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Mrs Ruth French and Mr Andy Matthews
Co-headteachers
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Dear Mrs French and Mr Matthews

Short inspection of Hardwick and Cambourne Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 15 September 2016 with Lynn Lowery, Ofsted Inspector, 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 March 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. As co-headteachers, you both have a teaching commitment and work in a unified way to lead Hardwick and Cambourne Community Primary School effectively. You both exude a passion to develop a love of learning for all pupils, no matter what challenges they face. As one parent reported, 'The school has a buzz about it. The children love it and are given amazing opportunities by very dedicated staff.' Pupils enter your school with various and, sometimes, very complex needs. You strive, along with your staff team and governors, to give pupils the best possible start to their education. This shared attitude and vision for Hardwick and Cambourne Community Primary School contributes to it being an inclusive school that welcomes everyone.

The school team has risen well to the challenge of adding a new site to its existing building. By working together effectively, you have successfully established one school over two buildings. The intake of pupils has doubled since the previous inspection, and continues to increase. As phases of the new site in Cambourne have been completed, the school has welcomed a significant number of new pupils on a regular basis. You both ensure that staff carefully assess pupils' needs and starting points quickly so that the teaching they receive meets their needs. However, on occasion, planning and feedback to pupils about how they can improve could be sharper. This is particularly the case for those pupils who enter the school with

levels of attainment that are typical for their age, to ensure that they make more rapid progress towards achieving the higher attainment levels.

You are both competently supported by staff and governors. They all share your high expectations and ambition for the school and its pupils. The enthusiastic and creative approach of all staff in seeking ways to provide fun, exciting and purposeful learning opportunities is a fundamental feature of the school's success. Pupils make a positive contribution to the industrious, productive atmosphere and ethos of the school through their good behaviour, enthusiasm, self-motivation and eagerness to learn.

Your perceptive approach to self-evaluation provides a firm foundation on which to secure further improvements. You have both identified accurate priorities based on a review of the last academic year. Inspection evidence shows that your evaluations are accurate and work on the areas to develop will further improve the school's performance.

You have both dealt with the areas for improvement that were identified at the previous inspection effectively. You know that more pupils should be making accelerated progress. Teachers plan carefully to make sure that they are considering the needs of all pupils in their class. This includes a whole-school approach using high-level challenge that pupils say 'makes their brains hurt' and 'helps them to think deeply and use what they know to help them get better'. As a result, pupils are making good progress, and more pupils are beginning to make accelerated progress. This includes pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Topic books from the last academic year demonstrate that pupils are given more opportunities to use their writing skills in all curriculum subjects. A scrutiny of books shows that data handling is taught more regularly as part of the mathematics curriculum, and pupils are applying this knowledge to other subjects such as science and history. Consequently, pupils' standards of work and their achievement in subjects other than English and mathematics are improving.

Despite only having had a couple of weeks in school, the children in the Nursery and Reception classes are very settled and are already showing how independent they are. This is because the adults have used the induction process effectively to get to know the children well before they enter the school. Staff have created a bespoke, purposeful learning environment for children, based on their interests and assessed needs. Routines and systems have been swiftly implemented and children are very clear about expectations.

Teachers constantly pursue ways to make learning fun, while ensuring that the demands of all subjects in the curriculum are met. There is an overwhelming sense of excitement and interest in the subjects being taught across the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were thrilled at the prospect of the dinosaur egg hatching and their pending visit to the Natural History Museum. Years 3 and 4 pupils talked excitedly about their learning following their recent trip to Hunstanton. Years 5 and 6 pupils were eager to explain their 'Golden morning' times because of the amazing activities they take part in. In particular, Year 6 pupils expressed their enthusiasm about the

opportunities that they have to lead events for the younger pupils. Consequently, pupils are very happy and enjoy coming to school. Attendance is consistently good and above national levels.

Parents are positive about all aspects of the school's work. One parent said, 'The school does a wonderful job in preparing our children to be lifelong learners, to discover new skills, learn the essentials and enjoy their education. The staff are attentive, inspiring and approachable. The heads are dedicated at the highest level, often referring to the school as a family.'

Governors demonstrate a high level of commitment to the school. They share your ambitions that whatever the challenges pupils may face, each pupil should enjoy the very best opportunities to achieve well in readiness for their next steps into secondary education. Governors provide considerable support and increasing challenge to the school to hold leaders to account for the school's performance.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have made sure that effective arrangements are in place to safeguard pupils. Rigorous processes for making staff appointments and carrying out all the required checks on adults are well established, checked and reviewed by leaders, including governors. These checks are carried out thoroughly and recorded accurately. You make sure that staff are properly trained and receive regular updates about safeguarding, so that they know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. The school has an effective system for recording staff worries about individual pupils as they arise. These are followed up scrupulously by senior leaders and resolved in a timely fashion, including by working effectively with parents, carers and other agencies for maximum support to be provided. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangement records are clear and of high quality. Staff know about the dangers to pupils from exploitation, radicalisation and extremism. Leaders successfully promote an ethos of shared accountability from all staff no matter what their role. Everyone knows, and commits to being aware, that they are responsible for every pupil's safeguarding and well-being.

Pupils feel safe at all times and know that school is a place where they can share any anxieties that they have, even if anything happens outside school. They say that they feel as though the adults all care about them and want them to be safe. One pupil said that 'it is like they are our mums and dads at school because our parents are not there to look after us'. The curriculum provides pupils with a very good awareness of e-safety and how to stay safe when using the internet or mobile phones.

Inspection findings

- Based on your evaluation of outcomes for pupils in 2015, you have taken determined and well-focused action to ensure that, in 2016, pupils' achievement improved further. Current unvalidated information shows that achievement for all pupils is on an upward trend.

- In 2015, achievement in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2 was similar to the national average for pupils of the same age. Unvalidated assessment information for 2016 shows that this remains the case. From pupils' various starting points, particularly those who enter the school with lower attainment, they make good and sometimes better progress.
- Published information indicates that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not always make good enough progress from their various starting points. However, leaders have acted on this swiftly. Inspection evidence, and pupils' work in their books, show that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good provision at Hardwick and Cambourne Community Primary School. In addition to making good progress academically from their starting points, the pastoral care you provide for them is a strength of your school. Very often, this ensures that they exceed their personal targets highlighted in their 'learning passports' that staff, parents and the pupils contribute towards. By the end of key stage 2, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well in the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is typically good. Pupils enjoy lessons which are planned well for their differing abilities. You rightly acknowledge that pupils are not always given adequate time to use the feedback that teachers give them, in line with the school's marking and feedback policy, to improve their work and make more rapid progress. Consequently, pupils who enter the school with abilities that are typical for their age do not always make the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- The attention paid to pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare is a strength of the school. Where pupils struggle to learn effectively, staff act rapidly to ensure that pupils' personal development and welfare needs are met so that they can access their learning. While this has not always been reflected in differences in pupils' attainment when compared with others nationally, there is evidence that pupils are making good progress. The bespoke care and support provided to pupils helps them to succeed whatever their need.
- Pupils who read to the inspectors both during observations and on an individual basis used their knowledge of phonics very effectively to read unknown words. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the books they read at home and at school, demonstrating a keen interest in reading.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points. You assess what they can do when they join your school and think very carefully about how to use the pupil premium, additional government funding, so that it best meets their specific requirements. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is checked diligently on an individual pupil basis and additional help is tailored carefully to meet their needs. As a result, these pupils achieve well. This is particularly so for the most able disadvantaged pupils. The most able disadvantaged pupils attain as well as their most able classmates. This is owing to precise identification of the potential of these pupils and thorough meeting of their various learning needs.

- Some senior leaders are new to their role. However, they are very keen to learn, passionate about doing their best for the pupils and committed to leading their areas of responsibility effectively. With the support of the co-headteachers, new leaders are carrying out some aspects of monitoring and evaluating. They recognise what is working well and identify areas they need to improve. The governors and both of you recognise the importance of continuing to develop leaders' involvement in monitoring the school's work to further improve pupils' outcomes.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- pupils in all classes are given enough opportunities to make the most of the feedback that they receive from their teachers
- pupils who enter the school with abilities that are typical for their age make more rapid progress to attain higher standards in their learning
- they continue to develop leaders who are newer in post, as prioritised in improvement plans, so that they can be fully effective in their monitoring and evaluating roles.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the director of children's services for Cambridgeshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Tracy Fielding
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, both inspectors observed teaching in the early years and all classes, (apart from one half of Year 3 and 4 who were out on a school trip), on both the school sites. These observations were carried out jointly by each inspector with the co-headteachers. We spoke to pupils throughout the school, and listened to a number of pupils read. Both inspectors scrutinised pupils' books from the previous academic year and looked at current work when in classrooms. I had discussions with you both, the two special educational needs coordinators and a curriculum leader, and met with four members of the governing body including the chair and the vice-chair. I analysed the 120 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 112 parent texts received. I also discussed the outcomes of pupils' and staff's views collected by the school on a regular basis. The inspection team also reviewed a range of documentation provided by the school including monitoring and evaluating paperwork, the school's own self-evaluation and safeguarding.