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Miss Charlotte Harper
Executive Headteacher
Askrigg Voluntary Controlled Primary School
Yorebridge
Askrigg
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Dear Miss Harper

Short inspection of Askrigg Voluntary Controlled School

Following my visit to the school on 5 November 2015, 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 May 2012.

This school continues to be good.

You and the leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. This is because you have made sure that the outcomes of pupils continue to be good through rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Because of this pupils are well prepared for secondary school.

The governing body is well led and knowledgeable about the school. Governors make robust and detailed checks on the school's work through regular and very precisely focused visits and follow-up discussion. Governors evaluate the impact of leaders' actions and provide challenge that contributes to keeping the school on track.

The previous inspection identified the need for pupils to have a clearer understanding of their own attainment and progress through a more consistent use of target setting. The school has moved effectively to address this. Pupils are clear about their targets and understand what they need to do to improve. The whole-school approach to marking and assessment underpins this understanding very well.

Your own monitoring of the school has identified that pupils' outcomes in mathematics have not been as strong as they should be. You have moved effectively to address this. More focused teaching and monitoring combined with the whole-

school 'Space Mission' approach has had a positive impact on outcomes in mathematics across the school.

The school is a calm and well-ordered place. A strong sense of pride in the school is apparent in pupils, staff and parents. Pupils say that they enjoy school and appreciate the care and challenge that teachers show. They are particularly positive about the RESPECT approach to behaviour and attitudes to learning. They say that they appreciate the way it helps them understand the links between positive behaviour, thoughtful understanding of other peoples' viewpoints and learning.

Parents with whom I spoke and those who responded to the online survey, Parent View, are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They are particularly complimentary about the leadership and the way you engage and seek parents' views. Parents are confident that their children are happy, safe and well taught.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and governors attach the highest priority to ensuring that all pupils are safe. You have put robust systems in place that are followed rigorously. Frequent review helps to ensure that safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose and pupils' safety is assured. Regular training helps staff and governors understand clearly what constitutes risk and keeps them up to date with best practice. Pupils report that they feel safe. Should they feel uncertain, pupils are clear that they could turn, with confidence, to any member of staff and their concern would be dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils work and play well together. They are confident and thoughtful. They are aware of the needs of others in their community and the wider world. This is because the school works hard to ensure that what pupils learn and experience takes account of, and develops, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

Inspection findings

- The school is very well led. The executive headteacher is clear about what needs to be done for the school to improve further. She communicates her high expectations robustly; these are shared by staff, pupils, parents and governors. Governors are both strategic and detailed in their approach. They hold leaders to account through very detailed questioning about the precise impact leaders' and teachers' actions are having on pupils' learning and well-being.
- The headteacher monitors the school rigorously. The headteacher has put in place effective systems to check on the quality and impact of teaching. These systems are effective because the information that the headteacher and, increasingly, middle leaders gather and evaluate is carefully and creatively linked to staff training. This means that teachers' expertise is further strengthened and developed.

- The work of subject leaders is a growing strength of the school. The headteacher is developing and extending the skills of these middle leaders so that they can even more effectively support, monitor and evaluate the work of their teams. The headteacher supports middle leaders well and regularly checks their work. This approach is having an increasingly positive impact on pupils' outcomes across the school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs do well. This is because this aspect of the school is effectively led by the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and carefully measured by governors. The SENCo regularly works with staff to ensure that, through focused monitoring and support, the provision for these pupils is of the highest quality.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced, imaginatively planned and its impact is carefully monitored. It prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. A wide range of sports and physical activities is offered to all pupils during school time and there are opportunities for after-school clubs. French is taught successfully to all pupils in Key Stage 2. Both parents and pupils report that the breadth of subjects and related opportunities is a real strength of the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- the improvements to outcomes in mathematics develop and deepen as a result of the continued and relentless focus by all staff on the mathematical needs of each pupil
- the good practice and skills of middle leaders are further extended so that they are precise and detailed in the monitoring and support of their teams and are clear about what is having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mark Evans
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this short, one-day inspection I met with you, subject leaders, a range of staff and members of the governing body, including the Chair of Governors. I also spoke with a local authority officer. I visited classrooms with you and saw a full range of lessons, including French and physical education. While in the lessons, where appropriate, I spoke with pupils about their work and experience of the school. I also scrutinised a range of pupils' books. I spoke more formally with a group of pupils at lunchtime. I spoke informally with individual and groups of parents and reviewed information on Parent View. I evaluated a range of documents including the school's most recent evaluations of its performance and records and logs of behaviour. I attended an act of collective worship at the end of the school day.