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Mrs Allyson Buckton
Headteacher
Forest of Galtres Anglican/Methodist Primary School
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North Yorkshire
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Dear Mrs Buckton

Short inspection of Forest of Galtres Anglican/Methodist Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 April 2019, 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in April 2013

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment, you have developed a strong team of staff who are proud to work at this school. You are ably supported by your assistant headteacher. Together, you have established a vibrant and inclusive environment in which pupils feel valued and safe. The five school values of creativity, collaboration, courage, care and Christian faith underpin all aspects of school life. One pupil summarised the importance of these values by commenting: 'They are values to live by. They help us in our learning, in our friendships and they are preparing us for secondary school.'

Since the school joined Hope Learning Trust in December 2016, you and your staff value the partnership working and the shared vision to provide the best education and support for pupils, so that they can thrive.

You place a high priority on the development of senior and middle leaders. You have invested in high-quality professional development, with some leaders attending courses to gain national qualifications in leadership. This strengthening of leadership at all levels has resulted in consistent approaches to teaching, learning and assessment across the school.

The majority of parents and carers shared positive views of the school. They particularly like the positive relationship between home and school, the strong sense of community and the good progress that their children make academically. One

parent commented: 'My children really enjoy going to school. They're learning and developing well, they have good relationships with the children and teachers, they feel safe and looked after. I don't think I could ask for any more from a school.'

Pupils say that they enjoy their learning and can talk enthusiastically about how proud they are of their work, particularly in English, mathematics, science and art. They are enthusiastic about the wide range of music tuition which is available to them. For example, pupils can learn to play piano, trumpet, clarinet, saxophone or violin. They also appreciate the opportunities to take on a responsibility, talking with pride about being a school councillor, mini sports leader, librarian or class monitor.

You have dealt effectively with the areas for development identified at your predecessor school's last inspection. You have established effective leadership systems to check on the quality of teaching. Pupils in key stage 2 have become more independent, because teacher questioning and feedback skilfully enable pupils to discover knowledge for themselves. The mathematics curriculum now provides pupils with regular opportunities for problem solving and applying their mathematical skills across a range of subjects. Pupils have strong phonic knowledge, leading to attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check being above the national average over time. You have ensured that teachers provide all pupils with greater challenge in all subjects. As a result, all current groups of pupils, including the most able, are making good progress. However, the proportions of pupils attaining the higher standards in mathematics, writing and English: grammar punctuation and spelling at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 were below the national averages.

The local governing body is responsible for the strategic development of the school, and its members have a clear understanding of their delegated duties. Governors liaise closely with you and other leaders, to assure themselves of the effect that leaders' actions are having on school improvement. Individual governors are linked to the priorities on the school development plan that match their areas of interest and responsibility. This helps them to obtain an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. For example, governors identified that increasing the proportion of pupils attaining higher standards, particularly in writing and mathematics, is a priority. Governors recognise that the range of experience and expertise that they bring to their roles provides a wide perspective to their work. This helps them to ask challenging questions and hold leaders to account.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders make sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that effective action is taken to safeguard pupils. Systems for checking the suitability of staff, volunteers and visitors to the school are thorough and well organised.

You have created a strong culture of safeguarding within the school, with all staff knowing that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff are confident to follow the clear and accountable systems that you have established. You ensure that staff

and governors receive regular training and updates related to safeguarding. Staff who are new to the school receive detailed safeguarding training and information as part of their induction.

All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View and those who shared their views in person with the inspector believe that their children are safe in the school. The vast majority of pupils share this view, saying that they feel safe and they are taught how to keep themselves safe. This includes, for example, learning about road safety, personal safety and adopting safe practices when online. The vast majority of pupils say that bullying is not a problem, but, if it did occur, they state that adults in the school would be able to resolve it.

Inspection findings

- By the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2018, pupils' attainment in writing at the expected standard was weaker compared to their attainment in other subjects. I looked at the quality of teaching and learning in writing. Pupils get off to a strong start with their writing, because of a wide range of writing opportunities in the Reception class. Recent approaches to developing pupils' independence in writing provide opportunities for pupils to edit and redraft their writing. As a result, pupils are improving the application of knowledge and skills in their written work. Teachers have secure subject knowledge when teaching complex vocabulary with related grammar and punctuation. This has resulted in pupils understanding complex reading texts and using ambitious vocabulary within their written work. However, sometimes pupils' written work lacks the quality of presentation and accuracy that is needed to further develop their fluency in writing.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher standards in writing, mathematics and English: grammar, punctuation and spelling at the end of key stage 2 was below the national averages. I wanted to find out if teachers were providing enough challenge to pupils, particularly the most able. Pupils' work in books and the school's own assessment systems indicate that the proportion of pupils currently working within a greater depth of learning in every subject has increased compared to last academic year. However, pupils' spelling knowledge is not as strong. Although pupils are competent at using spelling patterns which are ambitious for their year group, they do not have secure knowledge of spelling patterns they have learned historically. These regular errors in spelling patterns are preventing some pupils from reaching the higher standards in both the grammar, punctuation and spelling tests and in their general writing.
- You have enabled your inclusion worker to liaise closely with the special educational needs coordinator from the multi-academy trust. Together, their work is effective in providing support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). You ensure that staff have high expectations for these pupils. As a result, they make good progress from their starting points, particularly in reading and mathematics. Parents of pupils with SEND are happy with the support their children receive. The attendance of pupils with SEND is above the national average.

- You and your governors check regularly on the progress of disadvantaged pupils. We spent time in lessons talking to disadvantaged pupils and looking at their work. Teachers and teaching assistants provide a consistent approach within lessons, so that all disadvantaged pupils receive the support they need to overcome any barriers to their learning. The majority of current disadvantaged pupils are making good progress across the school. Their attendance is above the national average.
- You have highly effective systems in place to track the attendance of all pupils in your school. The attendance rates for almost all pupil groups have been above the national averages over the past three years. You and your staff provide effective support and guidance to pupils who are regularly absent from school and their families. As a result, the attendance rate has dramatically improved for these individual cases. The proportion of pupils who are absent regularly from the school is currently below the national average for all pupil groups.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- recent approaches to mathematics and writing are embedded, so that the proportion of pupils attaining the higher standards by the end of key stage 2 increases to be at least in line with the national averages
- teachers provide pupils with opportunities to revise and improve their knowledge of spelling patterns, to improve their spelling and support them to reach the higher standards
- pupils' presentation and accuracy of writing are of the highest quality to further improve fluency of written work.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of York, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Alison Aitchison
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, your assistant headteacher, middle leaders, staff and members of the governing body. I met with the primary improvement lead and the chief executive officer of Hope Learning Trust. I observed learning during lessons across the school with you. During these lessons, I spoke with pupils and looked at their books. I spoke with pupils when I observed behaviour at breaktime

and met formally with pupils from Years 1 to 6 to discuss their learning and views of the school. I listened to three pupils read. I also examined a sample of pupils' work in books. I looked at a range of documentation relating to safeguarding and pupils' attainment, progress and attendance. I also considered the school's self-evaluation and development plan. I checked on the school's recruitment and induction procedures for staff and volunteers. I considered the 27 responses to Parent View, including responses to Ofsted's free-text service. I also spoke with parents and carers at the beginning of the school day. I considered the 20 responses to the staff survey and 94 pupil responses to the online pupil survey.