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20 April 2017

Mr Richard Brown  
Headteacher  
Great Wilbraham CofE Primary School  
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Dear Mr Brown

### **Short inspection of Great Wilbraham CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 15 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 June 2012.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

The school is a vibrant, happy place where pupils clearly demonstrate the school's vision of being 'caring, confident and creative learners'. Pupils say that Great Wilbraham Primary is 'a friendly school, where everyone looks out for each other'.

You have created a very positive culture in the school that is appreciated by all staff. Morale is high and staff say they are proud to be members of the school. You and governors have recently managed a significant change in teaching staff. Through the school's robust induction procedures, you have worked tirelessly to ensure that teachers joining the school settle quickly and that the school's high standards of teaching are maintained.

Staff are committed and supportive of each other. They work well together and support you in providing a good education for pupils. Teaching across the school is at least good and pupils make strong progress from their starting points across a range of subjects. This ensures that pupils are well positioned to move onto their next phase of learning by the time they leave at the end of Year 6.

In your role, you are ably supported by the recently appointed senior teacher. However, you identify that in this small school you are both trying to undertake too many roles of responsibility. You and the governors acknowledge that you need to develop the leadership team capacity further in order to share some of the workload. Very sensibly, the senior team and governors are looking for ways to ensure that the current rigour in place is sustainable in order to continue to move forward with your astute plans for further improvement.

Governors know the school well and are clear about its strengths and areas for improvement. They support and challenge you appropriately to ensure that pupils receive a good education. Governors are well informed and visit the school regularly. You and governors have maintained and developed the strengths identified in the previous inspection report and made very good progress towards achieving successful improvements. In particular, you and governors provide effective leadership with a clear focus on ensuring that teaching and learning secures at least good outcomes for pupils.

An area for improvement from the previous inspection was to devise a wider range of ways to consult with parents and carers, and seek their views. You have developed this well. The school's website gives a full picture of the school, is informative and meets statutory requirements. Parent forum meetings, workshops, termly consultations and questionnaires give parents and carers many opportunities to share their views about the school.

Parents and carers appreciate the way you have sought to develop ways to communicate with them. As one parent said: 'The communication between school and caregivers is well managed and appropriate. There are various, well-advertised ways to contact staff to talk through any concerns. Staff have always been responsive to our comments or requests.' More generally, another parent commented: 'Great Wilbraham Primary is a lovely small school. The children learn in the extremely friendly environment, where they all know each other and all teachers know them.'

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a strong culture of safeguarding within the school. You and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, and records are detailed and of a high quality. Recruitment checks are meticulously carried out by the school business manager: they are up to date and fully meet current requirements. As a result, the school is a safe environment for pupils and they are well cared for.

All staff have regular and appropriate training to understand their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. Staff are clear about what they should do if they have any concerns. You are persistent when concerned about pupils' welfare, and work with external agencies as necessary.

Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and at breaktimes because of the excellent relationships they have with staff and the high standards of behaviour that all staff consistently expect of them. Pupils feel secure knowing there is always an adult at school they can share their worries with.

### **Inspection findings**

- In order to check whether the school remains good, one of the key lines of enquiry I explored was whether the good quality of teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection and whether a large enough proportion of pupils are achieving well from their starting points, particularly in key stage 2.
- The quality and quantity of work in pupils' books, displays around the school and the school's assessment information indicate that the quality of teaching is typically effective over time. Pupils are happy, confident and achieving well across all subjects. As one pupil enthusiastically said, 'The teachers are really good at getting your imagination working, and getting the best out of you.'
- Your checking processes for teaching and learning are rigorous. You gather information from a range of sources, for example by undertaking regular observations of teaching and looking at pupils' work. You judge teaching and learning extremely accurately. Your judgements have been endorsed by the local authority and match my findings. You provide constructive feedback to staff so that they are clear how to improve their practice further. Nevertheless, you know that you need to continue to embed the effective teaching approaches that were introduced at the beginning of the school year to secure and maintain high levels of pupils' achievement.
- Teachers' good understanding of what pupils know and can do ensures that teachers plan work that is matched well to pupils' different ages, needs and abilities. The relationship between pupils and staff is positive, encouraging and highly conducive to learning. Teaching assistants are deployed well and provide effective support for pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on teachers' feedback and to identify what they need to do to make better progress. This enables pupils to be clear about how to achieve further success.
- Another key line of enquiry focused on how leaders are ensuring that pupils achieve well in mathematics. This is because pupils' outcomes in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 in 2016 were disappointing, as pupils achieved well below the national average. While the results were skewed by the small number of pupils who undertook the assessments, you identified that some pupils had gaps in their essential skills and some pupils were not able to apply their knowledge to solve mathematical problems confidently.

- You took swift action to address the dip in pupils' performance by introducing a whole-school focus on securing core mathematical skills and developing problem solving by using mathematics knowledge in a range of different contexts. To support this approach, the mathematics curriculum was enhanced by purchasing a scheme of work to support teachers' planning. 'Build it boxes' were introduced, full of practical resources for pupils to use to increase their understanding of basic number concepts. One pupil said that using practical equipment 'helps me to get the right answer'.
- Specific training was provided to ensure that teachers challenge pupils to increase their confidence and solve mathematical problems. Teachers now challenge pupils routinely, asking pupils questions such as 'What is going to help you?' and 'What do you know already?', which deepens pupils' learning and improves their ability to explain mathematical processes. As a result of your focused actions, the school's assessment information shows clearly that pupils are now making much better progress in mathematics throughout the school.
- Finally, I considered how well pupils are supported and encouraged to attend school. This line of enquiry arose from historical information showing that not all pupils attended school as often as they should. I looked at rates of attendance and, specifically, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Previously, these groups have had particularly high rates of absence, including persistent absence. This is no longer the case.
- You have ensured that attendance is given a high priority and a range of appropriate measures are now in place to ensure that no groups or individuals are held back by low attendance. You take a direct role in addressing attendance issues – for example, phoning parents when pupils do not turn up for school. Current school information shows an improvement in the attendance of all pupil groups. The overall attendance rate is currently just above the 2016 national average.

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

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- the leadership team is developed further to strengthen and enhance the school's capacity for continued improvement
- effective teaching strategies are embedded across the school to ensure consistently good outcomes for all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Fiona Webb  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

- Meetings were held with you where we discussed the key lines of enquiry for this inspection, the school's internal evaluation of its performance, plans for future improvement, and information about current pupils' attendance, progress and attainment.
- I gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, including observations of teaching and learning, jointly with you, in all classes, and sampling of pupils' current work across all subjects and across a wide range of abilities.
- I spoke informally to a number of pupils in classrooms, met more formally with a group of pupils and observed pupils at breaktimes.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined, including mandatory checks made during the recruitment of new staff, and case studies about referrals made to external agencies. A discussion was held with you as the school's designated safeguarding lead.
- I met with the chair of the governing body and five other governors.
- I met with a local authority adviser.
- The views of 33 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and those who spoke or wrote to me during the inspection were taken into account, as well as the 33 responses parents made using the free-text service.