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Ms Jillian Davis  
Executive headteacher  
West Walton Community Primary School  
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Wisbech  
PE14 7HA

Dear Ms Davis

### **Short inspection of West Walton Community Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 1 March 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 2010.

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

At the time of the last inspection five years ago, one of the strengths of this school was the high quality of the care, guidance and support provided for pupils. You have maintained the high standard of personal development and well-being of pupils, which permeates throughout the school. As one pupil reported, 'You get the appropriate amount of help, not too much and not too little, that's how you learn from your mistakes.' This is reflected in the very productive relationships in lessons between pupils and adults. Pupils have a good attitude to learning. This was evident in the Nursery, where children played cooperatively with each other, right through to Year 6 where pupils work hard and try their best in lessons.

You and your senior leaders and governors are very ambitious for the pupils and instil high expectations for adults and pupils across the school. For example, the writing displayed on the walls from all Year 5 and 6 pupils is of a very good quality and sets the standard for the school community.

Underpinning your determination to foster excellence is an enriching curriculum that caters very well for all groups of pupils. Many exciting opportunities are enjoyed by pupils in sport, music and the arts. The most-able pupils are taking the opportunity to participate in projects such as the publication of the 'Windmill Warbler' newsletter and other local initiatives where they are challenged to further develop their literacy, numeracy and science skills. Pupils with disability and those who have special educational needs are well supported. School leaders have developed a school passport for pupils that makes clear what all teachers and adults should be doing

inside and outside the classroom to support individual pupils. Some parents are even using the passport with adults who organise out-of-school activities to help when articulating their child's needs.

The Windmill Primary Federation was created in June 2014 including West Walton and three other primary schools with you as the executive headteacher. Understandably, a few parents were concerned about the impact that this change would have on the school. However, you have maintained a close eye on the quality of teaching and learning, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, to ensure that it does not deteriorate. This has proved challenging since September, but you and the governors have taken the necessary steps to challenge teaching that does not meet your high expectations, and to overcome the difficulties of staff absence.

Leaders and governors have embraced the increased opportunities that being part of a federation has created; for example, the very effective family support unit that helps pupils and their families whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. The regular opportunities for pupils from each school to mix together on themed events, such as mathematics and literacy weeks, is broadening their social circle. You are aiding the transition to the next stage of pupils' education where they start secondary school with a larger group of pupils that they already know.

Last year, assessment information shows that some of the disadvantaged pupils in the school underachieved. You have tackled this issue with determination. This year, it is evident that these pupils are making better progress. Pupil premium funding for these pupils is used efficiently to give them bespoke support to address their particular circumstances.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

One of the strengths of safeguarding is the high-quality support that has been developed in the family support unit to help a number of vulnerable pupils and their families. These pupils experience a range of difficulties in their lives that demand the expertise of the highly skilled team that is establishing itself within the school and the federation. The team has nurtured trusting relationships with parents who have been hard to reach in the past, and this is helping with their children's education. Various procedures to safeguard pupils are extremely well organised and relevant to the needs of the pupils.

The school meets all safeguarding requirements. It is very easy to find the information required on the school website because it is well organised. The administration team is working to streamline the records of staff and the single central record across the federation. This is sensible as currently the system is complicated by staff who work in more than one of the schools. Staff in school are well trained to identify and act on nearly all types of abuse. Governors and leaders are embarking on training to fulfil the 'Prevent' duty requirements so that this aspect of safeguarding can be strengthened in school.

## Inspection findings

- Leaders and governors have addressed most of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Leadership and governance are much more strategic in their approach. They have successfully guided the school through the process of federation, and the quality of education provided continues to improve.
- Self-evaluation by school leaders is accurate and the school improvement plan concentrates on the aspects of the school that are in most need of improvement. You have rightly identified that the teaching and learning of problem solving and reasoning in mathematics are in need of improvement. Some teachers are good at this aspect of mathematics, but in other classes the opportunity to solve problems is not as regular.
- Middle leaders take full responsibility for teaching and learning in different subjects. For example, they have identified that they will be strengthening the teaching in science next term as a result of their checks on the science lessons.
- Writing is now a strength of the school. Well-structured termly writing projects such as the one based on Cinderella, which pupils were embarking on during the inspection, enable pupils of all ages to apply their literacy skills and compose a well-crafted piece of writing of which they can be proud.
- The improvement in the curriculum and teaching has had a marked impact on the outcomes for children in the early years and also for pupils in Year 1. The proportion of pupils that meet the expected standard in phonics has risen over the last three years and is above average. The proportion of children that reach a good level of development in the early years was below average in 2014, but in 2015 it was above average. This represents good progress from children's starting points in the Nursery.
- Standards in Year 2 have not risen as rapidly. This is because the teaching is not as strong as in other parts of the school. School leaders are well aware of this and are taking the necessary steps to support improvements in teaching and to provide extra support for pupils so that they maintain the progress that they have made in Year 1.
- In 2015, by the end of Key Stage 2 standards were broadly average in reading writing and mathematics. This is because the proportions making or exceeding the expected progress is close to national figures. This year, school information shows that nearly all the pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach or exceed the expected level. This includes the few disadvantaged pupils. Information shows that from a lower starting point this year they are making more rapid progress than the other pupils.
- Behaviour was a strength of the school at the last inspection and it remains very good now. Pupils should be proud of themselves. They work hard in lessons and they take a keen interest in the many exciting opportunities provided by the school. They are caring and kind to each other and have high expectations of behaviour. Staff have worked effectively to achieve this. There are a number of vulnerable pupils whose behaviour needs careful management. This is achieved successfully. Consequently, the exclusion rate is very low and attendance is high.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- the teaching in all classes strengthens to match the quality in the very best
- the teaching of problem solving and reasoning in mathematics is taught well across all classes
- the requirements of the 'Prevent' duty are fully embedded in the safeguarding procedures.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Norfolk County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Tim Bristow

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the deputy headteacher, three governors, pupils, administration staff, the leader of the family support unit and a representative from the local authority. Short visits were made to all classrooms, where books were scrutinised. A range of documents, policies and assessment information were examined.