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Mrs Ella Besharati and Mrs Chris Boxall
Executive Headteachers
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Dear Mrs Besharati and Mrs Boxall

Short inspection of Kettlewell Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 10 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 the school was judged to be good in June 2015.

This school continues to be good.

Since the school's previous inspection, governors have appointed you both as co-executive headteachers to work at Kettlewell Primary and across the other three schools in the Upper Wharfedale Primary Federation. You and your governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Your self-evaluation is accurate, and the federation improvement plan is already bringing improvements to this school. Leaders successfully take opportunities to grasp the benefits of working across the federation. For example, specialist teaching in subjects such as physical education (PE), modern foreign languages and computing, delivered in other federation schools, enriches the curriculum. Working with their peers in other federation schools enhances pupils' personal development and welfare. Subject leaders working across the federation are increasing leadership capacity and improving leadership expertise. The introduction of federation arrangements, such as consistent assessment approaches, enables increased staff collaboration to develop the quality of teaching. Consequently, the leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection and is making effective use of the potential for further improvement provided by the federation.

Leaders and staff have sustained the strengths identified in pupils' behaviour found at the previous inspection. Pupils thrive in the caring, nurturing and inclusive ethos across the school. During the inspection, pupils conducted themselves in a calm, orderly manner. When we visited lessons together, I found there to be a positive learning atmosphere in which pupils worked diligently and cooperated well. The relationships between staff and pupils, and pupils and their peers, demonstrate

mutual respect. Pupils socialise well at playtimes and lunchtimes. Younger and older pupils mix well together. Older pupils keep a watchful eye for the younger pupils and provide help sensitively where required.

Leaders are well focused on tackling the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection of your school. They have provided opportunities for staff to learn from effective practice found in other federation schools and beyond. Recently introduced federation approaches to assessment are enabling teachers to plan to meet pupils' needs more effectively. Collaborative working with colleagues from other federation schools with the same systems enables teachers to check that their assessments are accurate. Federation leaders for early years, mathematics and English are all beginning to bring improvements in their areas of responsibility. However, there is more to do to fully develop their roles in checking for improvement following their actions.

The subject leader for English understands the priority for developing the quality of writing. He has taken effective action to improve the teaching of writing, including training teachers. Our review of pupils' books showed that there are clear improvements in pupils' work and generally books showed strong progress this year. However, your assessments show that few pupils in school are currently working at greater depth in writing. Your leader for English is currently researching approaches to address this, including visiting schools where there is effective practice which can be adapted to the needs of your school.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders, staff and governors give high priority to keeping pupils safe and there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders complete appropriate safeguarding checks for all staff, governors and volunteers to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. One of the executive headteachers and the safeguarding governor complete regular audits of the school's record of checks, known as the single central record.

Staff and governors receive regular and appropriate training. As a result, they know and follow the school's procedures to keep pupils safe. The school works effectively with other agencies to secure support for pupils and their families where needed. Parents' and carers' responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, show that the vast majority of parents who responded believe their children feel happy and safe at the school. The pupils whom I spoke to during the inspection were confident that if they had any concerns there are adults in school that they can rely on for support. They did not think that bullying happens in their school and think that pupils are well behaved.

Inspection findings

- Executive headteachers, the leader for English and staff are taking appropriate action to improve the numbers of pupils who are achieving greater depth in writing. Training for teachers and improvement to assessment and pupil progress

recording systems are helping to match work better to pupils' needs. Our review of pupils' books demonstrated the positive effect of this on pupils' learning. However, your analysis of pupils' attainment in writing shows that there is more to do to increase the numbers of pupils who achieve greater depth in writing in most year groups.

- Analysis completed by the subject leader for mathematics at the end of the last academic year identified that pupils' mathematical problem solving and reasoning understanding were not as secure as their number knowledge. She has provided training for teachers and improved resources to address this issue. This is beginning to bear fruit. Your records show that there are increasing numbers of pupils working at greater depth in mathematics. Furthermore, our review of pupils' books found that there are growing opportunities for pupils to complete problem solving and reasoning work, although this development is not fully embedded.
- The federation special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works well with parents, pupils and other agencies. Consequently, any pupils who require additional support to meet their learning needs or personal development have appropriate provision.
- Reception children settle well into their class and relate sensibly to one another and their Year 1 and Year 2 peers. Over time, Reception children are generally making secure progress from their starting points although, as in other areas of the school, their development of writing needs to improve further. Guidance from the federation leader for early years has helped to develop the learning activities for the Reception children. However, there is more to do to improve the numbers of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception so that they are better prepared to start Year 1.
- A revised attendance policy and determined approach to reducing pupils' absence levels have had a positive effect. Leaders provide parents with clear guidelines of the school's expectations and offer support where pupils' absence is high. Pupils' good attendance is celebrated on a regular basis. As a result, overall levels of pupils' attendance have improved and are close to that of similar schools nationally.
- Teaching assistants are generally supporting pupils' learning and behaviour successfully. However, occasionally, they sometimes miss opportunities to deepen pupils' learning or to engage Reception children with learning when they are choosing activities. While teachers have received training to develop their skills in teaching mathematics and writing, teaching assistants have not received this update. At times, this can limit the effect that they have on pupils' learning in these subjects.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- opportunities for the most able pupils to work at greater depth in writing continue to improve

- developments in the teaching of mathematics problem solving and reasoning are embedded
- subject leaders' oversight of their areas of responsibility across all phases of the school develops further
- the role of teaching assistants develops so that they can support pupils' learning more effectively
- improvements in early years continue, so that children accelerate their learning, and more are well prepared to start Year 1.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Reeves

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this one-day inspection, I discussed the work of the school with both executive headteachers, the federation SENCo and federation subject leaders for English and mathematics. My meeting with three members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body, provided me with additional information. I held a meeting with a representative from the local authority. I observed and spoke with pupils throughout the day and considered the six responses to the pupil survey. I considered school documentation, policies and information posted on the school website. I considered the 25 parents' responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the 13 free-text responses. I reviewed the seven responses to the staff survey. Alongside the executive headteachers, I visited both classes to observe the teaching of writing and mathematics. I looked at a sample of pupils' English and mathematics exercise books. I considered information relating to safeguarding, attendance, behaviour, exclusions and bullying.