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Dear Mr Hebborn

Short inspection of Scampton Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 5 July 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 February 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection because it uses assessment information very effectively to track the progress of pupils. You are constantly vigilant, looking out for and acting upon any dips in pupils' outcomes, focusing on these within the school's plans for improvement. For example, in response to a drop in outcomes for pupils in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2015, you ensured that support was provided to improve the teaching of phonics (letters and the sound that they make) in the early years and key stage 1. As a result, an increased number of pupils have achieved the Year 1 national standard in 2016 and an increased number have achieved a good level of development in reading in the Reception class.

Similarly, you have highlighted spelling and grammar as being an area of lower achievement in key stage 2. Pupils' writing books in key stages 1 and 2 are packed with exercises to practise grammar skills and you and I were able to see progress over time when we reviewed the pupils' books during the inspection; however, there was less evidence of opportunities for pupils to practise these skills through extended pieces of independent writing.

You have not ensured that teachers know exactly what is expected of them when they mark pupils' work and the precision required when they give feedback. This means that pupils are not making as much progress as they could in using spelling and grammar to improve their writing.

Pupils thrive because the school's values are exemplified by the staff and governors. You and your staff know each pupil and their backgrounds in detail, believing that each pupil is everyone's responsibility. Parents with whom I spoke identified this as a key strength of the school, with many choosing to travel from neighbouring towns and villages for this reason. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who are looked after by the local authority, are particularly well cared for, with highly effective, individualised support provided by teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils display the same caring and thoughtful traits as adults in the school because staff are very good role models. Pupils are courteous and respectful towards each other and adults, and well equipped for life in modern Britain. They are tolerant towards others and knowledgeable about faiths and cultures that are different to their own.

You and your teachers have made very good use of the school's extensive grounds to enhance and enrich pupils' learning. An outdoor area is attached to each class, giving pupils the opportunity to grow and sample vegetables. The wooded area used for summer assemblies adds to the spiritual development of pupils, while Year 6 pupils have enjoyed creating and telling stories around the fire pit. Children in the early years have led the development of a very atmospheric 'secret fairy garden', in which their emergence as writers can be seen in signposts for the fairies to follow. Parents told me of how much they value the use of the outdoor environment because of the learning and enjoyment their children gain from this aspect of the school's curriculum. Parents value these opportunities because they epitomise the school's approach to, in their words, 'letting children have a childhood'.

Leaders have addressed the areas for improvement identified during the last inspection. You have improved communication with parents by replacing pupils' annual reports with termly report cards. These highlight each pupil's progress, and the next steps that they need to take to ensure their attainment reaches at least that expected for pupils of their age.

Together with leaders from other schools and representatives of the local authority, you monitor the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms and compare this with work in pupils' books to assess the quality of pupils' learning over time. The impact of this has been particularly noticeable in mathematics, where pupils' outcomes have improved in recent years.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors place a high priority on keeping children safe. The school's strong set of values provide a secure foundation upon which pupils are nurtured socially and academically. Adults are sensitive to the needs of pupils and vigilant for any changes that may suggest that a pupil is at risk of harm.

You have implemented a creative training regime that ensures that staff's knowledge and skills are regularly updated on issues such as domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, bereavement and the risks of extremism. Year 6 pupils talk confidently about how they feel safe in school and can rely on adults to address any

problems they might have. Parents and pupils are certain that bullying and name-calling are very rare. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to stay safe online.

Leaders and governors ensure that all safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Records are detailed and of high quality, monitored through regular safeguarding audits and the inclusion of safeguarding as a standing agenda item at all governing body meetings.

Inspection findings

- The school has continued to improve since the last inspection because leaders, governors and staff are ambitious for every pupil. Their levels of care and commitment towards each pupil form the bedrock of the school's success. As a result, pupils achieve well, academically and socially.
- You monitor the progress and attainment of each pupil diligently, and this ensures that any underperformance is tackled promptly. You provide detailed information to governors, who are dogged in holding you to account for pupils' outcomes. Governors ask challenging questions of you and undertake their own monitoring of the school to make sure that the information you give them is accurate.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's performance and the actions necessary to secure further improvements. Teachers willingly take on leadership roles that vary, dependent on the priorities for the school, each year. The effectiveness of this approach is evident in the improvements seen in the teaching and learning in mathematics this year.
- Leaders pay particular attention to the progress of pupils who are prone to underperformance, such as those who are disadvantaged, children looked after, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children of service personnel. All of these groups achieve well, given their starting points; however, published information on pupils' outcomes does not always reflect this accurately because of the small number of pupils in each cohort.
- Leaders and teachers are very effective at promoting diversity and equality of opportunity within the curriculum and the school community. This ensures that the much smaller proportion of girls attending the school are not marginalised and achieve well, given their starting points. Leaders constantly look for opportunities to meet and to extend pupils' experiences, for example using the physical education and sports grant to offer less-traditional activities, such as cheerleading.
- The school's curriculum is a strength, and teachers take very many opportunities to enrich pupils' learning experiences. In addition to using the school's outdoor environment to support the learning of pupils of all ages, visits to places of interest and of worship ensure that pupils are prepared for life beyond the school and its locality.
- Teachers often link different subjects to develop pupils' understanding and mastery of skills. For example, using solar panels, scientific investigation, mathematical calculations and measurements, computer control programming and time-lapse photography, Year 6 pupils have replicated the growing of plants in space, including seeds that have travelled to space and

back. In addition to the wealth of learning gained from this project, their reward was first place in the small schools science competition at the recent Lincolnshire Show.

- Pupils enjoy the wide range of roles of responsibility available to them by the time they reach Year 6. Roles such as membership of the school council involve elections, while others, such as school prefects who support children in the early years at the start and end of each day, highlight the importance of service to others. As a result, pupils have very positive exposure to fundamental British values, such as democracy, compassion and respect, by the time they leave the school.
- Children enter the early years with levels of development that are either just below, or in line with, those typically seen for children of their age. By the time they leave the early years, the proportion achieving a good level of development is consistently above the national figure and is increasing annually. This is because leaders act promptly and successfully to address any areas of development in which children achieve less well.
- In 2015, by the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils attaining at expected levels, or above, exceeded the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions attaining at the higher levels in reading and mathematics exceeded the national average. Over time, pupils' attainment has been broadly in line with or has exceeded that seen nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of key stage 2, in 2015, pupils' attainment was broadly in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in spelling and grammar was below the national average, particularly at the higher levels. From their starting points, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities attained well.
- Pupils leaving key stage 2 in 2015 made good progress over time, regardless of their ability, background or additional learning needs. Where published pupils' performance information identified underperformance, this was due to the disproportionate impact of small cohort numbers on total percentage figures. Girls made good progress from their individual starting points.
- Current assessment information on pupils' progress and attainment shows that, in each year group, the majority of pupils are making progress towards achieving levels of attainment that are at least those expected for their age by the end of the year. Teachers use this information to identify gaps in learning, and this is helping to accelerate pupils' progress, especially in mathematics.
- Work in pupils' books supports this assessment information. In mathematics, pupils use a range of calculation strategies with increasing confidence to investigate and to solve number problems. Pupils are encouraged to use reasoning skills to check and to justify their answers, and this is helping them to master new skills quickly and effectively.
- Pupils' writing books provide good evidence of the school's focus on improving spelling and grammar. Teachers mark these books regularly, although their feedback to pupils is not precise enough in identifying the next steps in pupils' learning and is not followed up consistently to ensure that misconceptions are addressed promptly. As a result, pupils do not make as much progress or attain as well in writing as they could.

- Pupils' writing books illustrate that teachers provide many opportunities to practise spelling and grammar skills across a range of subjects; however, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length and unsupported by an adult. Consequently, pupils' writing skills are not as well developed and embedded as they should be.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the policy for the marking and feedback to pupils on their work is clear about the practice expected of teachers and teaching assistants and applied consistently across the school to inform pupils precisely about the next steps in their learning
- teachers increase the opportunities for pupils to write independently, for extended periods, so that writing skills and learning are deepened and embedded and rates of progress accelerate and attainment rise.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephen McMullan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the chair of the governing body and the safeguarding governor, and some pupils from Year 6. I considered the 20 responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and spoke with parents on the playground at the start of the school day. You and I visited all classes and we looked at samples of pupils' work. I looked at a range of documents, including: an evaluation of the school's performance; plans for school improvement; information on how the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils currently, or previously, in receipt of free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is spent; a number of policy documents, including those for child protection and special educational needs; and the minutes from meetings of the governing body. I looked at the school's website, which meets requirements on the publication of specified information.