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13 December 2018

Mrs Sarah Hutt  
Head of School  
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Trunch Road  
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NR11 8LE

Dear Mrs Hutt

### **Short inspection of Mundesley Infant 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 the school was judged to be good in January 2015.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your impressive leadership of the school, supported by the executive headteacher and senior leadership team of the Coastal Federation, has enabled you to build a strong staff team and improve pupils' outcomes. Your detailed analysis of performance information, combined with your understanding of the context of the school, has resulted in accurate self-evaluation. You rapidly recognised the key areas of teaching, learning and assessment and the curriculum that required development following the last inspection. Teachers and support staff speak with great enthusiasm about the quality of training they have received, particularly in teaching mathematics. One teacher said: 'The training has helped build my confidence to teach maths. I'm much clearer about what the expectations are, and we've really raised our game as teachers and support staff.' Staff know precisely what current school development priorities are, for example to improve outcomes for boys and disadvantaged pupils, particularly those pupils capable of achieving greater depth in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Another teacher said: 'We've completely re-vamped the curriculum and the children are keen to learn because the new topics really interest them.' Pupils' enthusiasm and commitment to learning was evident when we visited every classroom. It was clear when we scrutinised pupils' books that all groups of pupils are making strong progress from their starting points in mathematics and writing. You have addressed the issues from the last inspection.

You, the phase one leader and the English leader have ensured a much stronger

focus on the teaching of phonics in Reception. This highly structured and systematic approach has improved reading outcomes for the children who completed their Reception Year in July 2018. These children are currently in Year 1. I read with a sample of lower and higher achievers, all of whom confidently used their phonic skills to read new words. You, the phase one leader and the English leader rightly recognise that children would learn to read even more rapidly if you strengthened your liaison regarding the teaching of phonics with the early years provision in the onsite children's centre pre-school. This is a target in your current school improvement plan.

Although your self-evaluation is detailed and accurately identifies strengths and weaknesses, your school improvement plan is too complicated. In addition, you have already achieved many of the targets identified. You and the lead teacher of the specialist resource base (SRB) have a strong understanding of how to manage this provision. However, you both recognise that successful reintegration to their home school could be achieved more rapidly for some pupils.

Most parents speak very highly of the school and the changes you have made since the last inspection. One parent told me they could not speak highly enough of how you and the family support team have listened and taken action to support their children's learning. A few parents raised concerns about bullying but said that you and the teachers deal with this rapidly. All commented on how communication between home and school has improved over the last year.

Most pupils love coming to school every day. One pupil told me: 'I like the teachers and teaching assistants because when we are doing topic, maths or English, they really explain it good.' Pupils like the focus on improving how they learn using 'the joy of not knowing' (JONK). Several pupils were very proud to explain their special JONK certificates. One pupil said: 'I got one for being reflective; that means thinking about my learning.' Pupils say they feel safe in school. Occasionally, children are 'mean' to each other but adults sort this out very quickly.

Governors are actively involved in school improvement and, consequently, know the school and the pupils well. They provide effective challenge as well as support to you and the federation's senior leadership team.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and the governors have ensured that safeguarding processes and procedures meet requirements. All staff understand and are confident to use the new computer-based safeguarding procedures. They find the monthly safeguarding newsletters particularly helpful.

You have successfully transferred your careful and detailed records of safeguarding concerns to the new computer-based system. Staff are particularly pleased that the new computer-based system alerts them to the outcome of referrals they make. You make effective use of the local authority's advice and referral services.

## Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was about how you have improved attendance and reduced persistent absence. You have taken stringent action to address non-attendance at school. You have made sure that parents understand that to make strong progress their children must be in school every day. There are also a wide range of effective incentives to encourage pupils to come to school. You and the family support team (FST) work highly effectively with the most vulnerable families who find daily attendance difficult. Parents speak highly of the FST and of the support they receive from you and the staff. Consequently, current attendance is in line with similar schools nationally and you have successfully reduced persistent absence to below average.
- My second line of enquiry was about how effectively you are using assessment information to check on pupils' progress from the end of Reception and especially for boys in reading and writing. This year, you and the phase one leader introduced a new web-based system for recording children's progress in all the areas of learning from when they start in Reception. This system is working well due to effective training for staff and parents. Consequently, everyone is confident to add information about learning to the system. For example, you have provided teachers and support staff with some examples of evaluative statements to add to pictures and videos of children at work. Parents can readily access this information on their mobile phones and tablets and feel communication about learning has improved dramatically because of this new approach.
- You and the staff use assessment information well to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. You have tightened school assessment systems and at your regular pupil progress meetings you keep a check on any pupils at risk of not achieving their best. Teachers have also benefited from working with teachers within The Coastal Federation and local schools to make sure that their assessments are accurate. All these measures have contributed to the strong progress all groups of pupils are currently making from their starting points.
- My third line of enquiry was about whether the curriculum offers pupils sufficient opportunities to practise the knowledge, skills and understanding they gain in reading, writing and mathematics in other subjects. You have completely redesigned your curriculum over the last year. You and the staff purposely selected themes that would appeal to all, and particularly boys. The impact of the new curriculum is evident in improvements in the quality of pupils' writing and the amount that they can write. You have also introduced a new reading programme that is connected to the topic themes, and this has contributed to pupils' improved enjoyment and understanding of texts.
- You acknowledge that mathematics does not feature enough in the new curriculum themes. You feel that now staff are confident to teach mathematics and pupils enjoy and are achieving well in the subject, it is the right time to evaluate the inclusion of mathematical themes in the new curriculum.
- My final line of enquiry was to evaluate the effectiveness of your actions to

include the SRB pupils in class and school learning activities. The SRB leader has strong and effective systems in place to assess pupils when they start at the SRB. This assessment results in a detailed action plan that covers their learning and emotional and social development. Plans are reviewed weekly with pupils, parents and the home school. The result of this robust approach is that pupils settle rapidly in the SRB and start to make progress with their learning as well as their ability to manage their behaviour. Progress information is recorded in detail in the informative and useful individual learning and behaviour plans.

- Staff work with pupils to help them identify strategies that will enable them to cope when they are back in their home school classroom. Pupils are often able to use these strategies within the SRB because it is a small environment where they feel at ease. However, currently they do not have sufficient opportunities to practise managing their behaviour in a 'normal' classroom environment with SRB support close at hand.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- there is close and effective liaison about the teaching of phonics and early reading between the school and the early years provision in the children's centre
- leaders stringently prioritise key areas for school improvement following self-evaluation
- pupils in the SRB are included as soon and as much as possible in classroom learning activities as well as special curriculum events.

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

Julie Winyard  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I spoke with you, the executive headteacher, the head of school from Bacton Primary School, who is a member of the Coastal Federation senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, the SRB lead teacher, the phase one leader, the governors, the staff, a representative from the local authority, pupils and parents. We observed learning and teaching in all classes with a focus on inclusion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in the main school and the SRB. Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 read to me. I scrutinised a range of documents, including your self-evaluation and

school improvement plan. I scrutinised pupils' writing in English and their mathematics work with you, the executive headteacher, the early years phase leader and English leader. I scrutinised a range of safeguarding documentation and a sample of pupil files via your online recording system. I scrutinised 15 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire for parents. There were no responses to the online staff or pupil questionnaires.