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2 February 2017

Mrs Susan Ulph
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Ulph

Short inspection of Aldbrough Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 January 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 January 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, your staff and governors have a clear vision for the school that promotes the achievement of every pupil within a caring community. You also have high expectations for the pupils. Pupils learn in a happy, calm and friendly atmosphere. Consequently, pupils have good attitudes in lessons and around the school.

At the previous inspection, the school was challenged to ensure that all higher-attaining pupils make the progress and reach the standards of which they are capable in writing. In response, leaders and governors prioritised writing and took action to address identified issues. As a result, outcomes steadily improved to significantly above average in 2015. Although there was a decline in writing in 2016, current evidence shows that this has been addressed and pupils, and in particular the most able, are making good progress and attaining well. Pupils' books show that standards in writing are being maintained in other subjects, for example science. Pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work and, from an early age, are taught how to write in a neat cursive style, which they do confidently.

Since the last inspection you have focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning in order to improve outcomes. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are learning during lessons and that the work pupils do is at an appropriate level. Teaching assistants offer effective support and, through precise questioning and clear explanations, they ensure that the pupils they support make good progress.

You have rightly identified that pupils' progress in mathematics is not as strong as in reading and writing. Consequently, you have introduced a new way of teaching mathematics. Evidence in books indicates that this is having an impact, and standards in mathematics across the school are improving for most pupils. You and your staff have acknowledged that there is still more work to do to ensure that the mathematics curriculum fully meets the needs of pupils who are most able. You have raised awareness of the mathematics curriculum with parents so that they understand what their children are expected to achieve and how they can help.

You are working hard to improve attendance, which remains stubbornly below the national average. Governors have taken a firmer line and issued sanctions when parents do not make sure that their children attend school regularly. The school's information shows that, overall, attendance is improving.

Safeguarding is effective.

Keeping pupils safe and secure is at the heart of the safeguarding culture in your school. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a good quality. You have ensured that all staff receive the necessary training so that they know the signs to look out for. Staff know their pupils very well and follow up concerns swiftly. Staff have been trained to protect pupils from radicalisation through the government's 'Prevent' strategy. You have formed good relationships with external agencies, which offer support to families where this is appropriate.

There are well-planned opportunities for pupils to learn to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. All parents who responded to the Ofsted online Parent View survey considered that the school kept their children safe.

Inspection findings

- You, your senior leaders and your governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to bring about further improvements.
- The subject leaders have clear action plans in place to improve teaching in their subjects. Leaders are now able to monitor the quality of teaching and outcomes in their subjects for themselves. However, school leaders and governors recognise that the monitoring of teaching and learning needs a sharper focus.
- Pupils' books show that they are making good progress in writing. Pupils from an early age are taught to use a range of grammar techniques and spell correctly in their writing. For example, in a key stage 1 class, pupils were using time connectives confidently and spelling complex words correctly. Older pupils write successfully for a range of purposes, such as letters, recounts and playscripts and use a range of interesting vocabulary to good effect.
- Significant amendments have been made to the mathematics curriculum following the school's most recent results. Pupils are given frequent opportunities

to practise their mathematical skills and, consequently, arithmetic fluency and ability to reason logically are now more evident across year groups.

- Since the last inspection, the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils have been similar to other pupils nationally. Although in 2016 there was a decline in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2, evidence in pupils' books indicates that disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making broadly secure progress.
- A scrutiny of pupils' books during the inspection shows that most-able pupils are challenged effectively and attaining high standards in writing. In mathematics, most-able pupils are challenged well, but are not applying consistently their well-developed fluency skills to more complex problem-solving activities.
- Leaders and teachers encourage pupils to read accurately. Pupils' reading records are well maintained and show evidence of how parents support children with their reading at home. Pupils read well and, taking into account their starting points, make good progress. Younger pupils understand how to use appropriate techniques, including phonics, to help them deal with unfamiliar or difficult words.
- Pupils show very positive attitudes to learning. They know what is expected of their learning and behaviour. Leaders have created a nurturing environment. Their high expectations ensure that pupils have excellent attitudes towards adults and each other.
- Attendance has been below average and still remains so. However, leaders and governors have adopted a firmer approach to improving attendance and current figures are showing that it is improving.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- most-able pupils apply their skills in mathematics to complex problem-solving activities more regularly so they can reach the higher levels of which they are capable
- leaders have a sharper focus on monitoring the quality of teaching so that teachers receive appropriate support and guidance when necessary
- attendance improves and levels of persistent absence decline so that pupils are not missing out on valuable learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Alan Chaffey
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, subject leaders for mathematics and English and four governors. I also had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. You accompanied me on visits to all year groups. I reviewed samples of pupils' work in writing, mathematics, science and topic books; this was done jointly with you and subject leaders for mathematics and English. I talked with pupils during lessons and listened to pupils read. I examined a range of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation, current development plans, safeguarding and child protection records and the school's own assessment information. I also took into account the views of 26 parents who responded to Parent View and the 20 staff questionnaires.

In particular, this short inspection focused on the impact of leaders' actions to improve standards in writing and mathematics in key stage 2, the effectiveness of leaders' work to improve attendance, challenge for the most able pupils and rates of progress for disadvantaged pupils.