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Mrs S Hay
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Hay

Short inspection of Langwathby CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 18 December 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 November 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 and senior leaders have created improvement plans that contain well-focused actions. Your evaluations of their effectiveness are precise and relate to pupils' outcomes. Leaders and governors share your ambition to ensure that pupils experience a broad and balanced education that allows them to develop as well-rounded young people. The school's Christian ethos is strong. Pupils are respectful of others, showing kindness and patience towards one another.

Governors are proud of the school's achievements, particularly over the past two years. They have a firm understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and use their broad range of skills to good effect. They contribute to the vision and direction of the school because they are well informed and ask challenging questions.

Parents and carers are happy with their children's education. Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and parents spoken to during the inspection, talked favourably about their children's experience of school. One comment summed up the many positive ones: 'Langwathby School has helped my child in everything they do. Their confidence has improved so much and that is all because of the teaching staff and teaching assistants.'

Pupils feel well cared for and behave extremely well in lessons. One comment from a pupil, typical of the others, included: 'It's a nice school. We all get on and teachers make sure that if we can't do something, we get taught how to.' Pupils enjoyed the recent work

on resilience led by you and recognise how this is having a positive impact on enabling them to tackle more challenging tasks.

At the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve the outdoor environment in the early years. Staff use the outdoor area thoughtfully to support children's learning and to challenge them appropriately. The effective use of the outdoor learning environment enhances their literacy, number and social skills well. As a result, they have plenty of opportunities to develop their confidence while having fun and learning. Leaders were also asked to improve outcomes in mathematics as another area for improvement. We agreed to look at this as part of the inspection.

During the inspection, we discussed the next steps required to enable the school to improve further. Over the past year, you have developed the performance of subject leaders who are new to their role. However, it is currently you who leads much of the work to evaluate the impact of activities on bringing about improvement. You are developing the skills of some subject leaders to ensure further improvement in the areas that they lead. However, it is too soon to measure their impact on pupils' progress, especially that of the most able pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Procedures for recruiting staff meet statutory requirements and staff are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding. There is a culture of safety around the school. This is strengthened by the caring relationships between staff and pupils. Leaders and staff give full attention to the care and protection of pupils. Your vigilance regarding the support of vulnerable pupils is a strength. Leaders are instrumental in contributing to the safeguarding of these pupils through effective relationships with external agencies.

All parents responding to the Ofsted survey felt that their children are safe at school. Pupils with whom I spoke agreed with this. They said that falling out among pupils is rare and is addressed quickly by staff, or they resolve situations themselves where possible. They also told me that adults teach them how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

Inspection findings

- We agreed several areas of enquiry for this inspection. The first of these was looking at the effectiveness of actions taken by leaders to improve outcomes in mathematics. Pupils spoke very enthusiastically about mathematics. All the pupils I spoke to told me it was their favourite subject. Pupils also enjoy the opportunities they have to solve mathematical problems and to explain their answers. This improvement has increased their confidence as mathematicians. For example, during the inspection, Year 1 pupils were developing fluency in addition and subtraction. These pupils were also able to select practical apparatus themselves to support their learning and solve the challenging problems.
- You have revised the teaching of mathematics during the past year to reflect the higher expectations. Teachers plan activities that meet pupils' needs well and challenge them

appropriately. Leaders provide effective training for staff and share good practice within the school and with other local schools. These actions have contributed to current pupils making strong progress in mathematics.

- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to apply their learning in mathematics across the curriculum, particularly in science. They work hard to make sure that there are opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills across the curriculum. This builds on what pupils already know and extends their knowledge and understanding further. For example, pupils' use of data-handling in science becomes more challenging each year. Similarly, work on direction and grid references in geography and orienteering reflects teachers' high expectations. Teachers promote the development of mathematical skills alongside subject-specific knowledge effectively.
- Next, we looked at the actions you have taken to increase the proportions of pupils who achieve at greater depth and the higher standard at the end of key stages 1 and 2. You have successfully raised expectations of what pupils can achieve through the training of staff. As a result, teachers' improved subject knowledge and their more effective use of questioning support most learning well. The work in pupils' books indicates that teachers are providing work which is beginning to challenge and extend pupils more effectively. Pupils I spoke with told me their work had become more challenging over the past year. However, there has not been enough time to measure the impact of these new strategies on pupils' outcomes in reading and mathematics at the end of each key stage.
- The last key line of enquiry celebrated pupils' progress in writing. Progress was significantly above the national average at the end of key stage 2 in 2018. Pupils are enthusiastic and write with imagination. For example, key stage 2 pupils' recent writing, about the Romans, is well structured and engages its audience. Through carefully thought-out topics, you provide more opportunities for pupils to apply the knowledge and skills they learn in English lessons in other subjects. The curriculum engages all groups of pupils through a wide range of opportunities to develop their writing further. For example, pupils in key stage 2 write reports of investigations in science accurately, using technical language such as 'axis' and 'hemisphere'. Pupils' topic work on Australia in lower key stage 2 also showed developments in use of vocabulary and writing stamina. In conversation with me, pupils spoke knowledgeably about what they had learned in these topics and said that they find writing about them enjoyable. Assessment information and pupils' work in a range of subjects show that their progress in writing continues to be a strength of the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they increase the proportions of pupils reaching the higher standard and achieving greater depth at the end of key stages 1 and 2 in reading and mathematics
- they improve the quality of leadership and management by developing the role of middle leaders to enable them to contribute more effectively to school improvement.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Carlisle, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's

services for Cumbria. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Hunter
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke with pupils about their work and school life, both formally and informally. I held meetings with you and also spoke with members of staff to discuss improvements in their areas of responsibility. I visited classrooms, jointly with you, to observe pupils' learning. I also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

I scrutinised pupils' work to evaluate their learning over time. I spoke with parents and took account of the 43 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, including 30 free-text responses. I also took account of the 12 responses to the online staff questionnaire and the 27 responses to the pupils' survey.

I looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, external reviews and information about pupils' progress. I also evaluated safeguarding procedures, including policies to keep children safe, safeguarding checks and attendance information. I also undertook a review of the school's website.