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Miss Joanne Bezer
Headteacher
Dersingham Primary School
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Dear Miss Bezer

Short inspection of Dersingham Primary School

Following my visit with Robert Pyner, Her Majesty's Inspector, to the school on 8 October 2015, 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 September 2011.

This school continues to be good.

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

You have continued to drive improvement and evaluate developments across the school. Since the last inspection, the school roll has almost doubled. The expansion of your leadership team has helped you to maintain the outcomes for pupils. Substantial redevelopment of the school has taken place to accommodate the greater number of pupils. In September 2013, the school reached capacity with its first cohort of Year 6 pupils.

You and your leadership team have established 'non-negotiables', which have resulted in high standards and aspirations from your staff. Teachers, through their modelling, convey similar high expectations of pupils. There is a culture of accountability set alongside positive relationships between staff and pupils. This promotes opportunities for pupils to work and learn well from a range of adults, including support staff.

Your school has an engaging environment with well-maintained, attractive and litter-free buildings and external areas. The thoughtful and careful use of the environment has provided opportunities to maximise learning for all pupils. For example, pupils have access to an additional play area on the first floor. Staff take pride in the environment. Pupils are reminded how important it is to look after the school site.

Leaders have developed an established system to monitor and evaluate new initiatives. Self-evaluation is accurate. It is also moderated externally, which provides further challenge. You have addressed the areas for improvement from the previous inspection appropriately. Consequently, the attainment of pupils continues to rise. This is particularly the case for those children in the early years and those disadvantaged pupils across the school. The latest results confirm this high level of achievement. Leaders have continued the drive to raise attendance for all groups.

Starting points for children's learning on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are accurately assessed. Staff receive appropriate training on the methods and approach to assessment. As a result, a profile of each pupil's progress can be identified. This provides strong support and effective transition in this phase of learning. Therefore, children make rapid progress.

Robust systems monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and there is effective support for teachers to develop their skills. Leaders quickly address any teaching requiring improvement. This high expectation of teaching is used to maintain secure outcomes for pupils' learning. Leaders have taken steps to further improve reading and outcomes in mathematics for the most-able pupils. This has already impacted positively on improving pupils' progress in reading.

Pupils engage well in effective play activities during break and lunchtime. Boys and girls of all cultures play together and not in isolated groups. This creates a harmonious community founded on respect for all. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is a strength of the school. There are vibrant displays and the atmosphere around the school is friendly. This provides the feeling of a school where pupils behave well and succeed together. Exclusions are very infrequent and declining, and pupils feel safe within the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. The school has a clear and systematic approach to all aspects of safeguarding. The single central record for recording the checks made on staff meets statutory requirements. Leaders and governors have developed clear policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and risk assessment. Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding. They work well with other agencies and families to keep pupils safe and provide appropriate intervention, care, guidance and support.

Safeguarding training for staff is frequent and well planned. It includes the delivery of aspects such as preventing radicalisation and female genital mutilation. Leaders regularly review training. Consequently, pupils feel safe; they know how to seek help and parents are supportive of the school's work to promote the personal development, behaviour and welfare of children.

Inspection findings

- Since the last inspection, you have responded well to meet the challenges of an expanding school. You have increased the size of your leadership team and increased management capacity. There is strong accountability and high expectations set for all staff. School development planning provides precise targets for teachers and this has resulted in improved outcomes for pupils.
- Your evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement are accurate. You recognise the need to develop further boys' reading. You have continued to raise attendance over time, so that it exceeds expected targets and is above the national average.
- The external moderation of your self-evaluation ensures the actions you are taking to maintain strong pupil outcomes are appropriate and effective. Leaders are diligent in the implementation and introduction of new strategies. Your leadership team reviews all strategies carefully before they are finalised. This enables a continued focus on pupils' outcomes. As a result, teaching promotes high standards.
- Pupils' work is presented clearly and shows the pride they have in their learning. Overall, the quality of writing is a strength across the school. Outcomes in reading and mathematics for more-able pupils are good, but not outstanding. Leaders have recognised this as an area to develop. They have introduced target texts for boys and a revised reading scheme. Pupils' learning in mathematics has been deepened through strategies to challenge their problem solving, reasoning and mastery skills. The latest school assessment information shows that outcomes in mathematics have improved for all pupils. The gaps between boys' and girls' reading skills have sharply reduced. Disadvantaged pupils continue to achieve well, matching the outcomes of their peers.
- Within the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make rapid progress. Middle leaders ensure this progress by building accurate profiles to monitor the outcomes of children. An electronic tracking system is used to record evidence supported by written work. This allows those children who join the school with limited English language skills to be targeted carefully. They quickly and rapidly acquire competent speaking and listening skills.
- Assessment in the early years is accurate, as is similar practice across all key stages. Teachers plan well and target their teaching through careful monitoring of pupils. There is regular evaluation of pupil progress and this enables the effective use of interventions. A range of effective initiatives have been developed. These include using adults and Higher Level Teaching Assistants to support and extend the learning of pupils. For example, in Year 6, a small group of more-able pupils were observed undertaking creative writing on the theme of Greek myths. These pupils were progressing well. They described their learning and deep understanding of myths with enthusiasm to the inspector.
- Leaders continue to focus on raising attendance. You have employed a Family Liaison Officer (FLO) to support the attendance of all pupils. Leaders use robust legal intervention when appropriate to address persistent non-attendance. The FLO provides careful guidance and support to encourage early intervention with

families. As a result, attendance has improved and is now above average. Leaders have increased the attendance target for this year, which is providing further challenge to the whole school community. Consequently, all staff aspire to continue to raise the bar for pupil attendance.

- Behaviour is a strength of the school. Your appointment of a 'Behaviour Manager' to focus on appropriate interventions and personalised programmes has improved behaviour outcomes. This resulted in a reduction of all types of exclusion. There have been no exclusions since the start of the academic year. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare and dealt with swiftly.
- Your school council provides a significant role in the leadership of the school. Last year there was a review of playground equipment and this has resulted in positive changes to the environment. Members of the school council were enthusiastic about their work and the work of their teachers.
- Pupils reported to inspectors that when they have concerns they are supported well. They know how to seek help, and feel safe, well cared for and happy. The majority of parents who returned the recent parental questionnaire support this view. The September 2015 survey found that parents were overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school.
- The Chair of Governors has an informed knowledge of the school. Targeted recruitment of new governors has been supported through an external review of the required skills to balance and strengthen the governing body. As a result, governors have developed their effectiveness over the last year with local authority support. Governing body minutes are clear and show appropriate challenge for school leaders. Targets are set for performance management and governors perform their statutory duties well.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- School systems to track and monitor progress inform teaching and provide aspirational challenge to raise outcomes for more-able pupils, particularly in reading and mathematics.

Yours sincerely

John Lambern
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors met with you as headteacher, your senior and middle leaders and teachers. They also met with a representative from the Local Authority and two members of the governing body, including the Chair of Governors. Inspectors spoke to pupils informally and met with the school council. They visited a number of lessons during the day gathering evidence on teaching, learning and assessment.

Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, minutes of meetings, information on the progress of students and the single central record.