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Mrs Lesley Stocks  
Headteacher  
Pearson Primary School  
Leicester Street  
Hull  
HU3 1TB

Dear Mrs Stocks

### **Short inspection of Pearson Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 5 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in June 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

You provide inspirational leadership and are passionate about providing your pupils with the best possible education so that they can achieve their best. Along with your senior leadership team, you have created a strong and caring ethos where diversity is valued and celebrated. Your vision, that Pearson Primary School is 'a gateway to limitless possibilities, to soaring aspirations and to brighter futures', is wholeheartedly shared by governors and staff. It underpins all aspects of your work.

The quality of leadership and management, in all areas of the school, is a strength. Leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and act swiftly to provide focused professional development where needed. Leaders provide effective support to develop highly effective practice. As a result, they achieve a consistency of approach across the school. By the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress in mathematics has been well above average and in the top 10% of schools nationally for the last three years. In writing, pupils' progress has been well above average and in the top 10% of schools nationally for the last two years.

Your whole-school focus on reading is paying dividends. In 2018, by the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress increased to above average and placed the school in the

top 20% of schools nationally. Furthermore, the proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check improved significantly and is now in line with the national average.

Pearson Primary is a school that offers a caring, nurturing and inclusive family atmosphere with pupils at its heart. Pupils learn in an environment of trust and respect; there is an air of calm around the school. Pupils are extremely polite and well-mannered and their conduct around the school is exemplary. Pupils support each other very well. Their relationships with each other and adults are a strength of the school. All of the pupils I spoke to told me how much they enjoy coming to school. Parents spoke highly of the support their children get from staff to help them succeed and are proud of the school and all that it achieves.

Governors are committed to the continued success of the school. They visit the school regularly and have a clear and accurate picture of the school's many strengths. Regular reviews from the multi-academy trust provide high-quality challenge. These help you and your governors to ensure that the school remains on track to achieve its ambitious goals. Governors have identified that the number of pupils who are regularly absent from school needs to reduce further. You have already put plans in place to address this.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are robust and fit for purpose. You, together with your staff and governors, ensure that the safety and well-being of pupils are priorities. Staff are clear about their roles and follow the school's systems and processes carefully, to promote pupils' welfare and keep them safe. You are very aware of the vulnerabilities of some of your families and pupils and provide bespoke support to those families most in need. By carefully checking pupils' attendance, you spot and take swift action where pupils might have gone missing from education or possibly be at risk of female genital mutilation.

Pupils told me that they feel very safe and happy in school. They say that bullying is very rare and are confident that if there is something that bothers them, any member of staff would listen to them. Parents who spoke to me all agreed that their children are safe and well cared for in school.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the start of my visit, we agreed a number of key lines of enquiry for the inspection. My first key line of enquiry was to explore how effectively leaders are improving progress in reading for pupils, by the end key stage 2. This was because, in Year 6 over the last three years, pupils made less progress from their individual starting points than in writing and mathematics.
- Throughout the school, pupils are enthusiastic about reading. Leaders have successfully developed a love of reading in all pupils. Pupils enthusiastically told me their favourite books and authors such as Julia Donaldson and Michael Morpurgo. Pupils also told me about the reading areas in each classroom. They

appreciate the variety of books on offer to them in the school's new library. Pupils discussed visits from poets and told me about books from the school's 'author of the month,' Pamela Butchart.

- Pupils read accurately and fluently. You have changed the way reading comprehension is taught and this is making a real difference. Whole-class, well-planned reading sessions take place each day. In these sessions, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop complex reading skills, such as inference, prediction and summarising, through challenging texts, questions and activities. For example, in a Year 5 lesson we visited, pupils were confidently answering a range of challenging questions about the text 'Room 13' by Robert Swindells. As a result of your determined drive to improve pupils' achievement in reading, Year 6 pupils' progress has increased year on year since 2016. Last year, it was above average and in the top 20% of schools nationally.
- My next line of enquiry related to attendance. This is because, in 2016 and 2017, absence and persistent absence were higher than the national average. You expect all pupils to attend regularly. Consequently, you make good use of well-established procedures to check pupils' attendance. You act quickly and decisively in the case of any unexplained or unauthorised absence to ensure that pupils are safe. You have introduced a range of initiatives to encourage pupils to come to school. As a result, pupils' attendance is improving. You and your governors have rightly identified that the rate of persistent absence for pupils is too high. This persistent absence has been disproportionately affected by a small number of pupils and families and remains above national averages. We agreed that more work needs to be done to reduce the number of pupils who regularly miss school further.
- My final focus was to explore how well pupils develop a depth of knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects so that they achieve well. You have a clear vision for the curriculum and the opportunities you want to provide for pupils. As one subject leader commented, 'We want our curriculum to open the children's eyes to the outside world and the endless possibilities that exist.'
- The curriculum is planned well across the school. Pupils benefit from an exciting range of opportunities and learning activities, which meet their needs effectively. Teachers know how well pupils are doing in each subject. This is because they have carefully plotted the knowledge and skills appropriate to each age group, across the curriculum. Pupils' work is of high quality as a result of teachers' high expectations. It shows that, over time, pupils build on their skills in all subjects and, therefore, achieve very well.
- Pupils enjoy the many sporting, art and music-based opportunities that are offered by the school. For example, they spoke enthusiastically about learning a woodwind instrument, their recent involvement in sporting events and their trips to the theatre, art gallery and the farm. Through these activities, you are ensuring that pupils develop a love of, and a thirst for, learning.
- The school strongly promotes fundamental British values through the curriculum and the warm and caring family ethos. Through their religious education work, assemblies and your links with local faith leaders, pupils have developed a strong understanding of the many faiths and cultures represented in British society and

in their own school. Pupils take on responsibilities such as being members of the school council, playground buddies and eco-councillors. Pupils are very aware of the part they play in making the world a better place. As one pupil told me, 'Everyone needs to make a difference, not as individuals, but as a unified planet.'

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the rate of persistent absence continues to decrease further so that it is at least in line with the national average.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kingston Upon Hull City Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mark Randall  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, your deputy headteacher, your mathematics, history, geography and science leaders, four parents, two members of the governing body and two representatives from the multi-academy trust. I talked with small groups of pupils informally, in lessons and during lunchtime. Along with you, I visited classes and looked at current reading, science and curriculum books from pupils in key stages 1 and 2. I also listened to some pupils read.

I examined a range of documentation, including documents relating to attendance and safeguarding. I took account of the minutes of the governing body meetings, the school's evaluation of how well it is doing, the school's development plan and the school's assessment information. I reviewed the school's website. As part of the inspection, I considered the eight responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. There were no responses to the staff or pupil surveys.