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Mr Paul Hill
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mr Hill

Short inspection of The Caythorpe Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 March 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.

In September 2016, you took up the post of executive headteacher, also appointing a new headteacher. Together you have brought much-needed stability to the school. The leadership team has taken swift and effective action to bring about the rapid improvements that were needed to maintain the good quality of education at the school. The leadership team has a clear vision for school improvement which is understood and shared by all staff. You have a detailed and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of further improvement. You have ensured that clear plans are in place to address these.

Staff are committed to school improvement. They understand what leaders are working to achieve and fully support them in realising these aims. Staff hold the interests of pupils at the heart of all they do. Staff feel valued, they enjoy working at the school and are proud to be part of it.

Governors are committed to the school. They share the staff's passion for pupils' success. The governing body has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of improvement. Governors are knowledgeable and have the skills to hold leaders to account.

Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. They recognise that staff want the best for them and want them to do well. Pupils are polite and confident. They are keen to please and to be successful. You have ensured that pupils enjoy a range of activities to broaden and enrich their experiences. Pupils appreciate these opportunities. The school is highly inclusive and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. Parents are supportive of the school and its staff. They recognise that staff are supportive and feel that their children are happy and safe and that they make good progress.

Leaders have taken effective action to tackle the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. Teachers now set clear learning intentions so that pupils understand what they have to do and the means by which to do it well. Teachers share success criteria and pupils understand how to use these to improve their work. The last inspection identified the need to provide pupils with more opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills. You have introduced a theme-based approach which incorporates all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils practise skills learned in discrete English and mathematics lessons during other aspects of their learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 told me how they had used their learning in mathematics to draw line graphs to depict population change in Victorian England as part of their topic work. Pupils are also provided with plenty of opportunities to develop their extended writing skills in various aspects of the curriculum.

Following her appointment in September 2016, the headteacher identified the need to develop pupils' attitudes to learning. She sought the views of pupils by creating a school council and supported pupils to recognise and understand the need to take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils used the existing school values to create a set of shared rules, promoting good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils have embraced these expectations. Behaviour is good and pupils' personal development and welfare are promoted well. All staff and pupils have contributed to the creation of a rich learning environment. For example, they have collaborated to produce vibrant displays that reflect pupils' learning and celebrate their successes.

In September, you identified the need to change the way in which teaching assistants were used to support pupils' learning. You have introduced a new model where pupils' progress is regularly assessed and teaching assistants are regularly re-deployed, ensuring that pupils' needs are recognised and met. Your internal tracking indicates that this is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.

You have rightly identified the provision of mathematics as an area in need of further improvement. You have recently appointed a new subject leader to drive improvements across the school. In the short time that she has been in post, there have been tangible improvements. Leaders are rightly maintaining this as a priority for school improvement.

Although much work has been undertaken to improve the rates of attendance and the progress of disadvantaged pupils, you recognise that further work is needed.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding practices are effective. You have created a culture where all staff embrace their responsibilities to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils. For example, staff are kept fully updated about current practice and potential concerns specific to the school and its pupils. All staff have received appropriate and up-to-date training. Records are of extremely high quality; they are detailed and reflect leaders' tenacity in following up concerns.

Pupils of all ages understand how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. For example, they are aware of the potential dangers of the internet and how to use it safely. At the time of the inspection, pupils had recently participated in an assembly that highlighted the importance of wearing a bicycle helmet, demonstrating the impact of the failure to do so with a cracked egg, representing an injured head.

Inspection findings

- The new leadership team is a strength of the school. Leaders are highly supportive of staff, while being clear in their expectation that high standards are achieved by all. The improvements that have been brought about since September are appreciated by all.
- Leaders have ensured that systems for monitoring the performance of staff are rigorous. Staff are now held to close account and have clear targets which they are supported to achieve.
- The headteacher has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school. She has identified areas most in need of improvement and taken rapid action to support staff to address these. The quality of teaching is improving and pupils are making good progress across the school.
- The school has benefited from considerable support from The Community Inclusive Trust. For example, teachers have collaborated with staff from other schools to develop their understanding of effective teaching practice by observing these staff teaching. Leaders have worked with their peers from other schools to develop their knowledge and skills, for example in ensuring effective safeguarding practices.
- In 2016, disadvantaged pupils' progress in reading, mathematics and writing was below the national average. Since September 2016, you have taken swift action to review the strategy for the pupil premium funding spending. You have ensured that teachers' assessments are regular and accurate. You have introduced a robust tracking system which regularly reviews pupils' progress. You use this information to correctly identify gaps in pupils' learning so that appropriate support can be put in place.

- As a result of this revised approach, disadvantaged pupils, of all ages, are currently making accelerated progress in all subjects. The difference in the progress between disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils is diminishing.
- A key focus of this inspection was to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics. You have already identified this as a priority and the newly appointed mathematics leader is beginning to bring about improvements. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics is good. Pupils who are currently in the school are making more rapid progress than in recent years.
- You have introduced a new assessment and feedback policy to challenge inconsistencies in teachers' marking. Pupils are responding well to the application of this policy and making good progress as a result. When we looked at pupils' books, we saw examples of this system providing additional challenge for most-able pupils in mathematics.
- In 2016, whole-school attendance was in line with national averages. However, disadvantaged pupils' attendance was considerably lower than that of other pupils. Leaders have been uncompromising in their expectations that all pupils should attend school regularly. You have developed positive relationships with families and continue to support them to recognise the importance of good attendance and to help pupils overcome their difficulties in attending. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school has improved.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- strategies already in place to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics are further developed to support pupils to make more rapid progress
- the strategy to ensure the effectiveness of the pupil premium funding is further embedded to support disadvantaged pupils to make continued and sustained progress
- strategies already in place to improve disadvantaged pupils' attendance are further developed to bring about increased rates of attendance.

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

Yours sincerely

Deborah Mosley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with senior leaders, other staff and governors. I also spoke by telephone to a representative of the local authority. I spoke to parents before school and also considered the 35 responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, and the 33 free-text responses. I met formally with a group of pupils and also spoke to pupils during their lessons. I looked at pupils' work in their lessons and in a sample of work across different year groups and abilities. I visited all classes with the headteacher and observed pupils' learning. I scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, school improvement plans, monitoring documents and records relating to safeguarding. I also viewed the information published on the school's website.