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Mrs Katharine Dews
Acting Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Dews

Short inspection of Lady E Hastings Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 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 September 2014.

This school continues to be good.

Since taking up your post as acting headteacher in September this year, you have undertaken a thorough review of the school's current performance. You have identified precisely the most urgent priorities to improve provision so that all pupils achieve as well as they can. You have established a new leadership team among staff to build capacity within the school to support sustainable improvement to raise pupil outcomes. Your high aspirations to do the best for pupils, and the community, are evident in the way that leaders have embraced the challenge to improve teaching and learning. You want to effect changes that benefit pupils' personal and academic development throughout the school. Leaders, including governors, have the skills and expertise to improve the school further. With highly effective support and challenge from the governors and strong commitment from staff, the school's aspirations to be outstanding in the future are realistic.

The school is a calm, orderly environment where pupils feel safe and happy. Teaching is good. Pupils say that teachers plan activities to make learning fun and interesting. They enjoy the many enrichment opportunities, for example visitors in school, sports clubs and provision for music, art and drama. Parents lend their support by organising fundraising and social events to extend pupils' personal development and deepen their awareness of their responsibility to others as they grow. With a high focus on ensuring that basic skills of literacy and numeracy are embedded well, pupils consistently achieve well. An increasing proportion of pupils are attaining at the higher standard throughout the school. Year 6 pupils are prepared well for secondary school.

School leaders know what is expected of them and your expectations of all staff are high. Your development plans are clear, precise and well measured. Staff are aware of

what they need to do to improve in their practice. One of the key issues identified in the previous inspection report, was to improve teaching, especially in writing. This key issue is still being addressed, but outcomes in writing, and indeed in other subjects, have risen with more pupils in 2018 achieving at the higher standard. You are planning for all staff to observe, and thus learn from, outstanding practice in other schools so that they take effective actions to strengthen their own practice. Since 2014, outcomes for pupils have improved, but with often very small year groups, inconsistencies do arise depending on cohort profiles. However, you examine each pupil's progress closely and check that pupils have the help they need to make good progress. The second key issue in the last report was to develop the roles of middle leaders. With many of these leaders relatively new in their posts this September, this is work in progress. You are providing good opportunities for them to undertake relevant training to develop their skills. They speak very positively about their plans to monitor provision in their areas of responsibility and explain that they receive good support and guidance from you and other schools to strengthen their skills.

You have made your expectations of all staff clear and provide effective support to ensure that teachers achieve the targets you have set for them. Staff have access to effective training and support to improve their practice. Recent improvements in the teaching of writing through other subjects and greater focus on embedding the basic skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation are having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. Pupils enjoy learning and want to do well. They talk enthusiastically about writing poems and narrative pieces, for example around Remembrance Day and the stresses of war, and they are fascinated as to how the world has changed over time. Those studying Greek myths and Ancient Egypt have found exploring diverse cultures and traditions, as they said, 'amazing!' Older pupils speak most favourably about working with secondary-school teachers to extend their art and drama skills, and say that they love these subjects. Although much of the teaching does provide challenge, the most able pupils are capable of achieving more. Occasionally, pupils of all abilities start with the same tasks. Teachers and teaching assistants do not always maximise their time to work with pupils to help them achieve more. Leaders agree that this is an important next step to strengthen provision further throughout the school.

Parents are very positive about the school. They like the 'family feel' of the relatively small school and say their children are happy and feel safe here. Relationships throughout the school are very positive. Pupils behave well and work hard because they value learning. Their attendance is above the national average because they want to be in this school. Parents say that their children make good progress and are prepared well for secondary school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school takes its duty of care responsibilities very seriously. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and reviewed and revised regularly. Leaders are thorough in their pre-employment vetting to ensure that all staff are checked and cleared to work with pupils. Safeguarding training for staff and governors is up to date. All staff know to follow all agreed procedures systematically and to act promptly if they have any concerns. Staff and governors understand the school's procedures for first-aid training, risk assessments, site security and supervision of pupils in all circumstances. Staff ensure that

pupils know how to stay safe at all times, including outside school. They learn about the dangers posed by, for example, social media sites and the internet. A few pupils explained to me that, 'You should not put personal details and stuff on the internet because people might use this in the wrong way to hurt you'. Pupils learn about 'stranger danger', road safety, what to do in a fire and how to stay safe generally.

Pupils know what constitutes bullying and know to report any worries and concerns to teachers, other staff or to parents. They say that bullying does not happen at school and that if it did, teachers would deal with it straight away. Pupils treat others with kindness and respect and follow the good examples staff model. Staff know that some pupils experience particularly difficult issues in their lives from time to time. You do everything to support pupils' social and emotional needs with sensitivity, referring to other agencies if necessary.

Inspection findings

- Since the school's previous inspection, while pupils have continued to leave the school at the end of Year 6 at or above the standard expected for their age, there have been some inconsistencies from year to year. While the school's data for the results of tests and assessment in 2018 is positive, a few pupils failed to make the progress they should have at the end of key stage 2. Given that cohort sizes are relatively small and so each pupil represents a considerable percentage, I examined whether support for all pupils is effective in helping them make the progress they should, not just at the end of each key stage, but within each year group.
- Current school data and inspection evidence show that across the various year groups in key stages 1 and 2, almost all pupils have made at least good progress against their starting points. From examining work in pupils' books, teaching over time is good. Any pupil at risk of falling behind their target is identified quickly and receives prompt support. Leaders review pupils' progress closely and modify provision to plan for individual pupils' needs effectively. Even so, some pupils are not being sufficiently challenged in their learning and therefore do not reach the higher standards that they are capable of. However, you and your team have set targets this year that are much higher than previously and you have also made 'improving teaching' a high priority. The school's targets for 2019, while ambitious, are entirely realistic.
- While the proportion of children attaining a good level of development at the end of the early years has continued to increase, no child achieved at greater depth in 2018. With this in mind, I wanted to examine the accuracy of teachers' assessments in the early years, including of children's starting points and at the end of the Reception Year. I also wanted to check whether children are challenged sufficiently. Children who have joined the early years class this year entered with starting points typical for their age. There are some whose skills are below those normally found in some areas of learning, but equally there are some already working at a good level of development in their reading and number skills. It is clear that expectations of the most able children were not high enough last year. Inspection evidence confirms that teachers' assessments are rigorous and reliable. Staff have the necessary skills to assess accurately, moderating their findings by working with other schools to ensure that practice is consistent. My findings confirm that the most able children need to be challenged further so that more of them

are prepared well for learning in Year 1.

- An issue in the previous report in 2014 was to raise pupils' achievement in writing. Outcomes in writing, and particularly pupils attaining at greater depth, is a priority in the school development plan. Outcomes in writing are still not as high as outcomes in reading and mathematics for pupils in the school, with a lower number attaining the higher standard at the end of Year 6 in 2018. Teachers are now planning for pupils to write at length not just in English but across other subjects. This is helping pupils to practise their skills more frequently and giving teachers useful information as to where pupils need to improve. For example, where maybe some pupils may have been reluctant to write previously, they now undertake writing about Greek gods, life in Ancient Egypt and scientific reports on why keeping fit is good for their circulatory system, with relish. Pupils enjoy exploring new vocabulary, and 'borrowing' from their favourite authors devices that will make their writing more interesting. These strategies have increased pupils' interest and confidence to write independently. Occasionally, basic errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation, and sometimes poor handwriting and presentation, detract from the quality of the work pupils produce. This is often because they are not reminded to check their finished work before submitting it.
- Outcomes in science are no better in the school than those found nationally at the end of each key stage. We agreed to explore this and discussed what leaders are doing to increase the challenge in science. Through examining pupils' workbooks, we agreed that while the curriculum for science is covered well, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to apply what they already know about the world around them to test their ideas and theories. They are not adept at using previous learning in science to think for themselves, reason their thinking and design and devise their own investigations to test their predictions. For example, pupils have explored the properties of materials, but subsequently have not made the most rational decisions as to what material might be best to make a parachute or why some materials are better insulators or conductors.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching challenges pupils consistently in all subjects and all key stages and that teachers have higher expectations of the most able pupils across the school, including the most able children in the early years
- teachers encourage pupils to apply what they know from previous learning, when solving problems or devising investigations in science and other subjects, in order to become more confident, competent independent learners
- pupils are encouraged to check their work for careless errors and poor presentation before submitting it as finished
- teachers and teaching assistants are deployed to maximum effect in all classes at all times to accelerate progress among all groups of pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer or equivalent of the Brigshaw Learning Partnership, the director of education for the Diocese of

York, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leeds. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and all your staff, the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. I met with a representative from the Brigshaw Learning Partnership and with your phase and subject leaders, and other staff with specific responsibilities. We discussed your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and I examined the evidence therein. I reviewed documentation relating to pupils' achievement, the school development plan, safeguarding checks and policies and procedures. I observed pupils around the school, including in the playground and in classes. Together with you and on my own, I visited all classes and discussed these observations with you and your colleague from the Brigshaw Learning Partnership. I looked at many pupils' books, spoke to several pupils about their work and listened to some of them read. I took into account the responses of the 38 pupils who submitted the online questionnaire from Ofsted and met with pupils to get their views of the school. I spoke with a number of parents at the start of the day to seek their views about the school. I also took into account the 14 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, the school's own survey of parents' views from earlier this year, and the 15 free-text messages submitted by parents to Ofsted. I also considered the 12 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.