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Mrs Alison Flack
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Flack

Short inspection of The Edenham Church of England School

Following my visit to the school on 25 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in November 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. In recent years, the school has experienced a period of significant change in leadership and governance. The school is now a member of the Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust (the trust) and, under your leadership, is collaborating effectively with two other primary schools within the trust. With the head of school, you have accurately evaluated the strengths and areas for development at the school. Detailed plans are now in place to continue to improve the educational outcomes of pupils and you are determined that they will be successful.

The school's vision is to offer the 'highest standard of education within a Christian context'. The core values of respect, hope, forgiveness, compassion, perseverance and courage feature in wall displays in every part of the school and are embraced by pupils. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes and provided with a rich curriculum including a range of opportunities to work outdoors. Communication with parents and carers has recently improved and there is considerable support for the school in the local community.

Since the last inspection, leaders have successfully improved pupils' skills and confidence in writing. Teachers plan a range of activities designed to hook pupils into their learning. They use a range of questions to extend pupils' understanding of the features of different types of text. As a result, pupils are increasingly able to write with confidence at length in a range of subjects. Older pupils enthusiastically

produce persuasive writing pieces in response to the 'young entrepreneur' project and express a good level of understanding of the importance of identifying the audience for their work. As a result, pupils' progress and attainment at the expected standard in writing is now in line with national benchmarks.

Scrutiny of books shows that pupils' work is being checked regularly and teachers provide feedback in a range of formats in accordance with the school's policy. Pupils appreciate the use of the 'wow, now' protocol and use these prompts to improve their work. Most pupils take pride in their work although where teachers' expectations are not as clear, the standard of pupils' presentation sometimes varies. Leaders have yet to establish high standards of presentation and handwriting throughout the school.

The small staff team work together to analyse performance information and identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Leaders, from across the cluster of three schools, collaborate effectively to plan additional teaching activities which are designed to boost pupils' understanding. Pupils' progress is closely monitored, and activities are adapted to ensure that pupils receive any additional help they need. Staff have recently benefited from training focused on improving their understanding of the importance of well-sequenced teaching. Nevertheless, not all teachers have the breadth of subject knowledge to confidently deliver all aspects of the curriculum and would benefit from further targeted professional development.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have established an effective safeguarding culture including detailed policies and procedures. Leaders understand the importance of making rapid referrals to relevant external agencies, to ensure that early help is sought so that pupils are kept safe. When appropriate, the school accesses support from therapeutic professionals including a speech and language expert.

The progress and well-being of pupils are closely monitored. All staff sign a code of conduct and are clear about their roles and responsibilities including the importance of ensuring that pupils understand fundamental British values. Staff are well trained and receive appropriate updates about aspects of safeguarding including key messages about current topics such as the dangers presented by sexting and peer-on-peer abuse. Record-keeping for pupils whose welfare is being monitored is thorough and case files are regularly audited by senior leaders. The single central record is comprehensive with clear evidence that thorough checks take place before an adult starts working or volunteering at the school.

Anti-bullying messages and the importance of e-safety are communicated clearly to pupils through wall displays and regular briefings. Pupils say that the school provides a safe and welcoming environment and they are clear about how to report concerns and get help if they ever need it. Positive attitudes to learning and high expectations of good behaviour are set out in school policies and promoted through assemblies and displays in classrooms. Leaders keep records of rare incidents of poor behaviour and any actions they have taken. Behaviour is typically good in

classrooms and in social spaces. Pupils express pride in their tolerant and welcoming school community.

Attendance is above the national average and has been for some time. Leaders demonstrate a clear understanding of the link between strong outcomes and pupils' regular attendance and they work with families to achieve this. The school draws on the support available from the trust to make sure parents are aware of the possible impact of unauthorised absence on their child's progress.

Inspection findings

- Leaders are focused on improving the consistency of high-quality teaching across the school. The school is well supported by officers of the trust who provide challenge and contribute to the close monitoring of the quality of teaching. Most teachers demonstrate a good level of understanding of the needs of the most able pupils and plan accordingly. However, they do not always set tasks that contain sufficient challenge for all pupils to move swiftly onto their next steps in learning. As a result, the proportions of pupils achieving the higher standard in reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 have lagged behind the national averages. More-recent assessment information shows that actions taken to improve the level of challenge are having a positive impact.
- Leaders have rightly made the importance of closing the gap in attainment and progress between boys and girls a key priority for the school. Curriculum planning includes carefully considered project-based learning opportunities. Pupils are encouraged to present their work to others and take leadership roles in the classroom. This is helping to build aspiration and promote high levels of motivation. Recent assessment information shows that boys are now performing more strongly in English and mathematics.
- The head of school has transformed the quality of teaching of mathematics. Drawing on expert training from the trust, he has been able to support teachers to plan more effective sequences of learning. As a result, pupils demonstrate confidence when they use mathematical resources and in using the correct mathematical vocabulary. Classroom displays are purposeful. Teachers refer to them during lessons to help pupils consolidate their learning.
- The youngest children in the school benefit from a vibrant and well-resourced early years learning environment. The early years leader has a detailed understanding of the learning needs of every child. Project-based learning opportunities are wide-ranging and include activities designed to enable children to practise and develop their skills in reading and writing. Planning of highly creative activities ensures that children enjoy and achieve well across all areas of the early years curriculum. For example, children invited members of the school community to take part in their imaginary alien invasion. The children demonstrated their interest and curiosity as they weighed 'space rocks', wrote letters to the aliens and constructed space rockets.

- Teachers regularly review the progress children are making and adjust their planning to meet children's needs. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development is rapidly improving.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- ensure that teaching is of the highest quality throughout the school
- improve the progress and attainment of boys at both the expected and higher standard
- provide staff with further targeted opportunities for training and development including the sharing of best practice around the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Emma Hollis-Brown
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and the head of school and shared my lines of enquiry. I also met with the coordinator who has responsibility for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and with representatives of the governing body and multi-academy trust. I considered the responses of parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, along with the free-text comments, and met with parents at the start of the school day. Together with senior leaders, I visited all classes and examined pupils' work in books. I observed pupils' behaviour and met with a group of pupils to discuss their experiences of the school. I viewed a range of documents including leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance, their plans for further improvement and information on pupils' current progress. I reviewed a number of documents including those relating to safeguarding and others relating to the support provided for pupils. I also scrutinised the recruitment checks that leaders undertake in order to confirm the robustness of safer recruitment practice.