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Mrs Emma Stevens
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Dear Mrs Stevens

Short inspection of Hauxton Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 31 October 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 November 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. The leadership team has ensured that pupils at Hauxton Primary School continue to receive the good quality of education that was recognised at the previous inspection. You ensure a clear focus on the development of pupils' academic and social skills. Parents are extremely impressed with and supportive of the ways in which you and your staff teach their children. This is evident in the many positive statements made in Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Parents noted the strong community ethos at the school whereby pupils support each other. One parent stated that 'The children are a very strong community who all really care and look after each other from Year 6 to Reception' and that the school promotes a 'strong ethos of love and respect'.

Strong leadership, including that of governors, has ensured that despite staffing changes and the inevitable demands of a growing school, the focus on improvement has continued unabated. Your clear focus combined with effective systems of monitoring and support have underpinned the ways in which you are addressing the areas for development identified in the school's improvement plan. Parents also noted your 'dedication to the learning and welfare of the children' and that staff 'constantly strive to do the best for the children'.

Governance at Hauxton Primary is rigorous. The governing body is committed to the improvements you are putting in place. Through thorough gathering of information, governors have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for

development. Consequently, governors are able to challenge the school and commend it on its successes. Governors share your aspirations and expectations for the social and academic success of each pupil.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are courteous, polite and considerate of the needs of both adults and pupils. As a result, the learning environment in the school is both harmonious and conducive to learning. Pupils are eager to learn. You have provided a well-balanced, enriched curriculum designed to develop pupils' wider understanding of the world. Pupils have opportunities to learn about different cultures and faiths. As a result, pupils are able to reflect and think thoughtfully about the world around them. For example, I observed pupils contemplating the horror of people's experiences during the Second World War in a Year 5/6 English class.

You correctly judge the early years provision to be a strength of the school. Strong leadership in early years has ensured that children make a good start to their learning at Hauxton. The learning environment is structured well to develop children's skills, knowledge and understanding. The development of children's academic skills such as reading, writing and mathematics is skilfully embedded in the early years curriculum. The proportion of children making a good level of development has remained consistently above the national average. This is because staff ensure that activities match the needs of children. Staff also work hard to enthuse and engage children. As a consequence, children told me how much they enjoy coming to school to learn.

You and your leaders take effective action where you identify areas for development. For example, as a result of your increased focus on accelerating the achievements of the most able pupils in writing, outcomes at key stages 1 and 2 rose in 2016 and were significantly above the national average. However, you acknowledge that there are areas in which the school can continue to improve. For example, you have stringent plans in place to further improve the teaching, learning and assessment of reading across the curriculum. You have also recognised the importance of ensuring that mathematics tasks are more consistently matched to the needs of pupils to raise their overall achievements.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils told me that they feel safe and protected at Hauxton Primary School. Pupils are enthusiastic learners who support each other with care and thoughtfulness. Pupils told me that they value being at a small school as it feels 'like a family' where staff look after every pupil. Parents unanimously agreed on Parent View that their children were safe at the school.

E-safety is a priority at the school. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when online and were able to tell me a range of ways in which they protected themselves. As a small community school where many pupils walk to school, you have particularly focused on road safety. The involvement of the police has further raised the profile and importance of road safety. Some pupils have additional responsibilities to support other pupils through the junior travel ambassador scheme. Pupils take this responsibility seriously and wear their badges with pride.

Pupils understand what bullying is and what forms it can take. They told me that bullying is not a common occurrence at the school. School records confirm that bullying is not a problem. Pupils explained that when issues occur, staff act swiftly and firmly to ensure that they are resolved.

Leaders, including governors, ensure that safeguarding arrangements are secure and effective. The school's referral system is rigorous. All concerns are recorded and acted upon where necessary. Adults are trained well in their safeguarding responsibilities. Pupils told me that they felt confident that they could go to a member of staff if they had an issue and that staff would support them. Documentation is securely maintained and reviewed regularly to ensure that the needs of pupils are addressed. Inspection evidence demonstrates that when a pupil requires support, leaders respond quickly and appropriately.

Inspection findings

- To ascertain that the school remained good, one of my key lines of enquiry was about pupils' achievements in reading at both key stages. Most pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, made progress in line with national expectations in 2016 and 2017. However, pupils' attainment at key stage 2 was below the national average in 2016 and 2017. Although the number of pupils is very small, you have acknowledged the issue and put in place improvements to the teaching, learning and assessment of reading at both key stages. As a result, you have reviewed the ways in which pupils develop their understanding of the ideas conveyed in the texts they read. It is, however, too early to evaluate the impact of these strategies.
- You have acknowledged the important role that developing pupils' enjoyment of reading plays in raising standards. For example, a weekly buddy reading scheme whereby the entire school comes together to read has been in place for a number of years. Pupils told me how much they enjoyed both reading to older pupils and listening to younger pupils. They also told me how valuable they found the process of talking about books. You have created an engaging school library alongside class-based book corners filled with interesting books.
- As I visited classrooms and talked to your leadership team and pupils, the school's focus on developing pupils' reading skills was evident. For example, in a Year 5/6 class I observed pupils of all abilities exploring the meaning invested in words to describe the terror of the Second World War. Pupils were able to make explicit links between the crafting of their writing and the ways in which language shapes meaning.
- As a small school, you are active in promoting external links to ensure that pupils receive good-quality teaching and learning. Through both the partnership with local schools and the local authority school improvement service, you have provided leaders and staff with training to improve their teaching of reading. Leaders are able to effectively monitor and track the quality of teaching, learning and assessment as well as the achievements of pupils. You ensure that this information is used effectively to plan support. However, the quality of teachers' support for reading remains inconsistent across year groups and key stages.
- My second line of enquiry was about how leaders are ensuring that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, receive a broad and balanced curriculum. You and your

leadership team continually monitor and review the curriculum offered to all pupils. Consequently, you and your leaders have established a strong curriculum. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of areas. For example, pupils learn to play a musical instrument and to speak Italian throughout their time at school.

- You have ensured that every subject area has a subject leader to drive improvements. Leaders are provided with appropriate time and support to develop their subject areas. They are able to draw on the support of the local authority school improvement service alongside the local partnership of schools. For example, leaders engage in external moderation to validate the accuracy of internal assessments.
- The leadership of science has been instrumental in driving a skills-based curriculum that engages and inspires pupils. For example, evidence in pupils' books demonstrates pupils' ability to hypothesise, experiment and evaluate concepts such as the composition of tornadoes in Year 1/2. In addition, you and the science leader draw on the expertise in the local area to provide pupils with meaningful ways in which science can have an impact on their lives, such as DNA screening.
- Although the numbers are small, you provide tailored support to disadvantaged pupils to ensure that they experience a broad and enriching experience of education. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress across the curriculum.
- You and your leadership team have also embedded a secure assessment system to monitor and track the progress of pupils in every area of the curriculum. This has been effective in providing information about how each pupil performs across the curriculum and to identify emerging issues.
- I also sought to establish how well pupils achieve in mathematics at both key stages. You and your leadership team accurately identified mathematics as an area for development and have drawn on a range of expertise to support and improve teaching and learning. As a consequence, pupils made improved progress and achieved well at key stage 2 in 2017.
- Your robust monitoring cycle of teaching and learning has accurately identified reasoning as an area for improvement in mathematics. With help from the local authority to provide bespoke support to teachers, together with putting in place a range of additional strategies, you have succeeded in improving outcomes for pupils. However, you are ambitious for further success and acknowledge that there is still inconsistency in the ways in which mathematical tasks are tailored to meet the needs of all pupils. Consequently, pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
- My final line of enquiry was about how well pupils keep themselves safe both in and outside of school. Pupils' behaviour in class is exemplary. They are thoughtful and supportive in their responses to each other. School is both a harmonious and an enjoyable place for most pupils. I spoke to pupils who told me how much they appreciated the ways in which the school cared for them and made lessons 'fun'. Attendance continues to be a strength of the school, which is testament to the hard work of staff in making school an inviting and exciting place to be. Since your appointment as headteacher, no pupils have been excluded. The school is supportive of the needs of others and has effective behaviour strategies in place to prevent issues escalating.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- mathematics tasks consistently match the needs of pupils so that they can extend their skills further
- the teaching, learning and assessment of reading continue to improve by:
 - embedding reading for pleasure more explicitly at the heart of the reading curriculum
 - making high-quality texts central to the curriculum so that pupils read for meaning in a range of subject areas
 - using assessment information to plan reading tasks with greater precision at key stage 1.

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

Yours sincerely

Susan Aykin
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

- During the course of this inspection I held meetings with you, other senior and middle leaders and a group of three governors.
- I spoke with pupils informally in classrooms and when walking around the school site. I also met formally with a group of 13 pupils.
- I visited a range of classes across key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- I undertook a scrutiny of pupils' work in their books and folders.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined along with the school's record of checks carried out on staff working at the school.
- A range of documents were analysed or discussed, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans; documents relating to pupils' achievement, attendance and behaviour; minutes of governor meetings; and curriculum plans.
- I considered the views of 27 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as 22 views parents expressed via the free-text service.
- I analysed 11 staff views expressed via the staff questionnaire.