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Miss Lisa Pearce
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Dear Miss Pearce

Short inspection of Wilby Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 29 November 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 October 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The last 18 months have been problematic for the school and it has been challenging for leaders to maintain an effective teaching team. As a result, there were times when you had to take responsibility for teaching Year 6. Despite your best efforts, the relatively high turnover of teachers had a negative impact on the standards achieved by some groups of pupils in Year 6.

Over the summer, you recruited well and in September 2016, three new class teachers and an experienced inclusion leader joined the school. In addition, an established and highly effective member of staff took up the post of assistant headteacher. This is a significant change in a small, four-class school and you and governors have managed it well. You have effectively inducted the new staff to the school and you are now working well with them to further develop the quality of their teaching and improve the progress made by the pupils. The continuing professional development of your staff and the effective future recruitment and induction of staff are key processes that will support the continuing improvement of the school and the outcomes achieved by pupils.

These appointments have also improved the leadership capacity of the school: you have more time because you are no longer teaching; your assistant headteacher has a very strong understanding of teaching and learning overall, and in mathematics in particular; and the experienced inclusion lead knows exactly what to do to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points and that those at risk of falling behind catch up. The effectiveness of the governing body has improved over the past 18 months and it is now effective. As a result, the leadership capacity of the school is good.

Following the last inspection, leaders have taken effective action to address the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report. You have ensured that assessments are accurate and consistent. This provides leaders with more reliable information to track pupils' progress effectively and hold teachers to account for the progress their pupils make.

You and teachers moderate assessments within school and with other schools. You have also provided teachers with a straightforward framework that sets out the curriculum expectations by year group. This helps staff to have a better understanding of age-related expectations and to use their assessment information to plan learning more effectively.

Governors are much more involved in evaluating and scrutinising pupils' progress than previously. This enables them to hold you and leaders to account for the standards achieved by pupils more effectively. However, overall, analysis and evaluation need to be sharper and more precise if leaders and governors are to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies and interventions they employ, in addition to the progress of particular groups of pupils (such as the most able) against national standards, accurately.

You have taken practical steps to enable pupils to engage in more energetic play at breaktimes, following your last inspection, including:

- providing separate breaktimes for key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils to maximise the space available for pupils to play in
- providing equipment such as balls and hoops for pupils to play with
- establishing pupil play leaders who organise the equipment and lead their peers in games.

Leaders further supplement this by providing before- and after-school sports clubs for pupils, delivered by external providers. There is also a friendship stop in the playground for pupils who need a friend.

You were also set the challenge at the last inspection of providing pupils with more opportunities to improve their knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity in Britain. You have successfully met this challenge and pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils were able to tell me about the different places, cultures

and religions they have learned about, in class and in assemblies. You achieved this by:

- revising the curriculum to identify clearly the opportunities to study a range of religions, cultures and places
- arranging visits and visitors to deepen pupils' understanding of different cultures and religions
- using 'drop-down days' (days when the usual curriculum is not taught) to facilitate whole-school learning about current affairs, religious festivals or significant events such as Remembrance Day
- using 'engagement days' at the beginning of a theme to excite and motivate pupils to learn about a range of cultures and localities.

There is a positive and friendly atmosphere to the school. Pupils and adults get on well with each other. Behaviour is good and pupils are confident that if someone were to misbehave, staff would deal with them well.

Safeguarding is effective.

You are clear about your role and responsibilities as designated safeguarding lead and you have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed. Consequently, staff know what is expected of them and pupils know whom they can trust and whom they can go to if they need help. You have ensured that all staff are well trained and up to date. Your work to inform staff of the implications of serious case reviews for their work is particularly noteworthy. Governors take safeguarding seriously and the lead safeguarding governor is well informed.

All pupils, parents and carers who spoke with me or responded to the Ofsted questionnaires reported that pupils feel safe and happy at school. Pupils told me how staff teach them to stay safe in school, in the outside world and online.

Inspection findings

- The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development by the end of the early years improved significantly in 2016 and was in line with the national figure. The children currently in the early years have made a good start to their Reception Year and are making good progress from their starting points.
- Although the proportion of pupils achieving the national standard in the phonic screening check was below the national average at the end of Year 1 in 2015, the vast majority of pupils had met it by the end of Year 2 in 2016. This is above the national average.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics were at least in line with the national figures at key stage 1 in 2016. Evidence from a sample of pupils' books and observing them in their classrooms indicates that pupils currently at school are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2016, including their progress and the proportion achieving age-related expectations in reading, writing, and grammar, punctuation and spelling, were close to the national averages. However, standards in mathematics were below the national figures.
- Evidence from a sample of pupils' books, observing them in lessons and listening to them read indicates that key stage 2 pupils currently at school are making stronger progress than in the previous year in reading, writing and mathematics. This is a view shared by most parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, who reported that their children are taught well and make good progress at this school.
- The appointment of effective teachers and the professional development leaders provide for them have supported the improvements in teaching this term. Teachers have an improved understanding of age-related expectations and this enables them to plan more effectively for pupils to make good progress. The feedback, both written and spoken, provided by teachers to pupils supports the pupils well. Pupils also provide feedback to teachers on how they think they are progressing, so that teachers can ensure that pupils' future learning meets their needs and is sufficiently challenging. Evidence from visits to a sample of classrooms shows that teachers have a good understanding of subject-specific language and that they use it accurately. This has contributed to the improved progress seen in pupils' books and in lessons, including in mathematics at key stage 2.
- The newly appointed inclusion leader has accurately reviewed the provision made for pupils who are at risk of falling behind or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. She has a good understanding of the measures leaders need to take to ensure that pupils catch up and has an effective plan to secure the required developments.
- The absence rates of disadvantaged pupils were among the worst 10% nationally in 2016. Leaders address this on an individual basis. They know who the families are with absence problems and employ credible strategies to improve attendance. Consequently, attendance has improved since September and is currently on track to be at least in line with the national average. However, leaders need to be more evaluative of the strategies they employ in order to know which are the most effective.
- Leaders and governors know the school well. The school self-evaluation summarises the standards achieved by the school and clearly identifies most of the areas that need to be improved, including the effective induction of new staff and staff new to their role, and embedding the improvements in governance. However, some areas for improvement are too focused on pupils achieving age-related expectations and do not place sufficient emphasis on pupils reaching the higher standard or working at greater depth.
- School leaders plan well to make the improvements identified in the school self-evaluation. The format of the plan is robust, sets out an achievable timeframe and clearly sets out who is accountable for implementing actions and their impact. The governors' role in evaluating the implementation and impact of the plan is also clearly set out.

- The school improvement plan is supported by the performance management arrangements. Leaders and governors have ensured that the school performance management arrangements are focused on raising standards of teaching and pupils' achievement.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- analysis and evaluation of strategies and interventions to improve outcomes of pupils are sharper and more precise in order to:
 - show the impact of each intervention and whether it provides good value for money
 - evaluate the outcomes of all pupils and different groups of pupils, no matter how small, against national benchmarks
- the arrangements for the ongoing professional development of staff and future recruitment and induction of staff are effective so that standards of teaching continue to improve and all pupils, including the small groups of pupils, make good progress and achieve well.

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

Derek Myers
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the leaders for mathematics, the officer responsible for the single central record, the chair of the governing body and several governors. I also met with members of staff. I spoke to representatives of the local authority and the diocese of Peterborough. I reviewed a range of school documentation. You and I visited a sample of classrooms and learning areas to observe teaching, talk with pupils and look at their work. I evaluated information about the pupils' progress and attendance. I observed and talked with pupils in their classes and met with six pupils. I met with you as safeguarding leader and reviewed your systems and processes relating to safeguarding. I looked at work from a sample of pupils.

I met with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day and considered their views alongside the responses from Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. I also reviewed the school's website, which meets requirements on the publication of specified information.

During the inspection, I followed five lines of enquiry:

- Are safeguarding arrangements effective?
- Do pupils make good progress, given their starting points?
- How accurate and consistent are assessments?
- Does the curriculum prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain?
- Are pupils able to engage in energetic play at breaktimes?