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Mr James Ayton  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Ayton

### **Short inspection of Walgrave Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 24 February 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 judged to be good in March 2011.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Your vision for school improvement has continued to inspire both staff and pupils alike. Your school is a bright, warm and welcoming learning community. Your belief that 'everyone is a leader' is successfully realised in the way staff and pupils take responsibility to ensure that the school is a happy and productive place, where each person can thrive and develop. You and the staff team are committed to ensuring that all pupils achieve success and any weaknesses in pupils' learning are addressed quickly, so that pupils make good progress.

Your pupils are fine ambassadors for the excellent ethos of the school. Around school and during lesson time, the atmosphere is productive and focused. Pupils clearly enjoy learning and very happily spoke with the inspector about their work. Personal and social education underpins the curriculum and this is woven through everything the school strives to achieve. Pupils generously give of their own time to raise money for those who are in need. For example, pupils worked hard to raise money for the Nepal disaster fund. A pupil in Year 2 has recently gone even further and organised a raffle to support the work of the NSPCC. This kind of attitude reflects the way the whole school community works together. For example, one parent wrote, 'this is a small school which encourages interaction amongst year groups and a culture of caring for others'.

The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that their children are happy and safe at the school. The majority believe that their children make good progress and are well taught. The school has gone through some significant changes over the last two years. The federation with Pitsford Primary School has caused some unrest and uncertainty among your parental community. As a result, some parents feel the many changes that have occurred are detrimental to the pupils at Walgrave Primary School. This has been a challenging time for all and you readily acknowledge this. However, you and the governing body have taken decisive action to maintain the standards at your school, including maintaining the quality of teaching and learning. The pupils make good progress in mathematics, reading, and writing, as well as in other subjects, such as music and physical education.

You and your team know individual pupils well. The curriculum you have developed is meticulously planned to meet the needs of your school community, so that it interests, excites and engages your pupils. You systematically track the attainment and progress of pupils. As a result, teachers know exactly what the pupils need to learn next in order to make progress. School assessment information and the work in pupils' books show that the vast majority of pupils make good progress in mathematics, reading and increasingly so in writing, across the school. Although disadvantaged pupils are making good progress in learning, some attainment gaps still remain. You and your senior leaders have acknowledged this and are addressing this urgently to close the gaps.

Children enter school with skills and abilities that are either slightly below or broadly in line with those typical for their age. The new early years leader works effectively to ensure that their entry into school life is smooth and well planned. For example, one parent wrote, 'My child started in Reception this year and has had an incredibly positive experience and start to school. Everything, from the transition from the Muddy Boots Pre-School to the first few weeks at school, were managed really well and I feel helped my daughter to settle very quickly at school.' Other parents of early years children echo this sentiment. In 2015, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was broadly in line with the national average. The previous year, it was below this measure. However, girls make faster progress than boys and attain higher outcomes in some areas of learning. This is particularly the case in writing, where the gap between girls and boys is wider than the national gap. Leader's plans to address this are in place and targets for improvement are ambitious. Early indications show that the school is on track currently to meet these targets.

The governing body is effective in holding leaders to account for their work. Governors regularly visit the school to check the quality of its work and meet with subject leaders to ensure that actions for improvement are in line with the school improvement plan targets. Governors demonstrate a high level of commitment to the federation and meet very regularly to ensure that both schools receive an equal measure of challenge.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and the staff team place a high priority on ensuring that pupils are safe and that their welfare is protected. You keep detailed records of interactions with external agencies. You are unafraid to pursue and challenge others, if decisions made on behalf of pupils do not reflect satisfactory outcomes for them. The governing body and the business manager are also vigilant in making sure that staff recruitment is carried out with the required checks, so that those working with pupils are safe to do so. You and the staff regularly undertake training, so that you are up to date with the latest guidance on dealing with national issues such as preventing radicalisation and extremism, and female genital mutilation. You distribute the responsibility for safeguarding appropriately among school leaders, so that awareness of safeguarding remains high in school. Parents expressed confidence that their children were safe at the school.

## **Inspection findings**

- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development is accurate and, consequently, actions for improvement are appropriate and focus on raising the attainment of pupils across the school.
- The headteacher is well respected by staff and pupils. He has a clear vision for developing an exciting and engaging curriculum that brings learning alive for all. The ethos he has created is demonstrated in the respect staff show to pupils and how this is reciprocated by pupils to staff. Pupils want to engage in learning because relationships within the school are strong.
- In 2015, the proportions of pupils making expected progress and more than expected progress in mathematics, reading and writing was either in line with or above other pupils nationally. Pupils' attainment was in line with other pupils nationally for mathematics, reading and writing at both Level 4 and Level 5. The number of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 last year was few, but those pupils made expected progress in all three subjects. However, these pupils did not exceed expected progress in any subject.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide pupils with the support they need to make good progress. Teachers plan learning that offers pupils many opportunities to develop their understanding of new concepts. Leaders are aware of pupils' individual needs and seek to find different ways to address them. Intervention groups rapidly pick up those pupils who fall behind their targets and they are supported effectively to 'get back on track'. Leaders work with outside agencies to identify specific needs and the leaders endeavour to work with parents to address these.
- The curriculum at Walgrave Primary School is bespoke to the school. It is broad and balanced and seeks to ensure that all subjects are taught well, not just reading, writing and mathematics. Careful planning by all staff means leaders are able to track pupils' progress across the curriculum. This means that pupils work at age-related expectations in, for example, art and history, as well as in English and mathematics.
- The learning environment is warm, bright and reflects the pupils' work. Classrooms and shared spaces are clean, tidy and well organised. This

demonstrates an ethos of care and attention, as is seen in the way everyone relates to each other in the school. Pupils are clearly valued by adults in the school and the opportunities and facilities available to pupils are evidence of this.

- The headteacher is well regarded by Northamptonshire local authority. In this capacity, he offers support to other schools within the area. The school also contributes strongly to a larger group of schools and, together, they share expertise, advice and support to moderate and improve learning for pupils in the wider community around Northamptonshire.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the attainment gaps for disadvantaged pupils are closed urgently in mathematics, reading, and writing, so that they are in line with other pupils nationally
- the learning gaps between boys and girls in the early years close, particularly in writing, so that boys and girls attain outcomes that are similar to each other across all seven areas of learning.

Yours sincerely

Jan Connor  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and other school leaders, including the leaders of teaching and learning. We discussed the school's plans for improvement and self-evaluation. We also discussed the progress of different groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs or disability. I met with the Chair of the Governing Body. I also met with the senior school improvement manager for Northamptonshire local authority. I toured the school, visiting all of the classroom. I observed teaching, spoke with pupils and looked at the work in their books. I observed pupils' behaviour, both in classes and around school.

I took into account the 52 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, the 17 free-text responses to Ofsted, an email sent to Ofsted and an interview requested by a parent during the inspection. I considered a range of school documentation, including the single central register of recruitment checks and other documentation relating to safeguarding.