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Phillip Clark  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Clark

### **Short inspection of Foxton Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 25 January 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 February 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. This small school manages to provide a lot for its pupils and the local community. The range of trips, clubs and additional activities is varied and ambitious. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoyed taking part in a djembe drumming session provided by the local music service. Lunchtime activities are organised very well, with a wide range of games available that pupils enjoy and appreciate. Older pupils welcome the excellent opportunities they have for taking responsibility and take care of the younger ones. They carry out roles such as being an 'eco monitor', or check that younger children have washed their hands. You involve all older pupils in these roles by rotating responsibilities.

You have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. You are aware of the strengths in teaching as well as areas that need to develop further. You have created a strong sense of teamwork and staff readily take on additional responsibilities. The school's priorities this year have included improving pupils' reading skills. This remains a focus because a small number of pupils with lower prior attainment still need to develop their understanding of texts further. The teaching of mathematics has been strong over time. You have made sure that the most able pupils can apply their mathematical skills using more challenging tasks because you realised that they could do better in this aspect of their learning.

Since the previous inspection, some staff have left and you have continued to ensure that teaching is planned well. Pupils are developing secure calculation skills

across current classes. The school's use of regular positive feedback is helping pupils to feel motivated and enthusiastic about their learning. For example, they enjoy the prospect of being a 'star of the week' and meeting you for a discussion and some refreshments. You are aware that reducing the absence of a small group of pupils, who have a disproportionate effect on the school's headline attendance and test results, remains a priority.

The governing body has a good range of skills and experience. The chair has ensured that governors receive regular training and has carried out an audit to identify, and address, any gaps in their skills. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and are ambitious for the school to be the best it can. The school has developed an effective partnership with a group of local schools developing joint training, moderation of work and sharing of resources. Staff and parents hold the school in high regard and many provide a high level of support. A typical parent comment was, 'Both my children have loved being at Foxton. It is a fantastic little school.' Pupils think that the school is 'brilliant'. They especially like the friendly atmosphere, how they all get on well with each other and the range of responsibilities they have.

The school provides a good resource for the local community. For example, a breakfast club gives pupils the opportunity to start school early in a safe and secure environment. Pupils vary widely in age, but enjoy being involved in activities such as using a webcam to check on local wildlife, such as a badger sett. The pre-school offers the opportunity for parents to access sessions in the morning and helps the children to feel ready to join the school. Pupils make a good start in the Reception class, building on their skills and experiences, which are broadly typical for their ages. The proportion achieving a good level of development is above average.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff receive regular training in safeguarding and the school has good systems in place to record any concerns. Records, including bullying logs, behaviour logs and any responses to complaints, are meticulous. The governing body has ensured that safeguarding is a high priority and the chair has carried out an audit of the school's procedures. Staff and governors are aware of the 'Prevent' duty. The school checks that visitors, staff and volunteers are suitably qualified and experienced. Pupils commented on the fact that they feel safe in school. They have no concerns about bullying and receive very good opportunities to learn about road safety, as well as how to use the internet responsibly.

### **Inspection findings**

- Published attainment and progress data for the school has fluctuated over time because of the small numbers in each year group. However, because the school is small, you know every pupil very well. You constantly check that pupils are making enough progress and that the school has a good range of information about each pupil. Work that we looked at, discussions with pupils and the

school's information about current key stage 1 and 2 pupils show that most are making good progress. The most able are doing well because they are able to tackle work that challenges them.

- You are aware that some of the older pupils did not do as well as they might have done in reading because their skills in understanding more complex ideas in texts were not as good as they could have been. This has been a school priority this year. Most pupils are now currently making good progress in this aspect of their learning. They have good opportunities to read texts in a range of styles and help each other to focus on improving their understanding of the meaning of sentences, paragraphs and how the information is used to develop ideas.
- A small proportion of pupils are persistently absent from school. Irregular attendance has a negative effect on their progress. Reducing absence remains an ongoing priority for school leaders. The school has good procedures in place to follow up absence on the first day it occurs. You have sought to promote the importance of regular attendance with pupils and parents. Where appropriate, you have also worked with local authority services. The attendance of the large majority of pupils is above average. You are aware of the need to continue to explore and develop strategies to work with a small number of families, so that they are able to support their children to attend school more regularly.
- Your plans for development demonstrate how attendance remains a priority because absence still has a negative effect on the progress made by this small number of pupils, especially a few with lower prior attainment. This is especially the case in lower key stage 2, because a few of these pupils did not make sufficient progress during the previous year.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- promotion of good attendance remains a key priority and that every effort is made to create a positive relationship with the small number of families who are not ensuring that their children attend regularly
- the pupils in lower key stage 2, who have fallen behind during the previous year, continue to receive additional support to help them catch up where they have fallen behind
- teachers continue to provide support for developing pupils' reading skills by helping them to develop their skills in understanding a range of more complex texts.

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

Yours sincerely

David Bray

**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

We discussed the focus for activities that I would carry out at the start of the inspection. I checked safeguarding records, training for staff in safeguarding and how the school follows up any concerns. I also checked the records detailing how the adults working at, or visiting the school, are suitably qualified and experienced. I visited lessons with you across the school, as well as pre-school sessions and the breakfast club. We checked a sample of pupils' work and discussed information about the pupils' progress. I spoke with a group of pupils, discussed their work and heard some pupils read. I met with six representatives of the governing body and reviewed the minutes of meetings of the governing body. I attended part of an assembly, as well as speaking to pupils at breaktime and during lessons. I checked school documents, including the school's self-evaluation summary and school development plan. I took account of the 24 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, from parents, as well as 13 responses to a staff survey and 13 survey responses completed by pupils.