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Mrs Nichola Geale  
Headteacher  
Cottingley Village Primary School  
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West Yorkshire  
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Dear Mrs Geale

### **Short inspection of Cottingley Village Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 10 October 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 November 2012.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection and you have effected significant improvements in many aspects. As headteacher, you lead with commitment and determination and have a clear vision of the experience you want all pupils to encounter at your school. You are ably supported by your leadership team, who share your vision and work effectively with you to achieve it. Your motto, 'we strive for excellence and together we succeed', is a hallmark of the school. As a result, pupils are happy, safe and achieve well.

Cottingley Village Primary is a school that offers a caring, nurturing and inclusive family atmosphere. Pupils learn in an environment of trust and respect; there is an air of calm around the school, which is the same in lessons as it is outside them. Pupils support each other very well, and their relationships with each other and adults are a strength of the school. Pupils are extremely polite and well mannered and their conduct around the school is exemplary. All of the pupils I spoke to told me how much they enjoy coming to school. Parents spoke highly of the support their children get from staff to help them succeed and are proud of the school and all that it achieves.

Your evaluation of the quality of teaching provides a very accurate view of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. You and your leaders continually evaluate the effectiveness of the work that you do so that you can bring about

further improvement. You have worked successfully to ensure that the quality of teaching is strong in all areas of the school and have acted decisively to make sure that any weaker teaching is quickly addressed. You carefully track the progress of all pupils and quickly identify groups and individuals who are falling behind, working with teachers to plan how to address gaps in pupils' learning. You told me that you are now developing these processes in subjects other than English and mathematics to ensure that pupils make equally strong progress across all areas of the curriculum.

At the end of key stage 2, pupils are making good progress, with some making even better gains in reading, writing and mathematics than pupils of the same age nationally. Consequently, standards are above the national average. However, you have rightly identified that the progress made by the most able pupils in reading and mathematics has not been as strong as it could be. These pupils are now making better progress in reading, although in mathematics you are aware that there is more work to do.

At the time of the last inspection, you were asked to improve pupils' attendance. Attendance has improved and is now above the national average; persistent absence has been below the national average for the last two years. Your work has paid dividends and Cottingley Village Primary is now placed in the top 5% of schools in Bradford for attendance.

Governors are fully committed to the continued success of the school and have an accurate view of what is working well and what could be better still. Through regular visits they assure themselves that pupils are well cared for and safe. They offer a healthy balance of challenge and support to you and your team. Governors value the training they receive and use this to suggest further improvements that benefit the school.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a strong culture in the school of keeping pupils safe and secure. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that all statutory requirements are very well met. Senior leaders ensure that appropriate checks are carried out when appointing new members of staff. Records are detailed and of high quality.

All staff receive regular training in keeping pupils safe from all forms of abuse. You review and update training arrangements thoroughly to take account of current guidance and refresh your knowledge of specific risks which pupils may encounter. The designated safeguarding leaders have received appropriate training and are diligent in carrying out their responsibilities. They always act on any concerns reported by staff. If a child protection referral is made, staff are tenacious in following it up with appropriate outside agencies.

Pupils told me that they feel safe and well cared for in school. They know that there is always someone they can talk with if they have any worries. For example, pupils are invited to feed any anxieties they have during the week to the 'worry monster'

in their classroom. Pupils told me that bullying very rarely happens in school and if it did, they are confident that an adult would deal with it immediately.

## **Inspection findings**

- As part of the inspection, I explored whether the most able pupils are making good enough progress in reading. Throughout the school, the most able pupils are enthusiastic about reading and their skills are well developed. Teachers provide opportunities for them to develop complex reading skills, such as inference, prediction and summarising, through challenging texts and activities. Pupils appreciate the variety of books on offer in the school's well-stocked library. The introduction of 'themed libraries' has been very successful, and pupils told me how much they enjoy reading high-quality texts, fiction and non-fiction, linked to 'space' or written by famous authors such as Terry Pratchett.
- I also explored whether the most able pupils are making enough progress in mathematics. Teachers ensure that appropriate apparatus and practical materials help pupils understand mathematical concepts effectively. Work in books shows that pupils' confidence and skills in calculation are very secure. At times, however, we discussed that the most able pupils spend too long practising mathematical calculations that they have already grasped. Teachers do not always ensure that these pupils are given sufficient opportunities soon enough or frequently enough to reason and apply their skills in solving increasingly complex problems.
- The quality of writing across the school is good. Teachers give pupils clear success criteria and pupils confidently use these to check, edit and improve their work. Pupils are given opportunities to write at length in other curriculum areas and produce work of a high standard as a result of teachers' high expectations. Recent whole-school training led by the English leader has developed teachers' understanding of the increased expectations of the new curriculum. Consequently, in 2017 more pupils were working at the higher standard than found nationally at the end of key stages 1 and 2.
- The school's curriculum is well planned and provides pupils with a broad range of subjects to study which successfully promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Work seen in the books of older pupils is of particularly high quality. It is well presented and shows that pupils take a real pride in what they do in all subjects. While leaders track the progress that pupils make in English and mathematics in detail, you acknowledge that you now need to review, with the same rigour, the progress that pupils make in other subjects.
- By the end of Reception, children reach levels of development that are above those expected nationally and are well prepared for key stage 1. Across key stage 1, pupils continue to make strong progress from their starting points. The 2017 provisional data indicates that standards in reading, writing and mathematics remained above national averages. The proportion of Year 1 pupils meeting the expected level in the phonics screening check remained above the national average, with a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils meeting the standard.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers plan more regular opportunities for most-able pupils to develop their reasoning skills through complex mathematical problems
- leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics develop the use of assessment systems further in order to provide a clear overview of progress for cohorts and key groups.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Randall  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I met with you, your deputy headteacher, three assistant headteachers, eight parents and two members of the governing body. I had a telephone conversation with the school improvement partner. I talked with a small group of pupils informally during lunchtime as well as in the classrooms we visited. Along with you, your deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, I visited classes and looked at current books from pupils in different year groups.

I examined a range of documentation, including documents relating to attendance, safeguarding and the quality of teaching. I took account of the minutes of the governing body meetings, the school's most recent external evaluation and the school's own evaluation of how well it is doing. I reviewed the school's website. As part of the inspection, I considered the 48 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.