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Miss Charlotte Harper  
Executive Headteacher  
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West Burton  
Leyburn  
North Yorkshire  
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Dear Miss Harper

### **Short inspection of West Burton Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 6 February 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 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. Good-quality teaching and learning have been sustained effectively and you have successfully preserved the welcoming family atmosphere of this small school, which sits at the heart of its community on the village green. Judging by high rates of attendance, pupils obviously enjoy coming to school each day and appreciate the broad range of opportunities provided by the varied curriculum that you have embedded. You have ensured that additional strengths in provision resulting from the federation with the nearby Bainbridge C of E and Askrigg VC Primary Schools enable pupils to thrive. They benefit from experienced and talented teachers, strong leadership and shared activities in a number of different curriculum subjects and focus days. Your skilful leadership has used the combined strengths of the federation to allow this school to flourish.

You are driving forward continuous improvements which are impacting significantly on improving the quality of teaching and accelerating the progress pupils make in their learning. You have a clear understanding of the school's context, and a resulting determination to eradicate any restrictions for pupils to access high-quality opportunities that may result from being a small school community. Robust and accurate self-evaluation involves everyone in the school and across the federation. Your supportive style empowers leaders and teachers, promotes teamwork and places a strong emphasis on continuing professional development for all.

You have ensured that areas for development identified in the previous inspection before your appointment have been tackled successfully. Self-evaluation is detailed and accurate. Combined with rigorous analysis of data tracking pupils' progress, detailed actions are now carefully planned and implemented to further strengthen pupils' learning. Detailed analysis of pupils' work in mathematics has allowed the school, and the federation, to devise a new and successful approach to the teaching of this subject. You acknowledge that over time, the proportion of pupils working at a greater depth in learning has been low. Tracking systems indicate that this trend is now being reversed as teachers' expectations and pupils' aspirations are rising.

Pupils develop excellent citizenship skills and are keen to take on responsibilities in school. These include being a member of the school council, a 'respect ambassador', or part of the eco or fair trade groups. You have ensured that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Links to a culturally diverse primary school in Leeds involving pupil visits, correspondence with Nepalese school children and a visit from a chef cooking Chinese food ensure that pupils have a wide appreciation of cultures other than their own. Pupils also take pride in their own locality, as seen in the topic on megastructures in the Yorkshire Dales.

You have ensured that pupils benefit from a curriculum that captures their interest through a four-year rolling programme of topic work used as basis for investigation, imagination and the development of English and mathematical skills. Older pupils benefit from a residential opportunity, and pupils reported exciting visits to Redcar and Saltburn as part of their 'seaside rescue' theme, or to Bolton Castle as part of the 'dungeons and dragons' theme. You agree that although the assessment and tracking of subject-specific skills is accurate and robust in some subjects such as English, mathematics and science, it is not yet extended to all subjects.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Policies, procedures and records are of extremely high quality, regularly updated by the business manager and checked annually by the local authority. Staff and governor training is thorough and up to date, including training to ensure that recruitment procedures are watertight and that pupils are kept safe from the risk of extremism and online dangers. Registers of staff training are completed diligently. Staff have access to well-written policies and guidance and have a secure understanding of their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils.

Under the watchful eye of all staff at your small, family-oriented school, no stone is left unturned to ensure that all pupils are safe and have opportunities to thrive. The curriculum supports pupils well in maintaining their own safety. Pupils know the dangers of social media and understand they should never post personal details online. Pupils have full trust in their teachers and teaching assistants who look after them and report feeling safe all of the time. They assured me that any minor disputes are immediately and effectively dealt with by all adults.

## Inspection findings

- Since the previous inspection, you have skilfully and successfully led improvements in the teaching of mathematics. New approaches have included improved planning of the mathematics curriculum, an increased use of practical resources and enrichment materials, and an emphasis on developing pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills. The significant role played by the mathematics leader across the federation has also been instrumental in facilitating change and eradicating underperformance. She has accessed high-quality professional development training and visited other schools to observe good practice in the teaching of mathematics.
- Your effective leadership style allows leaders to take full responsibility for their role, with clear systems of accountability. It has empowered all leaders, including the mathematics leader, to drive forward improvements. It is clear from accurate school tracking data and evidence from work in the books of current pupils that pupils' progress and achievement in mathematics have significantly improved.
- You acknowledge that over time the proportion of pupils working at a greater depth in their learning has been below that found nationally in all subjects and in both key stages 1 and 2. It remains low in published statutory data. You presented clear evidence that the impact of very small pupil numbers over recent years can render trends over time as insignificant, and that different cohorts vary widely. You have skilfully analysed other contributing factors to this pattern of lower attainment such as expectation from teachers that has not been sufficiently high. Planned activities provide different levels of challenge, and teachers encourage pupils to learn from each other, sparking ideas and sharing knowledge.
- You maintain that the major contributory factor to a cap on pupils' achievement has been pupils' aspirations and attitudes to learning. You have set in place a range of strategies and actions to address this in school and across the federation, and already the impact of these actions is evident. Pupils appear resilient, persist when challenged and display a desire to produce their very best and not to give in. School tracking data shows a much greater proportion of pupils working at a greater depth in all three key stages.
- Your skilful and highly respected leadership provides clear evidence of a driving ambition to continually improve and provide the very best opportunities for all pupils to excel. You have created a team of staff who are motivated and engaged, and where morale is high. Devolving leadership responsibility with accountability has invigorated and strengthened middle leadership across the school and federation. Annual reports produced by the English, mathematics and science leaders for governors are of extremely high quality, detailed and based on a range of robust monitoring activities. Governors are extremely well informed, bring a range of transferable professional skills and are equally ambitious to see pupils thrive. The whole leadership team has demonstrated diligence and foresight to address significant challenges caused by budgetary restraints. Plans are in place to guarantee the best possible provision for pupils.

- You have ensured that safeguarding is highly effective and the school's work to foster pupils' personal development and welfare is excellent. You have ensured that the school continues to work tirelessly to ensure that all pupils are safe and well cared for. The strong relationships in school, and high levels of trust between adults and pupils, ensure that pupils' conduct in lessons and around school is exemplary. Pupils are polite, caring, considerate and friendly to each other and to visitors.
- You have ensured that the school's curriculum is planned and tailored to the needs of the pupils of West Burton. Provision in mathematics and English is now of a high standard, and is impacting positively on pupils' achievement. Each class follows a rolling programme of themes, enhanced by visits out of school and input from specialist teachers, and enriched by after-school clubs such as cycling, singing and yoga. Curriculum focus days across the whole federation allow detailed study within subjects such as art and computing, and the most able pupils are stretched and challenged by attending 'MATT Science' at the local secondary school. Systems to assess and track pupils' progress in subject-specific skills are robust and embedded in some subjects, but not all.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the proportion of pupils working at a greater depth of learning in all subjects continues to increase
- systems to accurately assess and track the progress of pupils in subject-specific skills already in place are extended to all curriculum subjects.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Leeds (CE), 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

Phil Scott  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, a base leader from the federation, the federation English and mathematics leaders and the federation business manager. I also met with the chair of the federated governing body and a group of governors. Alongside you, I visited lessons in the key stage 1 class and I also visited the key stage 2 class in the afternoon. I reviewed a sample of pupils' workbooks with you, the base leader and the federation English and mathematics leaders. I spoke to pupils about their work and their views of the school. I observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime. A range of documents was considered relating to safeguarding. I

examined the school development plan, the school's monitoring of its own performance and its assessment and tracking of current pupils' progress and attainment. I also scrutinised pupils' achievement in the 2016 and 2017 statutory assessments, the 10 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents and carers, Parent View, and the school's website.