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Mrs Julie Beardwell  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Beardwell

### **Short inspection of Rawdon Littlemoor Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 4 December 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 October 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment in 2016, you and your team have worked hard to ensure that teaching is of a high quality. You have provided teachers with regular opportunities to learn from each other and effectively share the best practice in the school. As a result, pupils are making strong progress in gaining reading, writing and mathematical skills.

The curriculum provides pupils with rich and notable experiences that engage them and motivate them to work hard. The design of the curriculum ensures that pupils can apply the skills they have learned in literacy, mathematics or science to their topic work. Leaders have made sure that pupils' skills in subjects such as geography, history and art are also developed progressively. As a result, most pupils are confident, knowledgeable learners.

Children in early years are getting off to a strong start. Leaders have provided plenty of opportunities for children to write, by, for example, providing clipboards and pens in the construction corner. This approach is starting to pay off and children are writing regularly. The early years provision is stimulating, and adults are skilled in encouraging children to use an increasingly wide vocabulary.

You and your team recently identified that older girls lack confidence in mathematics. Plans are in place to ensure that teachers give girls more time to work on problems together. This approach is very new, and it is too soon to evaluate its

success.

At the time of the previous inspection, the school was asked to reduce the inconsistencies in pupils' achievement and strengthen teaching. You and your team have secured improvements, so that differences in the current progress made by different groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are minimal. You and your team have also been successful in raising the attainment of pupils in key stage 1, so that it is now consistently above the national average.

You and your team have been effective in ensuring that teachers match tasks to pupils' abilities. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including the small number who have hearing impairment, make strong progress. Teachers have improved the way they challenge the most able pupils and make sure that they ask them difficult questions. However, there are still occasions when teachers give pupils the answers too readily, rather than giving them the chance to work out problems for themselves.

Leaders' planning is focused on the correct priorities, so that staff and governors are clear about exactly what needs to improve. However, this is not sufficiently precise. While you and your governors can see that improvements have been made, it is difficult for you to identify the extent of that improvement at regular intervals.

The school's system to check on pupils' achievements is understood clearly by teachers. You and other leaders use assessment information to identify where there is a risk of pupils underachieving, and take effective action to help them to catch up. Middle leaders are effectively involved in checking on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. They, too, use assessment information effectively for the most part. However, they tend to place too much emphasis on how well pupils make progress in an academic year rather than the progress they have made from their starting points.

Pupils and staff are very supportive of the school. Staff morale is high, and teachers feel well supported by you and other leaders. Pupils who spoke to me and those who responded to Ofsted's pupil survey say that they feel happy and safe and enjoy their learning. Most parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive in their support for the school, but there is a small minority who say that their experience has not been as positive. While the numbers are very few and the reasons given do not follow any theme, it remains a concern for you and your leaders.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders have confirmed that staff know to whom, and how, to report any concerns they have that a child might be at risk of harm. You make sure that staff are kept up to date and you check on how effective training has been through a series of regular briefings and quizzes. As a result, staff are well trained. They are vigilant in keeping an eye out for the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect. The school's records show that leaders are thorough in their dealings with external

agencies. You and other leaders make sure that the appropriate recruitment checks are made on staff joining the school.

Pupils say that they feel safe and that they know they can talk to an adult, if anything is worrying them. Behaviour in the school is calm. Pupils are polite, and they have very positive attitudes to learning. Warm and trusting relationships between staff and pupils are a key factor in pupils feeling safe.

## **Inspection findings**

- Pupils enjoy their learning because their interests are captured by the broad and interesting curriculum. Regular trips and visitors to the school create memorable experiences for pupils at the start of a topic. For example, Year 6 pupils explained that their visit to the Thwaite Museum helped them to understand what life was like during the Second World War. This visit supported pupils in bringing to life their work on the experiences of evacuees.
- You and your leaders review how effective the curriculum is in your regular checks on the quality of pupils' work. For example, after looking at pupils' books, middle leaders became concerned that boys' writing was not of the same quality as that of girls. They reviewed the content of lessons about the Romans and changed the approach to include learning about gladiators. This helped to re-engage boys and, as a result, the quality of their writing improved.
- Pupils study topics that are relevant and interesting. You and your leaders make sure that pupils develop fluent reading, writing and mathematical skills in specific lessons. Opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their skills are threaded through their topic work. For example, when we looked at younger pupils' work, we noted they had learned how to structure sentences and paragraphs in their literacy lesson. We could see that they had used the skills they had learned to write diaries for their topic on space. In addition, it was clear they had quickly increased their vocabulary and knowledge of planets because they could write quickly and accurately.
- Pupils with SEND are making strong progress. This is because staff have high expectations of them. Leaders make sure that the support for these pupils is detailed and that staff cater for their individual needs.
- Pupils who read to me said that they enjoy reading and appreciate having access to a range of challenging texts, including newspapers and poetry. Less able pupils are developing strong strategies to help them sound out unfamiliar words and work out the meaning. Consequently, pupils are developing a wide range of vocabulary, which they can use with confidence.
- When we reviewed pupils' mathematics work, and in our lesson visits, we could see that pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills are developing. We noted that the reasons pupils, especially the most able, were offering for their answers were not fully extended. When we visited lessons, it was clear that teachers had made sure most-able pupils had challenging work. However, while teachers were asking difficult questions, they were too quick to provide solutions for pupils if

they could not answer straightaway.

- Teachers and other adults are making sure that children in early years develop strong reading, writing and mathematical skills. During our lesson visits, we saw children quickly getting to grips with subtraction as a result of the skilful support from adults. In key stage 1, pupils were building strong basic skills by working out different ways of solving calculations. We could see from the work in their books that their skills are secure and fluent. However, despite this strong start, girls in Years 5 and 6 lack confidence in their mathematical skills. We noted, during our lesson visits, that girls were less likely to answer teachers' questions, even when they had the correct solution.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- development planning is sharpened and middle leaders focus on pupils' progress from their starting points in their evaluations
- the concerns raised by a small minority of parents are investigated
- the consistency and quality of problem-solving and reasoning opportunities are improved across the curriculum, especially for the most able pupils and girls.

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

Yours sincerely

Joan Hewitt  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you and other senior and middle leaders and members of the governing body. I met with a representative of the local authority. I visited lessons with you. We looked at pupils' work together with the deputy headteacher and spoke informally with some pupils. I listened to four pupils read. I looked at the results from Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) and considered the 63 responses to it, including the 32 written comments. I evaluated the responses of 16 staff and 52 pupils to Ofsted's surveys. I examined a range of documents, including information about safeguarding, and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.