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Mrs Angela Hewson
Headteacher
Eastoft Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mrs Hewson

Short inspection of Eastoft Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 31 October 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 November 2014.

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 your staff have built a caring, safe and nurturing environment in which pupils and staff 'strive to be the best they can be'. As a result, the overall quality of teaching and learning remains good and pupils achieve well, over time.

Since the previous inspection, your subject leaders have developed well. They are now confident and capable in carrying out effective checks on how well pupils are learning. Experienced leaders know their subject areas well and demonstrate a successful track record of improving teaching and learning.

You and your staff are a close-knit team and work well together. There are effective checks on the quality of pupils' work, the accuracy of teacher assessments and the progress pupils should be making. All staff understand that accountability rests with them for the progress their pupils make.

You know the school inside out. Your self-evaluation is sharp, accurate and honest. You have identified the right priorities to further improve the school. You and your staff are prepared to dig deep to check that teaching and learning continues to improve. This involves detailed analysis of pupils' responses to questions, reviewing pupils' work over time and an increasingly detailed analysis of pupils' progress, particularly in Year 6.

Your school improvement plan clearly highlights the right priorities. However, it is not clear how your actions will improve teaching over time. This makes it difficult for you and your governors to check whether improvements are having the intended impact. This lack of clarity also relates to the impact that additional funding will have on pupils, including pupil premium and funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Governors are a keen and dedicated group. They come from a range of backgrounds and use their experience, well, to provide good levels of support and challenge. They have benefited from recent training and this is helping them build their confidence and skills over time. Governors are not afraid to have challenging discussions about your self-evaluation, the progress pupils are making and the provision for pupils in Nursery and Reception. Governors also meet their statutory duties and review policies in a timely manner.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff I met with leave nothing to chance. They are anything but complacent and recognise that safeguarding issues could happen anywhere. This means they remain vigilant and keen to report any concerns they may have, no matter how big or small.

Pupils recognise this vigilance too. Pupils I spoke with are happy and feel safe in school. Pupils are keen to stress that they know their concerns will be listened to and are confident to report any worries they have. Pupils who completed the Ofsted survey confirm this, as did several parents who described the school as 'a warm and welcoming place'.

Staff have worked hard with a small number of families who were not sending their children to school regularly. Current school attendance information shows that this work is paying off. There has been a marked improvement. Overall attendance has improved and persistent absence has significantly fallen. Staff are alert to pupils who are absent from school and make effective checks to ensure that these pupils are safe, even when they are not in school.

Staff work well with other agencies and professionals. Together, they have provided early help and support to those children and families, including valuable advice from health workers and educational psychologists

Leaders have developed an effective curriculum which teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe. This includes topics such as sexting, peer-on-peer abuse and cyber bullying. Staff also receive useful training about radicalisation and extremism, bullying, domestic abuse and the dangers of using children to sell drugs across county lines.

You and your governors take effective steps to check staff are suitable to work with pupils in your school. Your record of these checks complies with legal requirements.

Inspection findings

- Reading is a real strength of the school. You have been innovative in your approach to improve reading in the light of 2017 outcomes. You have created a monthly bookshop in which pupils and their parents can pick up a good read. This has raised the profile of reading and helped pupils to enjoy reading for pleasure. Pupils I spoke with read clearly and confidently. They enjoy the updated range of books and magazines on offer in their classrooms. As a result, outcomes improved in reading across the school in 2018.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have taken clear and effective steps to improve pupils' writing skills at both key stages. There have been significant improvements to the presentation, quality and accuracy of writing, especially in the pupils' use of grammar.
- Teachers have successfully improved the levels of challenge for all groups of pupils across a range of subjects, including science, history and geography. Work over time shows the use of well-thought-through 'tricky challenges'. These engage and encourage pupils, including the most able, to think deeply about their work on a regular basis.
- Leaders have rightly identified that the progress pupils make in mathematics remains a key priority, especially in the light of key stage 2 outcomes in 2018. Teachers have started to take effective steps to improve the levels of challenge in mathematics, particularly in reasoning and problem-solving. Although early signs are promising, it is too soon to evaluate whether these actions will have the intended impact.
- Leaders have created a broad and enriching curriculum. There are a good range of extra-curricular activities and after-school clubs, including craft, reading, farming and sporting clubs. This, along with a range of trips and visits, is helping to broaden pupils' minds and experiences. One pupil captured the impact of this work well when they said, 'School has allowed me to visit places I wouldn't usually go.'
- Early years provision continues to be a work in progress. Very recent changes have been made to the indoor provision. These are now increasing the opportunities for children to deeply engage in well-directed play. There is a clear flow from one area to another and this is starting to help them improve their mark-making skills. However, there is still a need to improve outdoor provision, especially in relation to increasing opportunities for children to develop their gross motor skills and phonetic knowledge.
- Pupils are friendly, polite and happy. They engage well with their teachers, other staff and visitors. They also enjoy the 'traffic light' behaviour system and take great pride in staying on green for their good behaviour. They look forward to the celebrations and rewards given for behaving well.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils, especially those in key stage 2, improve their progress in mathematics
- the very recent improvements made to early years provision continue and have a positive impact on children's progress
- improvement plans clearly show the timescales for when actions will occur and the intended impact they will have.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Sheffield, 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

Phil Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, your assistant headteacher and a group of subject leaders. I met with a group of governors and had meetings with a local authority officer and a representative from the Diocese of Sheffield. Together with you and your assistant headteacher, we visited classrooms to observe teaching and to look at pupils' work. I listened to pupils read. Consideration was given to 10 free-text responses from Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and to 15 pupil surveys. I evaluated recent information in relation to pupils' progress, the school's own self-evaluation document, the school improvement plan and a range of documentation about how you keep pupils safe.