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Mr Richard Bunn
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Dear Mr Bunn

Short inspection of Clarborough Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 September 2016, 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 December 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. This is a small school, where each pupil is known extremely well. Leaders and teachers work hard to make sure that pupils make good progress, feel safe and are happy. You believe in the importance of creativity to pupils and have ensured that there is a learning environment that promotes pupils' imagination and encourages their curiosity. Pupils said that they appreciate the 'time taken and the effort that their teachers make', so that they learn in such a positive space and with high-quality resources that stimulate their interest.

You are supported extremely well by a committed chair of the governing body and an expert group of governors. The governing body understands the school improvement priorities well and undertakes much work to monitor the progress against key actions. You and the governing body have entered into a partnership with the local 'family of schools', which provides useful opportunities for you to share resources and to work together on shared priorities.

You are aware of the progress that is made by each pupil. The most able pupils, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils have an individual plan of support and specialist help. You know a lot about how well each individual is doing. You acknowledge that you do not analyse and compare the performance of different groups of pupils thoroughly enough.

Inspectors at the previous inspection identified areas requiring further improvement and these included creating more opportunities to extend pupils' experience of different cultures. The curriculum has been adapted thoughtfully for each class, so that pupils' involvement and their knowledge are developed and broadened. Pupils particularly appreciate the range of learning experiences that are open to them and relish learning in science, history and lessons about the world and other people's faiths. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils study alternative forms of governance around the world, culminating in a visit to the Houses of Parliament. You continue to strive to make sure that you extend the opportunities that pupils experience, both within the school and in the community.

In 2014 and in 2015 pupils made good progress from their different starting points in key stage 1 and key stage 2. Disadvantaged pupils, including most-able disadvantaged pupils, achieved as well as their peers. The most recent information indicates that, in 2016, individual pupils made good progress from their starting points. Nevertheless, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics is too low.

In key stage 2 currently, a greater proportion of pupils are on track to be working at greater depth within expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics than previously. This includes most-able disadvantaged pupils. Leaders are aware that many of their pupils are hungry to learn and that their teachers must make sure each individual achieves at the levels they are capable of achieving. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 said that they thoroughly appreciated their school and their teachers. They said that 'every lesson is exciting!' These pupils are true advocates of the school.

Provision within the early years is good. The children make good progress and receive good support to achieve a good level of development. Parents are fulsome in their praise for the expertise and helpfulness of the staff and the early years leader.

Pupils enter key stage 1 with the phonics skills that they need in order to read with fluency. The small number of pupils who need to catch up receive specialist and effective help to do so. Much successful work is done to encourage a love of reading in all pupils.

Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are attending school more regularly than previously. Leaders are improving the way in which pupils' attendance is monitored. The response, if pupils are not in school, is swift. Contact with parents is good. You are pleased that more pupils are in school and are learning, but you are not complacent. You are currently conducting a review of attendance analysis and procedures because you want all of the pupils in school.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have made sure that there are effective systems in place to safeguard the health and well-being of pupils. In this small school, pupils are well known. Individualised plans are in place for those pupils with the most needs.

Issues are dealt with in a timely fashion and leaders work creatively and effectively with external agencies. All leaders, but particularly the special educational needs coordinator, work successfully with parents and the communication with them is good. As a result, parents said that they appreciated the lengths that leaders and staff were prepared to go to ensure the well-being of their children.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders manage the recruitment of staff efficiently. The senior leader in charge of safeguarding has rigorous processes in place. All staff receive very effective training about how to keep children safe and have received the most recent updates. Leaders ensure that the safety of pupils is the business of all staff and their ways of working reflect this. For example, the supervisor of the breakfast club was keen to endorse this fact.

Pupils are emphatic about how safe and well cared for they feel. They appreciate very much the efforts to which their teachers go, in order that they attend a happy school. They said that the best thing about their school was the respect that they are given, that their teachers listen to their views and that these views are then acted upon.

Pupils described in detail the ways in which they keep themselves safe when using the computer in lessons and at home. Parents are well informed about this issue and have access to further information through the school's website. Pupils are taught sensitively about other risks that they may encounter, including ways that people older than them, or of the same age, may try to force them to behave in ways that are inappropriate or 'feel wrong'.

The behaviour system in school is well understood and is applied consistently. Pupils proudly discussed the classroom 'golden rules' and the 'traffic light system'; they said that these systems worked and that rarely was their learning interrupted by the poor behaviour of other pupils. Bullying is unusual. It is dealt with promptly and effectively by teachers, if it takes place. All pupils said that they had very many people in school to whom they would go if they had a problem, or if they needed someone to talk to for advice.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have dealt with the areas for improvement that inspectors identified at the previous inspection.
- Pupils experience a varied curriculum and enjoy many opportunities to learn outside of the classroom and in the community.
- Leaders have created a culture within the school of high expectations and

high levels of support. Individual pupils at key stage 2, particularly most-able pupils and most-able disadvantaged pupils, are working at a greater depth within the expected standard. You have made it a priority to increase the progress that they make.

- Pupils attend school more regularly than they did last year. The processes in place to monitor the attendance of individual pupils are more effective and communication with parents is swift. We agreed that you do not currently analyse the attendance of groups of pupils sufficiently well. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities attend school more often, but their attendance still needs to improve.
- Provision within the early years is effective. A larger proportion of children than the national average achieve a good level of development and progress to key stage 1 with the skills that they need.
- More pupils than the national average achieve the required standard in phonics. The vast majority of pupils read well.
- In 2016, pupils made good progress according to their starting points in key stage 1 and key stage 2. You have recognised correctly that not enough pupils made good progress in writing. You have accordingly put plans in place to improve the pupils' writing.
- The special educational needs coordinator is highly skilled and effective. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive high-quality bespoke help, so that they succeed rapidly and want to attend school.
- The support of the governing body is good. The chair of the governing body is right to insist that any work undertaken in partnership with the family of schools helps to increase the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard for their age in writing.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- a greater proportion of pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2, particularly most-able disadvantaged pupils, achieve at the expected standard in writing
- the progress and attendance of groups of pupils is monitored more regularly.

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

Yours sincerely

Jayne Ashman
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

My inspection focused upon a number of key lines of enquiry. These were:

- whether the areas for improvement, identified at the last inspection, had been dealt with effectively
- if the number of pupils reaching the required standard in the phonics screening check has continued to improve
- if pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 are making strong progress from their starting points
- if pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils are attending school more regularly
- if the safeguarding procedures are effective.

During the inspection, I met with you and the chair of the governing body. I spoke with the bursar and reviewed safeguarding procedures and policies. I met with the special educational needs coordinator and the governor who oversees the progress and attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. At the start of the school day, I spoke with parents and observed pupils arriving at school. I observed pupils during their breakfast club and spoke with the leaders of this provision. I considered the views of parents posted on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. In addition, I considered a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, pupil performance information and pupil attendance information. I spoke formally with a group of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. You and I walked around the school at the start of the school day.

The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on the website.