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Dear Mrs Coleman

Short inspection of Pinchmill Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 30 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 September 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 provided strong, effective leadership which has led to the development of the school. You know the school extremely well, have high expectations of yourself and your staff and are determined to achieve the best possible outcomes for every pupil. You are supported well by your assistant headteacher and governors, who are ambitious to provide the best possible education for pupils.

You and your senior leaders have successfully managed a number of necessary changes over a relatively short period of time. When the school became a primary school in September 2017, you sought expert advice from the local authority and a number of local primary schools. As a result, the conversion to become a primary school was a smooth process.

The school provides a happy and vibrant learning environment for its pupils. Pupils are very well mannered and courteous towards visitors and one another. The school creates a family atmosphere, and pupils told me that they get on well with their teachers. I observed pupils enjoying their lunchtime, playing games and interacting well with members of staff in a safe and secure environment.

During visits to classrooms, pupils engaged well with their learning and worked hard. Pupils could confidently explain to me what they were learning and what they were aiming to improve. Teachers support pupils to improve their work in

line with the school's policy, which supports continuous improvement. Where teaching has not been effective in the past, you have taken appropriate steps to ensure that the quality has improved throughout the school.

Governors are well organised and appropriately curious. They understand their roles and responsibilities and use these to ensure that their work is sharply focused. For example, the governing body has supported you well during recent staffing decisions that have been made.

You have successfully maintained the school's strengths and addressed most of the issues presented in the previous inspection report. An accurate and robust assessment system provides useful information about how well pupils are achieving. Regular discussions between leaders and teachers enable you to provide effective support to ensure that pupils make better progress. However, further work is required to ensure that a greater proportion of pupils identified as the most able achieve at the higher standards across the curriculum.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have created a culture for safeguarding pupils. You have provided necessary training and guidance to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in protecting pupils from harm. Good levels of vigilance and excellent relationships between staff and pupils ensure that any concerns are picked up and reported appropriately. You make robust checks when recruiting staff, and all adults are fully vetted to ensure that they are safe to work with children. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

Pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe are highly developed, especially in relation to road safety and online safety. This is because these aspects are taught effectively, and events such as curriculum days also contribute well. Pupils know how to protect themselves when using social media or the internet.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry to establish if the school remains good centred on the progress that pupils make across key stage 2 since the school became a primary school. You worked closely with the local authority and local schools to establish robust tracking systems to monitor the progress of pupils closely. As a result, you and your staff have a comprehensive understanding of each pupil's individual needs. Consequently, you were able to inform me of the strategies that you have adopted. For example, the change in mathematics scheme has had a positive impact on pupils' mathematical understanding.
- During our time looking at pupils' workbooks at key stage 2, it was clear that many are making strong progress. You have well-established systems so that pupils can explain their understanding and develop their key skills to a high standard in a range of subjects. Pupils at Pinchmill Primary are well prepared for

the next stage of their education by the time they leave Year 6.

- However, not all pupils are being given tasks that challenge them sufficiently to make the progress of which they are capable. You agreed that teachers need to match tasks more closely to the ability of their pupils, particularly in the case of the most-able so that they consistently make strong progress.
- My next line of enquiry focused on teaching at key stage 1. Current teaching is strong. Skilful questioning is a key driver in the positive progress that pupils are making. Teachers provide pupils with questions that not only allow them to explain their reasoning but also provide them with time to respond. The school has addressed the previous weaknesses in teaching and has ensured that current teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. Small cohort sizes mean that there will be fluctuations in results. However, progress in books shows that current teaching is strong over time.
- My third line of enquiry centred on the school's curriculum. You have ensured that the curriculum is planned well. The curriculum supports the mixed-aged classes well. Your curriculum approach is engaging and supports pupils' interest and development. For example, the recent work on bridges by a retired engineer aided the development of pupils' technology skills extremely well. You and your staff ensure that the curriculum comes to life. Pupils are excited by the school trips to local museums and nature reserves.
- Subject leaders are proactive in monitoring and provide effective support and training for colleagues where appropriate. Pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum that is exciting and develops key skills in order for them to move to secondary school adequately equipped. However, opportunities to embed and apply these skills across the curriculum are not used fully. For example, pupils are taught punctuation well but are not regularly encouraged to use their skills in longer pieces of writing in other subjects.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils are provided with the challenge they need to make strong progress
- teachers provide more regular opportunities for pupils to practise and apply skills taught in English and mathematics across the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Joseph Figg
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke with you and your subject leaders, school governors and a representative from the local authority. I spoke to a group of pupils and individual pupils around the school.

We made visits to classrooms to observe pupils' learning and took a learning walk around the school. We also looked at pupils' books across a range of ages and abilities as well as information from the school's assessment system.

I scrutinised a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, current information about pupils' progress and attendance information. I evaluated safeguarding referrals and child protection records, including the single central record. I also looked at the school's website.

In addition, I took account of 20 responses to the Parent View online survey and 18 free-text comments from parents.