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Mr Chris Edwards
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Dear Mr Edwards

Short inspection of Reedham Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 5 June 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 the school was judged to be good in July 2015.

This school continues to be good. The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. As a leadership team, you have taken effective action to address the areas of improvement identified in the previous inspection report. In particular, you have introduced a range of strategies to support most-able pupils to make better progress in writing. Higher expectations and good-quality staff development have supported improvements. One example of this is the school newspaper that everyone in key stage 2 works on. This is published in the community and pupils are proud of their contributions.

You have developed a school ethos which cares about every individual pupil. Leaders have a clear vision to achieve the best for everyone. This applies to supporting pupils to make good progress in all subjects across the curriculum, and to developing their emotional well-being. You lead the school with a determination to keep on improving. Parents and staff are overwhelmingly supportive. One parent wrote: 'My daughter absolutely loves coming to school. The teaching staff are fantastic – not only do they ensure children's educational needs are met, they are also very supportive when there are problems at home.'

Self-evaluation is accurate and provides a clear plan for how the school wants to improve. Leaders and governors set challenging targets each year. They ensure that staff feel well supported in making any necessary changes and that suitable training is provided.

The governors know the school well and provide appropriate challenge, particularly with respect to the key areas identified for improvement within the school development plan.

They make regular visits to the school. One governor leads the school council, which meets every two weeks, and others have responsibilities for safeguarding, special educational needs and/or disabilities and health and safety. Governors have a wide set of appropriate skills which they use to support and challenge the school. They carry out an annual self-evaluation of their performance. Performance management arrangements for staff are thorough and detailed. They link closely to the school improvement priorities. Regular monitoring of teachers' performance towards their targets takes place.

Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Otters class were observed to be studying Ancient Egypt, developing the quality of their writing and understanding archaeology. Effective curriculum planning has ensured that this work builds on previous learning and is linked to a visit to the museum. Additional activities are designed to support and deepen the learning, such as lessons in Egyptian dance.

A large proportion of parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, were positive about the school. All of them reported that their child was happy and well taught. In addition, parents were pleased with the quality of communication and were overwhelmingly supportive of you. One parent, who transferred their child from another school, summed up the general view by saying: 'Definitely the best choice I could have made. The leadership, inclusivity, safeguarding and ethos at Reedham are exemplary in every way.'

Pupils are kind and considerate to one another. In class they show good attention when the teacher is talking and work diligently when given tasks to do. Pupils are keen to take part in lessons and enthusiastically answer teachers' questions, which strengthen and deepen their learning. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong in all classes. At breaktime pupils play safely with one another. Older pupils play with the younger ones and there are opportunities for pupils to sit and read.

Pupils are provided with a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including two residential experiences during key stage 2. There are many opportunities to take part in competitive sports such as netball, cricket, football, rugby and cross-country. Other activities enable pupils to perform in front of large audiences such as the Open Song and Dance event.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders ensure that appropriate checks are made on staff, governors and volunteers to make sure they are suitable to work with children. The single central record of recruitment and vetting is kept up to date. All staff have regular training in child protection.

Attendance is above the national average for similar schools because pupils enjoy coming to school, lessons are interesting and the school has good systems to support pupils whose attendance starts to fall.

There is a strong culture of caring for the whole child. Good relationships with families ensure that you know children well and can respond to their developing needs quickly. Pupils say they feel safe in school and know who to talk to if they have a problem. One pupil said, 'I could talk to any of the adults: they all care.'

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection we agreed I would investigate the progress pupils make in mathematics during key stage 2. This was because the proportion of pupils that reached the expected standard, while broadly in line with the national average over the last three years, dipped in 2018. Leaders and governors have responded quickly to this outcome, making mathematics improvement a key focus within the school improvement plan.
- Good quality self-evaluation has meant that a range of appropriate strategies have been adopted to strengthen progress in mathematics, which include the introduction of a new calculations policy to support pupils with their basic number work. Every member of staff has been trained in a new approach to teaching mathematics. Staff have visited high-achieving schools to observe practice and have been given detailed feedback from visiting experts on their mathematics teaching. New resources have been purchased to support learning in the classroom and at home.
- There is a consistent approach across mathematics in all classes as a result of clear guidance to teachers about good teaching and effective questioning, which strengthens and deepens learning.
- Inspection activities, including lesson observations, work scrutiny, interviews with staff and discussions with pupils identified the need for: developing pupils' mathematical fluency; providing more opportunities for pupils to engage in problem-solving and reasoning; developing pupils' knowledge of mathematical language and using a wider variety of practical resources.
- The second line of enquiry we agreed was for me to investigate the quality of reading provision. This was because a key aim of the school is to encourage a love of reading. I found that pupils are making strong progress in all key stages. Last year, in Year 6, every pupil achieved the expected standard. Similarly, good progress was made in the early years and in key stage 1.
- The school has been successful in creating a culture whereby almost all pupils love to read. Reading is given a high priority within the curriculum and is strengthened through opportunities for shared reading, guided reading and individual reading. In addition, pupils are given time to read quietly to themselves.
- A love of reading is strengthened by the school's approach to paired learning. Older pupils regularly read with younger ones, helping them develop both their reading skills and their ability to understand the text. The school provides opportunities for parents to come in and learn about the school's approach to reading. Curriculum planning encourages a strong emphasis on improving reading comprehension alongside developing the ability to read and decode words.
- Since the previous inspection, the library has been completely refurbished, providing an area for children to read quietly and calmly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that progress in mathematics is strengthened in key stage 2 by:

- continuing to develop pupils' mathematical fluency
- providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills
- strengthening pupils' knowledge of mathematical language.

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

Yours sincerely

Duncan Ramsey
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and held a discussion with two governors (including the chair). We visited all classes together, observing teaching, looking at pupils' books and talking to pupils about their work. I observed pupils around school and at breaktime. I heard pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read. I spoke to a number of parents at the start of the day. I took account of the 30 responses to Parent View, including free-text responses, and the six responses to the staff survey. I looked at a range of documentation, which included the school's self-evaluation document and the school improvement plan. I looked at documents related to safeguarding, recruitment and staff training.