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7 December 2018

Mrs Victoria Johnson  
Headteacher  
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Monks Road  
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Lincolnshire  
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Dear Mrs Johnson

### **Short inspection of Lincoln Monks Abbey Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 21 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 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.

Through your strong and determined leadership you have continued to improve the school. You and the governors are committed to leading an inclusive school where all pupils are welcomed and make good progress. You are ably supported by your deputy headteacher and a team of dedicated senior and middle leaders. You have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. Many pupils join the school at different times throughout the year. Your improvement priorities reflect the needs of different cohorts of pupils.

You provide pupils with a well-cared-for and stimulating learning environment. Pupils are happy and enjoy learning at Lincoln Monks Abbey. They told me about the many extra-curricular activities that they take part in. Pupils also shared examples of the roles that they play within their school community, such as eco-warrior and online safety officer. Pupils are polite, friendly and thoughtful in their manner. You also engage parents in their children's learning by offering shared learning experiences. Most parents and carers are very supportive of the school.

You work collaboratively with other schools and make strong use of teaching partnerships to share effective practice. In doing so, you improve the quality of teaching and leadership throughout the school. All staff who responded to Ofsted's survey said that they are proud to be members of the school community. Teachers and teaching assistants work in harmony and with enthusiasm to provide pupils with

interesting and engaging learning experiences. Pupils are keen to take part in learning and work well together. Teachers use questioning skilfully to check on pupils' understanding and, increasingly, to deepen pupils' thinking.

Pupils have continued to make good progress throughout the school since the last inspection. Children in the early years continue to make strong progress. A higher proportion now reach a good level of development. Over time, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the national Year 1 phonics screening checks has also remained in line with the national average.

The members of the governing body bring a range of skills and experience to their roles. They know the school well and fulfil their responsibilities conscientiously. Governors have a good understanding of the actions that you take to improve pupils' progress. They validate the wealth of information that you share with them through regular visits to the school.

You have taken effective action to improve the areas identified at the school's last inspection. You were asked to ensure that teachers set work that is challenging enough for pupils to achieve their best. You have reorganised how lessons are structured. This has created more opportunities for different groups of pupils to be challenged in their learning. Alongside this, teachers plan tasks that are better matched to pupils' needs. Both the most and least able pupils make consistently good progress and reach standards similar to the national averages for these ability groups.

Inspectors also asked you to improve the quality of teaching by making it clear what teachers expect pupils to learn. Pupils now know what their learning objectives are. This was evident in the lessons that I visited and in pupils' workbooks. Pupils could also explain to me the purpose of the tasks that they were completing. You have also reviewed and amended the school's marking and feedback policy. Pupils spoke positively about the guidance that teachers offer to help them improve their work. They also explained that sometimes this involves being set more difficult tasks, which helps them to learn new things.

During the inspection, we discussed the steps needed to improve the school's effectiveness further. The new programme in mathematics does not yet meet the needs of some groups of pupils. In addition, opportunities for pupils to explain their mathematical understanding are not yet fully embedded. In reading, boys do not routinely make as much progress as the girls.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You ensure that safeguarding throughout the school has a high profile. Leaders have carried out all the necessary checks on the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children. You and your experienced safeguarding team keep staff well informed about safeguarding matters. Staff are vigilant and caring in their daily routines. They understand, and make effective use of, the school's procedures for reporting any concerns where a

pupil may be at risk.

You have strong relationships with other agencies and access any extra support that pupils or their families may need. Pupils told me unanimously that they feel safe in school. They explained that this is because adults are around to look out for them and that they are taught how to keep themselves safe. Pupils understand the different forms of bullying and racism. Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, said that their children feel safe.

### **Inspection findings**

- Pupils' progress in mathematics at key stage 2, although good over time, has seen a little variation for different cohorts of pupils. Comparisons with national averages are often skewed, because many pupils join the school at different times of the school year. When pupils complete most of their education in the school, progress is consistently good. This includes the high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Leaders are not complacent about the good progress pupils make in mathematics and have taken action to improve pupils' progress further. The new mathematics teaching programme is proving to be popular with pupils. Teachers provide pupils with a range of resources to structure their learning and ensure that pupils apply their mathematical skills to solve problems. Pupils are also developing a better understanding of how they arrive at their answers. This is not yet, however, helping pupils to reach a greater depth in their learning. The progress made by some groups of pupils is hindered because the prescribed activities are sometimes too difficult or insufficiently demanding.
- Pupils typically make good progress in reading. In 2018, however, pupils' progress in reading by the end of key stage 2 had dipped. Leaders have taken action to improve pupils' reading. They have involved pupils in increasing the school's supply of reading books. Pupils now enjoy reading on a daily basis. Guided reading lessons are more focused on developing pupils' specific reading skills. The pupils I listened to reading were fluent and confident. They were able to explain to me what they had read and showed a firm understanding of the stories that they were reading.
- Leaders have also identified that pupils' vocabulary is not broad enough to make accurate inferences about the texts they are reading. In all learning opportunities, teachers now draw out specific words to expand pupils' knowledge. Pupils showed me examples of their work where they had looked up the meaning of the words that they had not understood.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Leaders use the pupil premium funding particularly well to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well in the Year 1 national phonics screening checks. Sometimes, however, disadvantaged pupils join the school towards the end of the key stage and gaps between their attainment and the national averages do not close in this time. To improve this, leaders provide all disadvantaged pupils with an adult mentor and a targeted programme of

support.

- Historically, the boys have not made as much progress as the girls. Leaders have adopted alternative teaching approaches that motivate the boys more in their learning. The boys I spoke with felt confident about, and well supported in, their learning. During observations, boys were keen to take part and were articulate when answering questions. They displayed a good understanding of the activities they were completing. The school's assessment information shows that more boys, currently in the school, are making similar progress to the girls. This is not yet, however, consistent across all year groups in reading.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they review and adapt the new mathematics programme to better meet the needs of different groups of pupils
- teachers further develop pupils' reasoning skills in mathematics and increase the proportion of pupils who reach a greater depth in their learning
- they increase the proportion of pupils who make strong progress in reading, especially the boys.

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

Yours sincerely

Vondra Mays  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I discussed leaders' self-evaluation of the school, and shared my key lines of enquiry. I held meetings with you, the deputy headteacher, a range of staff and members of the governing body. With you, I observed pupils' learning in several lessons.

I observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around the school. I spoke with pupils informally and met formally with a group of pupils. I also listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 read and examined samples of pupils' work.

In addition, I considered a range of documents. These included the school improvement plan and records relating to pupils' progress, attainment and attendance. I considered the parents' responses to Ofsted's online survey, as well as pupil and staff survey responses. I reviewed the school's safeguarding practices. The school's website was also checked to confirm whether it meets the

requirements on the publication of specified information.