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Andrea Revens
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Revens

No formal designation inspection of Hackleton CofE Primary School

Following my visit with Ged Philbin, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 11 March 2020, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This 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 aspects of the quality of education at the school.

Evidence

We spoke with subject leaders and visited lessons. We scrutinised the work in pupils' workbooks and listened to them read. We considered the views expressed through Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. We met with governors and considered a range of documents provided by the school. We observed pupils' behaviour during formal and informal parts of the day.

We scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding. We met with the headteacher and staff and spoke with parents and pupils.

Context

Hackleton CofE Primary school is a smaller-than-average sized primary school. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is small. A few pupils speak English as an additional language.

Senior leaders have been appointed since the previous inspection. There have been recent changes to the membership of the governing body.

Inspection findings

Leaders have brought about a renewed focus on high standards. They have developed an ambitious, broad curriculum. All staff and governors want pupils to be well prepared for secondary education. They want pupils to have a secure body of knowledge and skills so they can succeed in the next stage of their learning. Leaders have worked with staff to improve what pupils are taught. They have planned precisely what pupils need to know and the order in which they need to gain this important knowledge. They have made sure that these improvements are well considered. Staff conduct their own research about the changes that they want to make. Together, they discuss these new approaches before establishing what the right changes are.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Children in the Reception class get off to a brisk start learning phonics. They have plenty of chances to practise the sounds that they learn. Staff check carefully to see which sounds children can remember. Children who need extra help get it straight away and catch up quickly. Children listen to stories with attention. Teachers carefully choose stories that help children find out more about their topic of 'hot and cold'. Children spot different animals with delight. They can remember the names of narwhals and caribou.

Teachers make sure that pupils' reading books are just right. They check that pupils use their phonic knowledge accurately. Teachers carefully consider the order that pupils learn or revise sounds. Pupils make connections between the sounds they read and what they write. For example, pupils learned the sounds in 'slice' and 'knife' before writing instructions for making marmalade sandwiches.

The library is a busy hub of the school. Pupils thoroughly enjoy choosing new books and sharing recommendations with each other. They explain how they like being quizzed on what they have read. They are highly enthusiastic about the school's reward system for reading frequently. Pupils are motivated to read authors who are new to them and from different genres. They appreciate the demanding texts that their teachers introduce them to. They develop ambition to become better readers and challenge themselves. Pupils can explain and give examples of how this helps them to learn more information. They can understand increasingly difficult vocabulary. Pupils can recognise the undertones in passages of text.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. Pupils achieve well in mathematics throughout the school. However, leaders and teachers are not complacent. They have sought to make mathematics teaching even better. They have refined the curriculum so that pupils become highly fluent mathematicians. Teachers know precisely what pupils need to learn next. Pupils remember what they have learned before and can explain how this helps them. For example, older pupils can recall multiplication facts quickly, enabling them to work out ratios.

Teachers check the depth of pupils' understanding. They provide feedback to them so that misconceptions can be swiftly addressed. Teachers spot when pupils need the chance to revisit learned material. They make sure that pupils practise this. Pupils explain how this approach helps them to build on what they already know. They understand and use mathematical vocabulary in their explanations. Pupils say that work is demanding and they enjoy the challenge. Pupils understand how important mathematics is for daily life. They can explain how they use their knowledge to solve everyday problems. They think deeply, apply what they have learned and discuss possible solutions. Pupils in all key stages of the school are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

Staff are proud of the school's broad curriculum. They want pupils to gain a comprehensive knowledge of the world around them. Staff make sure that pupils learn important knowledge in the right order. Adults in the early years make sure that what children learn prepares them well for key stage 1.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge in geography. They have high expectations and have developed a rich and exciting curriculum. They have made sure that pupils build on what they learned before and check that they can remember it. Pupils develop a secure understanding of mapping skills. They use this to locate different countries. Pupils can recall what they have learned about continents and rivers. Pupils use technical language accurately in their explanations. For example, younger pupils explain that Kenya is hot because it is near to the equator. Older pupils understand how erosion and meanders are connected. Teachers challenge pupils to think more deeply and make connections between geographical features. These include animal habitats and human populations. Leaders check that the curriculum deepens pupils' knowledge.

Pupils are inspired by their learning. They listen attentively in class and are highly motivated to find out more. Pupils said that new pupils are welcomed. Pupils appreciate the lengths to which teachers go to make learning interesting and enjoyable. There are many opportunities available to pupils which enrich their development. An extensive range of clubs includes craft, art, ballroom dancing and a variety of sports. Pupils are proud of all the sporting events that they get to participate in.

Pupils feel safe in school and parents agree. Leaders have made sure that teachers can spot the signs that pupils might be at risk. They act quickly on any concerns. They meet with parents and carers to make sure that families are well supported. The school counsellor provides effective help for pupils and families. Leaders check that this is making a difference. There are strong links with external agencies, such as the school nursing service. Pupils say that bullying is rare. They learn how to pass on concerns to adults at the school through the 'blue butterfly' scheme. They can use the 'worry box' which is checked frequently.

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

Yours sincerely

Hazel Henson

Her Majesty's Inspector