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Mrs Rona Pryme
Executive Principal
Skegness Infant Academy
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Dear Mrs Pryme

Short inspection of Skegness Infant Academy

Following my visit to the school on 6 November 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 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. Since your appointment in September 2016, you have brought about improvements in the quality of education and in outcomes for current pupils. Working closely with the deputy principal, who was appointed in September 2017, you have ensured that staff share your strong commitment and drive for continual improvement. Middle leaders told me how effectively they are trained and supported to do their jobs. They have enjoyed developing their roles and accepting the considerable responsibility that they are given for developing teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. They are now having a very positive effect on improving the school.

Senior and middle leaders, including governors, have a detailed and accurate view of the school. The regular meetings that you hold with teachers to discuss the attainment and progress of each pupil means that any pupil at risk of not doing as well as he or she could is identified. Any necessary additional support is provided either in class or through catch-up sessions. I saw one of these catch-up sessions in operation when some Year 1 pupils were being given additional help with their phonics learning. This session showed me one of the ways that the school is helping pupils to improve their reading.

The care that you and your staff have taken to ensure that the school provides an attractive and stimulating environment for children is evident throughout the whole building, and also in the outside areas. A particularly useful feature of classrooms is the good-quality guidance for learning provided for pupils across a wide range of

subjects. Good guidance is also provided to support pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

All the parents I spoke to hold the school in high regard and none were critical of any aspect of the school's work. Parents in the early years appreciated the improved links that have been made with them and said that they were effectively supported in helping their children to do well in school. They are particularly keen on the high-quality communication that takes place through an online app used by the school. Many parents told me how keen their children are to come to school, how much they enjoy lessons and how happy they are in school.

Pupils behave well, work hard and concentrate in lessons. As soon as they start in the Nursery, children are expected to behave well and do their best. These high expectations continue into the Reception Year and beyond. Throughout the school, pupils are keen to respond to the good-quality guidance that they receive from teachers and teaching assistants to help them improve their work and to understand things more clearly. Pupils act safely in lessons and around school and show respect for the safety of others. They are taught how to keep themselves safe online, and they enjoyed being introduced to the new e-safety cadets in the assembly that I observed. Rates of attendance were below average when you took over as principal. You have worked effectively with the education welfare officer and the school's family liaison worker to improve rates of attendance, and rates of attendance are now above average.

Over the last two years, you have worked effectively to improve the consistency of the quality of teaching and the use of assessment throughout the school. You have ensured that teachers assess pupils' learning accurately and staff have improved their understanding of how to analyse the performance of each individual pupil in their class. Consequently, staff have an accurate view of the learning of each pupil and are able to modify their teaching to meet the individual needs of pupils.

Over the last two years, children at the end of Reception, pupils in the Year 1 phonics screening check and pupils in the Year 2 national assessments have done well. Results have typically been in line with results attained nationally. These good results reflect the work put in by you and your colleagues to raise standards. The work I saw in pupils' books shows that current pupils are making good progress in their learning. You are rightly aware that some of the most able children are still not quite fulfilling their potential, particularly in writing. You are appropriately aiming to make teaching more demanding for the most able pupils in order to increase the proportion of pupils who attain greater depth in reading, mathematics and, particularly, in writing by the time they leave the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose and fully meet requirements. Records are detailed and of high quality. A culture of safeguarding where all staff in the school are well trained and fully understand their responsibilities for safeguarding is evident. You and your colleagues place great emphasis on pupils' welfare, and many

parents recognise this. The governing body and the Greenwood Academy Trust regularly audits safeguarding arrangements to make sure that they are strong through well-established and robust checks. The school works hard to identify potential risks at an early stage and takes any necessary action, including the full involvement of outside agencies, when appropriate.

Inspection findings

- Following your appointment, you quickly set about improving pupils' attainment throughout the school. For example, you have done much to ensure that reading has a prominent part in the school's curriculum. The attention paid to helping pupils to read well is evident. The rich environment for reading, including the good collection of books in the school library and around the school, helps pupils to develop a real interest in reading. Some of the pupils I spoke to told me about their recent visit to the Skegness library. I observed some effective teaching of phonics, and it is not surprising that pupils do well in the national phonics screening check.
- Middle leaders now take a stronger role in helping to continually improve pupils' outcomes. The improved sharing of leadership roles throughout the school has ensured that the school has very good capacity to continue to improve in the future.
- You have recently begun to concentrate on ensuring that teaching fully meets the needs of the most able pupils. This work has begun to bear fruit, and a larger proportion of pupils attained greater depth in their national curriculum assessments in 2018 than in the previous year. You are aware that there is more to be done, particularly in writing, to ensure that the most able pupils achieve their full potential.
- When I observed learning in the early years, it was evident that children, as soon as they arrive in Nursery, adhere to the school's high expectations that they sit quietly, behave sensibly and concentrate. They answer questions politely and are clearly happy in their well-ordered classroom. The quality of care for children is of a high standard. In Reception, children go about their work in a sensible manner and clearly enjoy their learning. The results attained in national assessments at the end of the early years indicate that provision is good and that children make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Pupils' behaviour and personal development were evaluated as outstanding at the previous inspection. The strengths identified at the time have been maintained. Pupils show consideration for others. They are polite and well-mannered and enjoy lessons and learning. You recognised that rates of attendance were below average when you took over in September 2016, and you set about tackling this. Attendance is much improved and persistent absence much reduced.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- increase the proportion of pupils attaining greater depth by the end of Year 2, particularly in their writing.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Roger Sadler
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Before and during the inspection, I analysed the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally. During the inspection, I evaluated the school's own records of pupils' attainment and progress. The executive principal and I jointly observed teaching and learning in classes. I also looked at past and current work of pupils of different abilities and compared pupils' work with the school's assessment records. A meeting was held with two members of the governing body. I also spent time with the executive and deputy principals. I analysed documents, including plans for the school's improvement and reports showing the school's view of its own performance. I looked at recent reports on the school's effectiveness, which were provided by the Greenwood Academy Trust. I met the school's education welfare officer, the trust's education director and senior education adviser. I evaluated the school's website. Safeguarding documents, policies and records relating to pupils' personal development, behaviour, welfare and safety, and attendance, were inspected. There were insufficient responses to the Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, to provide information, but I was able to ascertain the views of parents. I did this by analysing the results of the 81 returns to the academy's own survey of parents' views, undertaken in April 2018, and also by speaking to 51 parents of 72 children outside the school on the day of the inspection. Pupils' views were gathered through a pre-arranged meeting and informally around the school.