for adults to learn, from colleagues beyond the school, have helped them to develop their subject knowledge. Teachers use questioning effectively to encourage pupils to justify their answers. You have reviewed your calculation policy and this provides teachers with more clarity about the approaches they should teach. As a result, we watched pupils using a range of approaches to explain their answers. For example, pupils in Year 3 drew images to reason why they thought some calculations were incorrect. Pupils' books show that they have more opportunities to use their number skills to solve problems. Provisional outcomes improved at both key stage 1 and key stage 2 in 2018 and were above the national average. However, examples of pupils' work show that, sometimes, the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. This remains an important area to address so that the improved outcomes in 2018 are sustained.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- children in the early years have opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge more fully by planning more effectively for the use of the outdoor area
- the activities that are planned for children in the early years have a clear purpose and provide sufficient challenge for all pupils
- teachers use assessment information carefully to plan activities that provide enough challenge for all groups of pupils, especially for the most able, including in subjects other than English and mathematics
- teachers respond more effectively to the changing needs of pupils within lessons so that pupils receive additional support or challenge when needed
- the planning of subjects other than English and mathematics is organised so that pupils build upon their learning in previous years.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of York, 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 explained my lines of enquiry. I also met with members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, the subject leader for mathematics and the designated safeguarding leader. I considered the 26 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View and four responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils. We visited classes together in the early years, key stage 1, and key stage 2. We observed pupils' behaviour in lessons 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 statutory requirements on the publication of specified information.