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Mrs Claire New  
Headteacher  
East Preston Infant School  
Lashmar Road  
East Preston  
Littlehampton  
West Sussex  
BN16 1EZ

Dear Mrs New

### **Short inspection of East Preston Infant School**

Following my visit to the school on 8 March 2016, 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 December 2010.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection, while leading the school through a number of important changes. You have recruited new staff with a range of skills and experience, to replace the high proportion of long-standing colleagues who retired after the previous inspection. At the same time, you have successfully steered the growth of the school to meet the increasing demand for infant school places in the local area. Under your capable leadership, all the staff work well as a team, sharing your commitment to the best possible education for all the pupils.

Pupils respond well to your high expectations and the excellent example of diligence, care and courtesy shown by all the adults. Pupils behave well, show respect for adults and one another, listen carefully to the instructions adults give them and try hard to succeed. Pupils take good care with the presentation of their work and persevere when tasks are challenging. This helps pupils to achieve well, particularly in reading and mathematics.

All the staff who responded to Ofsted's online survey are hugely appreciative of your leadership and proud to work at the school. Your open approach to partnership with other schools supports the development of the school's curriculum well and teachers' assessment of pupils' progress. Parents I met, and those responding to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are overwhelmingly confident about their children's progress and the teaching pupils receive. A minority of parents, as reflected in your own recent survey, feel there could be better communication between home and school. However, all the parents who responded to Parent View are confident that their children are happy and safe at school, and nine out of 10 would recommend the school to others. Parents support the school well through pupils' good attendance.

You have taken effective action on the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report, so that:

- all teachers now have clear leadership responsibilities, including a role in checking teaching and pupils' progress. Leaders' individual action plans link well to ensure a coordinated approach to improvement work
- governors have developed a clear understanding of the information available to them about pupils' achievement. Governors use this information well, to check pupils' progress and to hold you to account for the school's performance.

You and governors are not complacent, however. You have rightly identified that some pupils, particularly boys and the most able, achieve less well in writing than in reading and mathematics, including during Reception Year.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met, so that pupils feel safe and are kept safe in school. All the staff create a calm atmosphere, where pupils rightly trust the adults to care for them well. Policies are kept up to date and staff are well trained. When staff or volunteers are recruited, all the necessary checks are made and recorded. You and other leaders work well with external agencies to support children and families. Governors regularly check the health and safety of the premises, which are well maintained. Pupils are taught well how to keep safe online, with this learning regularly reinforced. I saw this for myself in Year 2, where an independent activity involved pupils revisiting this information to check their understanding.

## Inspection findings

- You and the deputy headteacher lead a clear vision for the school, shared by all the staff. You aim for all pupils to achieve as well as they can, from the moment they join the school. You ensure that teachers regularly assess pupils' progress and discuss this with you. As a result, you know how well every pupil is doing. You make prompt arrangements for any extra support pupils need to learn well.
- You and the deputy headteacher keep a close eye on the quality of teaching. You support staff well to share strengths and ideas, and maintain their professional development. Through well-considered recruitment, you have made sure that the teaching team has a good range of knowledge, skills and expertise. Your open approach to advice and ideas from beyond the school supports teachers well to reflect on their practice and introduce relevant new ideas.
- Leadership in the school has developed significantly since the previous inspection. You ensure that all teachers lead an area of the curriculum and provide clear guidance about what you expect them to achieve in this role. Staff work in effective teams to develop the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics consistently across the school.
- Pupils make good progress during Key Stage 1 and achieve well. In reading, writing and mathematics, pupils' attainment at age seven is regularly better than seen nationally. However, fewer of the most-able pupils at the school attain highly in writing, compared with reading and mathematics, and boys' achievement typically trails that of girls, particularly in writing.
- Children join Reception Year with knowledge and skills which are often, but not always, below those typical for their age. Children's readiness to begin writing is often limited, particularly for some boys. At the end of Reception Year in 2015, a lower proportion than seen nationally attained a good level of development. Nevertheless, most children had made good progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability and pupils supported by the pupil premium, make good progress.

- Interesting topics bring the wider world into the school. Christmas celebrations in 2015 involved international traditions and music. Visits to local places of worship, most recently a synagogue, promote pupils' spiritual development as well as their respect for other people's lives. Pupils' regular learning out of doors promotes their understanding of nature and respect for the environment. Pupils achieve high levels of skill in physical education due to the excellent teaching and staff development you arrange through the local sports partnership.
- Governance is a strength of the school. Governors are knowledgeable and committed. They know the school well through your regular reports and their own visits and meetings with leaders. Governors keep their ways of working under regular review, maintain their training conscientiously and make themselves readily available to parents.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- boys' achievement in writing throughout the school, and the achievement in writing of the most-able pupils, improves further.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for West Sussex local authority. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Siân Thornton  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you to discuss your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and priorities for further improvement. Together we observed teaching in every classroom, when I also spoke with pupils. I spoke with parents in the playground at the start of the day and analysed the 40 responses to Parent View; there were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey. I met with governors and with a representative of the local authority. I considered the 31 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and a range of documents. These included information about teaching and pupils' achievement, the school's self-evaluation summary and improvement planning, staff meeting records, safeguarding policies. I also considered information on the school's website.