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Mr Daniel Pilsworth
Headteacher
The John Harrox Primary School, Moulton
Broad Lane
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Dear Mr Pilsworth

Short inspection of The John Harrox Primary School, Moulton

Following my visit to the school on 9 July 2019, 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 your school was judged to be good in November 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, your staff and governors have high aspirations for the school, wanting every child to achieve the best they can. Together you have created a welcoming and inclusive school environment which reflects the values that the school promotes.

Although the school has undergone a period of staffing instability during this academic year, leaders with the support of the governing body and local authority have continued to improve the school. You have quickly appointed new subject leaders and ensured that they received training to enable them to be confident in their roles. The new leadership team is working effectively and has an accurate understanding of the school's areas of strength and those for improvement. There is strong capacity within the leadership team to improve the school further.

Pupils are proud of their school, enjoy their learning and attend every day. They are polite, respectful and behave well both in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel that they are challenged to do their very best. They told me that 'teachers get you out of your comfort zone to do things that you've not tried before'.

Pupils described the school as being a welcoming friendly place, and that new pupils are made to feel welcome and settle in quickly. They spoke with enthusiasm about the range of sporting activities that are provided and the many after-school clubs that they take part in. Pupils described how the residential visits that had been

organised for them had helped them to develop new skills and build their self-confidence.

Governors know the school well and are experienced in their roles. They are ambitious for the school and provide the leadership team with strong support and challenge. They check the work of the school regularly through visits to classrooms to observe learning, work scrutiny and consultation with pupils, parents and carers. Consequently, they have a good overview of the school. Governors demonstrate strong commitment to ensuring that the school continues to improve.

At the last inspection, leaders were asked to raise pupils' achievements by ensuring that teachers set pupils challenging tasks and activities and provide work that enabled pupils to deepen their understanding. This has been partially addressed, but there is still more to do. Children make a strong start in foundation stage achieving a good level of development which is in line with that achieved nationally. Standards have risen at key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics, but at key stage 2 there is still some inconsistency. Although attainment at the expected standard is in line with that achieved nationally in mathematics not enough pupils reach the higher standard. Standards in reading have also improved but are still not as high as the standards that pupils achieve in writing.

You were also asked to ensure that pupils developed a stronger understanding of the world around them and to deepen their knowledge of other cultures in modern Britain. This has been addressed successfully but leaders are keen to develop this further. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures through a wide range of curriculum activities. Termly 'passport days' help pupils learn about the culture and cuisine of a range of countries in Europe and across the world. Pupils also learn about different faiths and religious festivals in assemblies and in their religious education lessons. Pupils have also visited different places of worship as well as building strong links with the local church. Displays around the school reflect their growing awareness of different faiths and cultures preparing them fully for life in modern Britain.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted across the school. As a result, pupils demonstrate tolerance, understanding and respect for each other, and for other people. Older pupils willingly take on responsibilities as playground leaders, house captains and members of the 'Sports Crew', becoming positive role models for younger pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. As the designated safeguarding lead, you have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You ensure that all staff and volunteers are appropriately checked before they start to work with children.

You have ensured that all staff receive regular training and are knowledgeable about safeguarding. Staff know that they need to be vigilant and know how to

record and refer their concerns. Child protection issues are followed up carefully and records are stored securely. Vulnerable pupils are supported through a range of agencies.

Pupils told me that they feel safe in school. They feel that teachers listen to them and that there is always someone to talk to if they have a problem. They report that bullying is rare and that it is dealt with quickly when it happens. They are taught about e-safety and spoke knowledgeably to me about how to stay safe online.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have recognised the need to improve attainment and progress in mathematics and they have put in place a range of strategies to address this. The school has become part of a mathematics hub with other schools to share and develop good practice and a specialist mathematics teacher has worked closely with the school. Recent key stage 2 results show that these actions have had an impact in improving the number of pupils achieving the expected standard but were less successful in raising the attainment of the most able.
- Professional development for the new mathematics subject leader has developed his confidence to carry out his role. He has quickly identified some of the inconsistencies in teaching and that the attainment of the most able is not high enough. The mathematics mastery approach has been successful in raising standards at key stage 1 but is not yet fully effective in key stage 2.
- In the mathematics lessons where the mastery approach was strongest, teachers displayed strong subject knowledge and modelled new learning carefully. They insisted that pupils used correct mathematical vocabulary and challenged pupils to develop their thinking through skilful questioning. This deepened their understanding and consequently pupils made strong progress. Pupils were supported in their learning by skilful intervention by teaching assistants. This fostered their engagement and confidence in learning.
- In pupils' mathematics workbooks, there is evidence of strong progress being made. Pupils take care to present their work carefully and have pride in their work. However, the work set for the most able pupils is not always challenging enough and sometimes lacks variety. Consequently, the most able pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
- The literacy lead has introduced new strategies to develop pupils' early reading skills and reading comprehension. These have successfully raised attainment in reading at key stage 1. However, these are not yet established across the school and consequently they have not raised attainment in reading by as much in key stage 2.
- The school has undergone a period of staffing instability during this academic year. Although most parents are extremely positive about the school, this period of change has shaken some parents' confidence in the school. This was reflected in their comments on Parent View and in my conversations with them.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are set challenging work, particularly the most able, to ensure that all pupils make strong progress
- new initiatives to develop reading are fully embedded across all year groups to ensure that pupils' reading skills improve quickly
- new initiatives in mathematics are carefully evaluated to ensure that they have strong impact on pupils' progress, particularly the most able
- they develop greater parental involvement in the life of the school to strengthen their confidence in the work of the school and their children's learning.

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

Heather Hawkes
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, the assistant headteacher who has subject responsibility for English and the mathematics lead. I also met with three members of the governing body including the chair of governors and the vice-chair. I also spoke on the telephone with the local authority adviser. I visited all the classrooms with you, and we looked at pupils' work together. I spoke with pupils informally during lessons and breaktimes and formally during a group discussion. I also observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons. I examined a range of documents including safeguarding records and policies, information relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour and the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan. I considered the 212 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the 42 responses to Ofsted's free-text service. I also spoke with a small number of parents at the start of the school day and reviewed the 13 responses to the staff survey.