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Mrs Suzanne Scott
Headteacher
Ellison Boulters Church of England Academy
Sudbrooke Road
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Lincoln
Lincolnshire
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Dear Mrs Scott

No formal designation inspection of Ellison Boulters Church of England Academy

Following my visit to your school on 30 January 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This monitoring inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for inspecting schools with no formal designation. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was concerned about outcomes for pupils at the school.

Evidence

I scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. I met with you, the deputy headteacher and a range of staff. I met with five members of the governing body, including the chair.

I considered a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement, the latest assessment information, minutes of meetings of the governing body, and several external reports relating to the school's performance. I observed learning in lessons with you and the deputy headteacher and considered a wide range of evidence from the work in pupils' books. I spoke with pupils informally during lessons and I held a discussion with a group of pupils from Years 5 and 6.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

the school remains outstanding

safeguarding is effective.

Context

The school is a broadly average-sized primary school. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and of those who speak English as an additional language are much lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils included in the register of special educational needs is below average.

During our discussions, we focused on the decreased rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 in 2018. As a result of your detailed analysis, you had identified several key factors which led to this decline in standards. Over the past four years, there has been a greater degree of staff turnover than that which is typical for the school. There has also been some difficulty in recruiting replacement staff mid-way through the year. In the past, assessments at the end of key stage 1 were overgenerous for the group of pupils who reached Year 6 in 2018. These factors had a negative impact on pupils' progress. Standards across the rest of school, including at the end of the early years foundation stage, in the Year 1 phonics screening check and at the end of key stage 1, have remained consistently high and above the national averages.

During the inspection, I gathered a range of evidence to determine whether leaders and governors have taken effective action to address the key concerns and reverse the decline in standards at the end of key stage 2.

In our discussions, it was clear that leaders and governors have carried out a detailed analysis of the school's performance. Clear and incisive plans for improvement are in place. The positive impact of your actions is clear to see. Pupils in all year groups are making consistently strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. During our tour of the school, we observed highly effective teaching across a range of subjects. Pupils in all year groups show positive attitudes to learning as they engage in interesting activities that are well-matched to their needs and abilities. The quality of the work in pupils' books, across a range of subjects, is impressive. This clearly shows that pupils take pride in their work and that teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils.

The previous staffing issues have been resolved and the staff team is stable and of a consistently high quality. A number of staff across the school have additional responsibilities, such as being local authority moderators or through the school's work as an initial teacher training lead school. This brings benefits, such as enhanced training and staff expertise, resulting in a high degree of confidence in

the accuracy of teachers' assessments.

All of the school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet statutory requirements. In discussion, pupils confirmed that they feel safe at school and that bullying is very rare. Typical comments were, 'you can trust all the teachers if you have any worries' and 'what makes me feel safe is being with my friends'.

External support

The school is a single, 'stand-alone', academy. The school has a strong history of involvement with a wide range of partners. This includes membership of the Lincolnshire Learning Partnership and the Kyra Teaching School Alliance. The school is the lead school for the Lincolnshire Teaching School Alliance. The school also works informally with 'clusters' of local schools. This strong partnership work provides regular opportunities for leaders and staff to check the quality of the school's provision and to receive regular and up-to-date training.

The report from a recent 'peer review' carried out by a group of Lincolnshire headteachers confirmed that teaching, learning and assessment are highly effective, with no weaknesses noted.

Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 improve to be at least in line with national averages, in 2019.

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

Yours sincerely

Christine Watkins
Her Majesty's Inspector