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Mrs Elizabeth Martin  
Long Preston Endowed Voluntary Aided Primary School  
Long Preston  
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North Yorkshire  
BD23 4PN

Dear Mrs Martin

### **Short inspection of Long Preston Endowed Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 2 February 2017, 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 October 2012.

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

You have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your high expectations and strong child-centred values are at the heart of the school's work. Crucially, you have built a strong and cohesive staff team who share your values and your deep commitment to the children and families you serve. Your purposeful drive for 'the best', combined with your thoughtful, collaborative and highly reflective approach, has placed the school in a strong position to secure further improvement.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They work hard, apply themselves well and learn independently and cooperatively. This is because you and your staff have consistently high expectations for pupils, the curriculum 'sparks' their enthusiasm and learning activities are interesting and challenging. Pupils are demonstrably proud of themselves, their work and the school.

Inspectors identified three areas for improvement at the school's last inspection: first, to improve the teaching of mathematics, second, to improve pupils' understanding of how to stay safe and third, to increase pupils' knowledge of the wider world. You have tackled these areas for improvement well. Although you know that more needs to be done, the teaching of mathematics and, therefore, the progress that pupils make in this key subject have improved since the last inspection. Importantly, pupils are now knowledgeable about how to stay safe, for example when using computers, mobile phones and the internet. Your strong link with a large inner-city primary school has had a profoundly positive impact on

pupils' knowledge and understanding of people who have different backgrounds and faiths.

You have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and the areas needing further work. You know, for example, that Year 6 pupils did not make fast enough progress in writing and mathematics in 2016. You quickly identified the reasons for this 'dip' in performance and, with the strong support of your colleagues, you have taken swift and decisive action to secure improvement. As a result, current Year 6 pupils are making faster progress and a higher proportion are on track to achieve the age-expected standard by the end of key stage 2.

Importantly, you know that the changes you have made to the way pupils' progress is assessed and tracked need to be fully embedded and the impact of your strategy for improving the standard of pupils' writing needs to be fully realised.

Governors keep a close eye on all areas of the school's performance and work effectively with you and the wider staff team. Governors have proactively supported the development of strong partnerships with other local primary schools. This important collaborative work has added to the school's drive for improvement, for example through jointly organised training and regular opportunities for teachers to work together.

Although governors receive detailed information and reports about the school's work, some information does not 'cut to the heart' of what is working well and what needs further improvement. Similarly, the school's improvement plan does not have sufficiently clear and measurable step-by-step targets. This makes it difficult for governors to check whether the actions being taken are having the impact they expect within the timescales they have set.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. There is a strong culture of promoting pupils' welfare and keeping them safe.

You are alert to the things that make children vulnerable and you act quickly and effectively when you have a concern. Crucially, both pupils and parents say that they trust you because you always listen and, without exception, provide the help, support and guidance that they need.

### **Inspection findings**

- The effectiveness of mathematics teaching has improved since the last inspection and, up to 2015, there was an upward trend in the outcomes achieved by pupils at the end of key stages 1 and 2. This improvement was not sustained in 2016. Current pupils are making strong progress in mathematics as a result of better teaching and more precise and accurate assessment. Learning activities are, typically, interesting and challenging; teachers explain ideas and concepts well

and they question pupils skilfully about what they are learning. When challenged with complex reasoning and problem-solving activities, pupils respond enthusiastically, showing determination, resilience and resourcefulness as they 'grapple' with their work. Occasionally, pupils are not given the opportunity to use and apply their mathematical knowledge to solve real-life problems and, sometimes, pupils are not fluent or accurate in their basic mathematical skills before they move onto new work.

- Children in the Reception class and those in Years 1 and 2 are developing their phonics knowledge and confidence in reading. Phonics is taught increasingly well and, as a result, more pupils are reaching the expected standard in reading by the end of the early years and in the Year 1 phonics screening check. The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, enjoy reading and love books. The most able Year 6 pupils read confidently, fluently and with expression, showing a sophisticated understanding of what they are reading.
- Over time, some pupils have not made strong enough progress in writing. As a result of the school's strategy for improving writing, pupils are beginning to use their better knowledge of the features of good writing in their own work. Although this is an important and positive step, the headteacher knows that more needs to be done to make sure that the standards achieved in writing match those achieved in reading.
- The strengths in pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare identified at the last inspection have been sustained and improved further. Pupils are keen, confident and assured learners. Notably, pupils show great concern for each other and are kind, helpful and supportive friends. In addition to their deepening understanding of the world beyond their school, pupils know how to stay healthy and keep safe. They understand, for example, that a balanced diet and regular exercise are essential for maintaining good health and well-being.
- Governors are knowledgeable about all areas of the school's work and, as a result of recent changes to the committee structure, have an increasingly clear view of the outcomes achieved by pupils. Governors bring a wide range of skills and experience to their work. Individually and collectively, governors provide strong support and robust challenge for the headteacher. They are well supported by the local authority school improvement adviser, who gives them a helpfully objective external view of key areas of the school's performance.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- strategies for further improving the progress pupils make in writing and mathematics, including the school's new approach to assessment and tracking, are effectively implemented and fully embedded
- the school's improvement plan includes measurable step-by-step targets and objectives, and that information and reports about the impact of this plan, and the school's effectiveness, are precise and evaluative.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Leeds, the regional schools commissioner and the director of

children's services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Nick Whittaker  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you and your staff, pupils, a representative from the local authority and four representatives from the governing body. I visited lessons with you, looked at the work in pupils' books and talked to them about their learning. I considered the survey results from Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and seven written responses from parents. I also considered 11 responses to the staff questionnaire and 55 responses to the pupil questionnaire. I examined a range of documents, including information about safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and information about pupils' progress.

I focused my inspection activities on:

- the effectiveness of mathematics teaching and the progress that pupils make in mathematics in key stages 1 and 2
- the progress that pupils make in reading and writing in the early years and in key stage 1
- how well leaders have tackled the areas for improvement identified at the school's last inspection
- the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements.