

26 July 2018

Miss Karyn Wiles  
Executive Headteacher  
Gedney Drove End Primary School  
Spalding  
Lincolnshire  
PE12 9PD

Dear Miss Wiles

### **Short inspection of Gedney Drove End Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 21 June 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 January 2015.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

Gedney Drove End is a member of the Griffin Federation of three local schools with you as the executive headteacher. It is a popular school. You have fostered positive relationships with the local community. Parents and carers value the friendly, encouraging ethos of the school and your purposeful leadership. As one parent commented: 'This school makes a rounded person. They've got the tools to go on.' Parents know that any concerns they have will be dealt with appropriately.

Pupils told me they are happy to come to school and they are enthusiastic about the range of visits and wider opportunities planned to promote their interest in learning. Pupils say that they enjoy lessons that challenge them because, on occasions, they find the work too easy. When the expectations of teachers are high, pupils respond well. Pupils know how well they are doing because of the house points award system in place. Pupils report that, as well as learning English and mathematics, they would like to learn more in other subjects, such as art, science and music.

You work closely with your team of specialist senior and middle leaders to secure the continued development of the school. You share good practice and training opportunities within the federation. Leaders have opportunities to check on pupils' learning, so that they are able to contribute to improving the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, published data shows that all children in the Reception class in 2017 achieved a good level of development. The proportion of pupils who reached

the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 and at the end of key stage 2 was above the national average.

However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Not all initiatives relating to writing and mathematics are equally effective across the school. Consequently, over a period of time, progress for a proportion of pupils in writing and mathematics has been below the national average. Leaders do not have the necessary skills they need to ensure that they can use a range of evidence to assess the quality of teaching and learning accurately. Your current evaluation of the school's work does not fully reflect where improvements to teaching still need to be made so that all children and pupils make good progress.

The governing body are knowledgeable regarding the school's priorities and regularly track how well the school improvement plan is being implemented. They recognise that targets set for pupils' achievement are ambitious and appropriate. Without a more precise picture of the strengths and areas for improvement in teaching, the governing body cannot form a reliable picture of whether targets are likely to be achieved.

During a tour of the school, which you and I conducted together, it was noted that there was an inconsistency in how well tasks were designed to match the ability of different pupils and to provide sufficient challenge for them all to do as well as they should. This meant that some work was too easy for the most able pupils.

During the inspection, some members of staff were successful in managing the conduct of pupils who require extra help to manage their behaviour. However, in lessons, when pupils' concentration lapsed, some disruption was not efficiently dealt with.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The school administrator ensures that all checks on staff, volunteers and visitors meet statutory requirements. Your record-keeping is well organised and records are kept securely. Policies are reviewed and updated regularly.

Leaders, including members of the governing body, maintain a robust safeguarding culture across the school. You have made sure that all staff receive timely and up-to-date training in child protection. Checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children are comprehensive and are kept securely. Members of the governing body make thorough checks on all safeguarding practices. High-quality, detailed records show that you manage concerns swiftly and understand the procedures for referring pupils to other agencies when there are concerns.

Most parents spoken to, and most of those who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their children are happy at school and feel secure. Pupils say that they are taught how to stay safe, including when using the internet. They feel safe in school and are confident to seek help if they have fallen

out with other pupils. They understand the forms that bullying can take and report that, while bullying is rare, they are confident that it would be dealt with effectively were it to occur. However, they did express their concerns about poor behaviour in some lessons affecting their learning. A minority of parents felt that poor behaviour by a few pupils is not dealt with effectively.

## **Inspection findings**

- Children enter the school in Reception with skills that are broadly typical for their age. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year is much higher than the national average. However, published data shows that the proportion of pupils who achieve at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and at a higher standard in writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 is lower than in most schools nationally.
- Too few disadvantaged and higher-achieving pupils make the progress of which they are capable in writing. You have identified that teachers are not routinely teaching the key components of good writing, which include spelling and grammar. A significant minority of pupils do not always use correct spellings, punctuation and grammar when they are writing independently.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to write independently, at greater length and depth and in a range of curriculum subjects. An over-reliance on tasks that require a single word answer limits pupils' thinking and how much they write.
- Adults do not always assess pupils' work accurately and mistakes made by pupils are missed. Pupils who have the capacity to reach the expected or greater depth standards are not given frequent enough opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills sufficiently. The new strategies you are implementing for hastening pupils' progress in writing have not had enough impact yet.
- A significant minority of pupils do not make the progress they are capable of in mathematics. Pupils' skills in understanding questions, reasoning and applying their mathematical understanding to solving problems are underdeveloped.
- Where teaching is effective, Year 6 pupils were successfully working through calculations to work out dimensions of shape and profit and loss on commodities. They were eager to move on to the challenge of solving problems relating to creating a profitable, computerised theme park. However, not all teachers in key stage 2 discuss pupils' thinking with them well enough. There are limited opportunities for pupils to explore and express their mathematical reasoning in an age-appropriate and logical manner. Pupils in key stage 2 are not suitably challenged in mathematics and are sometimes given work that is too easy.
- A significant proportion of pupils have not yet secured appropriate skills in handwriting. Inconsistencies in the presentation of work in pupils' books show that adults' expectations are not always high enough.
- The school is vigilant in monitoring pupils' absence and has been successful in improving overall attendance and in reducing the proportion of pupils who are

persistently absent. Published information shows that attendance is in line with the national average. Leaders are effective in ensuring that pupils' attendance continues to improve.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers strengthen pupils' mathematical reasoning skills so that an increased proportion reach the greater depth and higher standards
- the teaching of writing in key stage 1 and key stage 2 improves so that it securely accelerates the progress of the disadvantaged and the most able pupils and extends opportunities for pupils to write for a broad range of purposes
- teachers set work for pupils that matches their abilities and provides sufficient challenge
- the accuracy of the school's improvement planning fully supports leaders at all levels in swiftly bringing about improvements when they are needed
- all adults use the school's behaviour policy so that pupils' behaviour is consistently good
- teachers have high expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work.

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

Elizabeth Moore  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, senior and middle leaders, the chair of the governing body and another governor, all Year 6 pupils, a representative of the local authority, and parents at the start of the school day. I observed the conduct of pupils around and outside the school. I considered the eight responses that parents made to Parent View, and those of 12 staff and 10 pupils from the electronic questionnaires. We visited all classes in the school together, and looked at a sample of pupils' work. I viewed a range of documents. These included the school's evaluation of its performance, plans for further improvement and information on how the pupil premium is spent. A number of other policy documents were examined, including those for child protection and safeguarding and the single central record.