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18 April 2018

Mrs Heather Reid  
Headteacher  
Crosby Primary School  
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Lincolnshire  
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Dear Mrs Reid

### **Short inspection of Crosby Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 20 March 2018, 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 2013.

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

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

You and all your staff and governors are ambitious for the pupils in your care. You want them to achieve as well as they can in their learning and personal development. Those parents I spoke with, and those who submitted free-text information in response to Ofsted's online questionnaire, were most positive about the school and all that it does to support their children's good progress.

Your school is a rich mix of cultures and faiths and there is a strong sense of community and mutual respect throughout. Pupils enjoy a safe, calm, orderly environment where everyone is valued equally. Pupils are happy, well looked after and make good progress from their generally very low starting points, even among those who join the school late in key stage 2, often with little or no previous schooling and/or English. Staff embrace these challenges positively because every child does matter in your school.

You lead and manage the school very effectively. Staff and governors trust your good judgement to instigate actions to improve the school with a clear sense of purpose and direction. You have the support of governors, staff, and parents, to improve the school further. You and your senior leaders check closely that the actions planned have the impact they should to benefit pupils' learning and personal development. Pupils trust their teachers and know that everyone at the school is there to help them. They know school is important and most attend regularly and ready to learn. Staff support them effectively and, in turn, pupils learn to work hard and show kindness and respect to others at all times. A high number face extremely challenging circumstances in their lives at home; the school provides them with the stability and resilience they need to grow and flourish.

Your expectations of all staff and pupils are high. Leaders provide staff with the support and training they need to improve their practice so that teaching is consistently good or better. Those staff who are new to the school settle quickly and quickly adopt the culture and ethos which leaders engender. Staff say that are very proud and happy to work at the school, because they feel cared for and valued. Senior leaders have your trust and confidence to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Phase leaders take effective action to bring about improvements in their areas of responsibility and support staff in their teams effectively. They check pupils' progress closely and instigate extra support where pupils are at risk of falling behind their targets. They verify teachers' assessments as accurate and reliable and inform teachers' planning effectively.

You have been diligent in addressing the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. At that time, pupils' standards of attainment were well below average and so you were tasked with raising standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, particularly in mathematics. You have addressed this well. Outcomes at the end of all key stages have been on a rising trend and in key stage 2 in 2017, were considerably higher than those in 2016. This is despite the school experiencing a high turnover of staff and high mobility among its pupils. Standards in Year 6 were much closer to average. From children's very low starting points in the early years, this represents good progress. In mathematics, a more consistent approach to developing pupils' mental arithmetic and problem-solving skills and extending their mathematical vocabulary is proving successful. Achievement in mathematics across the school has markedly improved.

At the time of the last inspection, you were also asked to improve pupils' attendance as it was below average. Your success in tackling poor attendance and promoting good attendance reflects in published information that shows that the proportion of pupils who are absent, including those who are regularly absent, has been falling year on year. In 2017, attendance was in line with that seen nationally.

You evaluate the school's performance accurately. Therefore, you, other leaders and governors are aware of aspects of the school's performance that could be even better. You acknowledge that sometimes, in some year groups, teachers' expectations of what some pupils are capable of achieving could be raised even further. This is especially the case for lower-attaining boys and the most able pupils. You know that further work is also needed to raise standards and increase pupils' progress in reading across the school.

Governors know the school and its community well. They visit the school regularly to review its performance, examine work in pupils' books and talk with pupils about their work. They examine information from the headteacher regarding pupils' progress, and challenge leaders if pupils are not achieving as well as they should. They know that many pupils and their families face difficulties in their lives and are quick to lend their support when issues arise. Governors have the skills and expertise to support developments and ensure that funds are maximised to accelerate the progress of all pupils.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and everyone understands their legal responsibilities to keep children safe. Governors, and all staff, take their roles seriously and regularly review policies related to keeping pupils safe. They

make sure that parents understand the school's safeguarding procedures to act promptly if any concerns arise about any child or their family. Leaders are particularly vigilant in protecting the well-being of the school's high number of disadvantaged pupils, who are often the most vulnerable. Staff take good care of all pupils and provide guidance to children and families on how to stay healthy and safe, and manage their emotional and mental well-being. Checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school are thorough. Leaders brief all new staff fully on the school's procedures to keep pupils safe and to follow guidelines diligently. All concerns are recorded meticulously and leaders take prompt action to alert other authorities where necessary. Leaders follow up any pupil absences urgently to keep pupils safe from harm. If required, leaders instigate legal action to ensure that pupils attend regularly.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school and love being there. They like and trust their teachers and know that they will help them at all times. Staff regularly remind pupils of how to stay safe in school and outside. Pupils learn about internet safety and the risks posed by social media sites and cyber bullying. They know not to tell strangers personal information as this might put them in danger. Younger children talk about not talking to strangers or taking sweets or other things from people they do not know. They learn about fire and road safety and how to stay fit and healthy. Pupils know that any form of bullying is unacceptable. The school deals with any incidents very firmly. As one pupil explained, 'You must never be unkind to people or hurt them or laugh at them. If you are worried at school or home you should tell teachers or parents straightaway.' Parents agree that the school's care arrangements are effective and that staff would alert them if they had any concerns about their child, and would contact other agencies if necessary.

### **Inspection findings**

- While school performance data shows an improving trend in pupils' achievement over time, I wanted to check whether current pupils are achieving well in all key stages. From often very low starting points, children in the early years make good progress. The large majority are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- By the end of Year 2 in 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in writing and mathematics was in line with the national average but below average in reading. A well-above-average proportion of pupils reached greater depth in writing. Overall, these levels of attainment represent good progress from pupils' lower starting points. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils currently in key stage 1 are making good progress.
- In Year 6 in 2016, standards of attainment were below average, especially in reading and mathematics. School performance data indicates that these pupils did not make good enough progress from their previous starting points. In Year 6 in 2017, however, pupils' achievement improved considerably, especially in mathematics. Standards were much closer to average. Inspection evidence confirms that overall good progress is being sustained among current pupils in key stage 2, especially in Years 5 and 6.
- With recent outcomes in reading not being as strong as those in writing and mathematics, I looked at the school's provision for reading. From your analysis of test results in reading last year, you identified that while pupils are competent in their skills to build words, their understanding of vocabulary and their overall

comprehension skills needed further development. Leaders are addressing this urgently and systematically. There is now a greater focus on developing pupils' comprehension skills in all classes. Pupils are becoming more confident and fluent readers. While pupils are doing better in reading this year, the school's focus on this needs to continue so that more pupils reach the expected standards by the end of Years 2 and 6.

- Some children that join the school across the year groups do so at an early stage of English acquisition. Some, including a few pupils in key stage 2, have had little or no previous schooling in their first language. Their vocabulary therefore, is often quite limited and so they find the finer nuances of unfamiliar words or phrases difficult when trying to understand complex texts. Although these pupils find reading a challenge, the effective teaching of reading, including phonics, and the support they receive ensure that these pupils make rapid gains in learning to read.
- During the inspection, I considered the achievement of different groups of pupils. In particular, I looked at the performance of disadvantaged pupils. This is because in 2017 these pupils did not achieve as well as other pupils in the school and nationally. Leaders identify any pupils at risk of underachieving early and organise swift and effective support to help them accelerate their progress. The school is using pupil premium funds to good effect and, as a result, most disadvantaged pupils are currently achieving well across the school.
- The school's monitoring of teaching and learning is effective. During our joint observations of pupils at work, we agreed that, overall, we saw effective teaching and learning. Pupils were well engaged, keen to learn and trying their best. Their attitudes to learning were good.
- For the most part, teaching ensures that pupils' varying abilities are well considered when planning pupils' learning. Effective additional individual and group support helps those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or are learning English as an additional language to make good progress. Expectations of pupils, including of those who are capable of reaching the higher standards, have risen. However, you are aware that some inconsistencies remain. Sometimes, work for the most able pupils lacks challenge. A few lower-attaining boys, mainly among the disadvantaged, also sometimes do not make the progress they should. Ironing out these few remaining inconsistencies remains an important next step for the school.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are consistently high, especially for lower-attaining boys and most able pupils
- the school's focus on improving achievement in reading continues so that pupils' progress is good in every year group and standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are at least average.

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

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and all your staff, the chair, and vice-chair, of the governing body and one other governor. I also met with your senior phase leaders, other staff and a representative of the local authority. We discussed your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and examined the evidence therein. I reviewed documentation relating to pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, safeguarding checks and policies and procedures. I observed pupils around the school, including in the playground and the dining hall and in classes. Together with your deputy headteacher, we visited almost all classes and discussed these observations. I looked at pupils' books, spoke to pupils about their work and listened to them read. I also met with pupils to get their views of the school. No pupils submitted any responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire. I took into account 14 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, the school's own survey of parents' views from last term, and the 13 free-text messages submitted by parents to Ofsted. I also considered the 31 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.