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Mrs Laura Green
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Dear Mrs Green

Short inspection of Morley Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 December 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 January 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team, supported by strong governance, has restored the good quality of education identified at the previous inspection. When you took up your position two years ago, you took stock of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Using this evidence and that of a local authority audit that you requested, you judged that parts of the school's provision were not as good as you needed them to be.

Working closely with other leaders, you continue to bring about necessary improvements. The school is part of the Tacolneston and Morley Federation (a partnership of two schools) and you divide your time across both schools. Your professional, well-organised approach and the work of the effective deputy headteacher and subject leaders ensure that the momentum of school improvement is maintained.

Since the previous inspection, three teachers have left and three have arrived. The deputy headteacher took up her position in September 2016. You have also made amendments to the structure of subject leadership. In the period when these changes to staffing have taken place, you and your staff have successfully maintained the caring ethos of the school. Several parents told me they have chosen for their children to attend Morley Church of England Primary School because of the level of care offered within its small school setting. Most parents hold the work of staff in high esteem and value the level of care and support offered to their children. Inspection evidence endorsed a parent's comment that

'Staff work hard to make sure school is a place that children love to be.' Several parents commented on how staff make sure that their children's specific needs, including special educational needs and/or disabilities, are well catered for. You also work with considerable success to include parents in school life.

Adults know pupils well and model the behaviour they expect of them. In response, pupils typically act with the kindness and respect which underpin the school's values. Pupils also respond well to the school's clearly understood behaviour routines. In lessons you and I visited, pupils were keen to learn and supportive of each other in their work. Pupils explained that this was typical of their school and 'a normal day'. Pupils also told me how much they appreciate the excellent array of play equipment available to them at breaktime and lunchtime. Their enthusiasm and consideration for others when playing basketball, using pogo sticks or chatting with their friends provides further evidence of pupils' mature and caring behaviour.

You have made improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment the central focus of your work. You do not shy away from challenging practice that is not of the quality you expect. Staff welcome the clarity of your support and challenge. One member of staff described the support he has received as 'astounding'. Adults are reflective and keen to develop their practice. They told me that working as part of the federation is supporting their professional development. Hence, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to improve.

The impact of your carefully considered action to improve the quality of provision is evident within the early years. Adults quickly gain an understanding of children's capabilities and provide well-judged learning activities that help them develop their knowledge and skills in the key areas of literacy and mathematics. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has improved over the past three years and was in line with the national average in 2018. Children are well prepared for Year 1. Further evidence of your impact on improving the quality of teaching is seen in the increase in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2018.

The school benefits from effective governance. Governors play their full part in ensuring that the school's values remain central to its work. Staff told me how they hold the governing body in high regard and appreciate the balance of support and challenge governors provide. Governors gain their understanding of the quality of provision from a wide variety of sources, including external audits by the local authority and leaders of other schools. Governors also make well-coordinated and clearly focused visits to the school to check the accuracy of what they are being told. They recognise that their effectiveness could be further enhanced though a greater understanding of how well pupils achieve in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your leaders have made sure effective safeguarding arrangements are firmly in place. You provide staff with appropriate training and keep them regularly

updated. Staff fully subscribe to your belief that keeping pupils safe is a shared responsibility. Adults know the signs that indicate that a pupil may be at risk and are alert to their responsibility to report any concerns they may have.

Evidence from securely and carefully maintained records indicate that where there are concerns about a pupil's well-being you take appropriate action. The local authority confirms this to be the case.

You make suitable checks on staff, governors and regular visitors to the school to ensure that they are suitable people to work with children. Records of the checks are thorough and carefully scrutinised by governors.

All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire agreed that their children are safe at school. Pupils told me that they are safe and happy. They attribute this to the care of the adults who work with them. Pupils also know how to keep themselves safe. For example, they have an age-appropriate understanding of the risks of using the internet and explained the strategies they would use to keep themselves safe. Pupils also know what bullying is and explained that adults deal with it effectively on the rare occasion that it occurs.

Inspection findings

- In 2018, pupils' progress by the end of key stage 2 was broadly in line with that of other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. However, this was not the case in reading and mathematics for a small number of middle-ability pupils. Therefore, my first line of enquiry was to establish how effectively leaders have ensured that middle-ability pupils make the progress of which they are capable in reading and mathematics.
- In keeping with your thorough approach, you carefully analysed the reasons for these pupils' lower achievement in reading. You established that, for a variety of reasons, there is a wide variation in pupils' familiarity with, and use of, a broad range of vocabulary. This, in turn, has limited pupils' confidence in speaking about, and making inferences from the texts they read. You have used this analysis to build further on work already under way to improve pupils' love of, and progress in, reading.
- You have successfully used a variety of approaches to create a culture in which pupils enjoy and are increasingly accomplished in reading. You have ensured that the library is central to the school. You are seeking to expand further the range of books in the library for pupils to enjoy. This reflects the importance you place on developing reading. Pupils enjoy your weekly reading cafés, in which parents and pupils read together. Parents' feedback on these sessions is also very positive.
- You have also provided thoughtful support for pupils who need help to catch up in their reading. In some cases, this is having a dramatic impact on their progress. Pupils told me how much they enjoy their reading sessions.
- Teachers choose texts that enrich and broaden pupils' vocabulary and familiarity with different writing styles in line with your chosen approach. The consistent

and better-quality teaching has been an important factor in the improvements in pupils' progress in reading. Pupils read with confidence and make pertinent observations about the context of the books they are reading. This is having a positive impact upon the quality of pupils' writing. Together, we saw evidence of pupils making use of increasingly sophisticated language in their creative writing.

- You also identified that middle-ability pupils had gaps in their understanding of some aspects of basic mathematics. This was affecting their confidence and ability to apply mathematical knowledge successfully to solve more complex problems. Strong leadership, good-quality training and careful monitoring have improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics.
- Teachers typically plan and implement logical sequences of learning that enable pupils to make good progress in mathematics. Pupils are encouraged to consolidate their knowledge and then apply it to more complex problems. There does, however, remain variability in the teaching of mathematics across key stage 1. Most-able pupils are not moved on in their learning in a timely way and these pupils are not deepening their understanding as well as they could.
- We agreed my second line of enquiry was to establish how well disadvantaged pupils are supported to achieve well. Although numbers in each year group are very small, some of these pupils did not make the progress they should have by the end of key stage 2 over the previous two years.
- You, your leaders and the governors have detailed plans for the allocation of pupil premium funding. In these plans you identify pupils' barriers to learning and strategies you judge will help pupils overcome them. You have carefully reviewed and made appropriate amendments to these plans.
- Disadvantaged pupils in school are making better progress in reading, writing and mathematics, often from low starting points. This is because you have made sure that staff have a more detailed knowledge of the strategies needed to help to overcome pupils' barriers to learning. You put precise support in place to help disadvantaged pupils not only with their academic development, but also with their social and emotional development where it is needed.
- Finally, to establish whether the school continues to provide a good quality of education, I looked at the progress that pupils make across the wider curriculum. You have designed a curriculum that is reflective of your school's mission statement, 'work together, learn together, grow together'. This curriculum is providing pupils with opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in the next stage of their education. Your efforts to ensure that pupils benefit from a broad curriculum are not lost on parents, several of whom commented on the breadth of 'creative and stimulating learning opportunities' available. Another parent explained, 'for a small school, it is amazing the opportunities they provide for the children'.
- Pupils told me how much they enjoy learning topics such as First World War. Pupils' interest and enthusiasm is evident in the work in their books and in the many high-quality displays around the school. In keeping with how you want the curriculum taught, pupils are gaining confidence in making links between subject

matter and skills across subject disciplines. Pupils are, more often than not, making good progress across a range of subjects.

- Subject leaders care, not only about the pupils they teach, but also the subjects they oversee. Several of these leaders train, support and monitor other staff in the delivery of subjects across the curriculum. Where this is done best, it has a marked impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils make better progress. However, you and the governors know that some leaders are new and yet to have a significant impact on the quality of provision in their subjects. This leads to unevenness in the effectiveness with which a small number of subjects are taught in some classes.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in key stage 1 by ensuring that most-able pupils are provided with appropriately challenging learning activities, especially in mathematics
- all subject leaders' practice reflects the best that exists in school, so they can have demonstrable impact on the quality of provision within their subjects in all classes
- governors are well informed about the progress pupils make in subjects other than English, mathematics and science across the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

John Lucas
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

You and I discussed the key lines of enquiry for this inspection, leaders' evaluation of the quality of education, plans for future improvement and information about current pupils' learning. I met with other leaders, a member of the administration team, a group of 13 teachers and teaching assistants, and the chair of governors and one other governor. I also met with a representative of the local authority.

I examined: the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation document; leaders' monitoring; leaders' analysis of the progress pupils make; and pupil premium reports. I also examined the school's safeguarding arrangements, records, files and documentation.

Together with you I observed pupils learning and looked at examples of pupils' work in each class to explore the progress they are making over time. I also heard pupils read. I spoke with two groups of pupils and with others informally during lessons and at breaktime regarding their learning. There were no responses to the pupil online survey.

I considered the views of parents I spoke with at the start of the school day. I also took into account the views of 38 parents who responded on Parent View and the 20 parents who left comments on the Parent View free-text service.

There were no responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.