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Jo Brinkley  
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Dear Mrs Brinkley

### **Short inspection of Dorset Road Infant School**

Following my visit to the school on 16 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 March 2011.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since joining the school in January 2015, you have worked successfully with the governors to create a stable and committed staff team. The good-quality teaching recognised at the previous inspection has been maintained. Consequently, pupils continue to make good academic progress. By the time they leave in Year 2, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school is a calm, welcoming and friendly place. Pupils enjoy their learning and behave well. The majority of families continue to be supportive of the school's work. As one parent commented, 'It's a wonderful, nurturing school. The facilities are well maintained and good for the small environment they have.'

The curriculum continues to develop pupils' personal development well. Pupils enjoy opportunities to take on responsibilities and they learn well from them. They attend school council meetings, help organise school events and participate in musical performances in the local area. Pupils also contribute ideas for improvements to the school, such as the installing of a 'storytelling chair' in the playground. The school offers a number of enjoyable and interesting clubs after school, including those involving dance, drama and physical education. These are popular and well attended.

You have made a number of positive changes to teaching, learning and assessment. The introduction of an effective system to track pupils' achievement ensures that all

teachers know each individual pupil's potential and use this information to plan interesting activities. Pupils' progress is reviewed regularly by teachers and overseen by senior leaders. Any pupil falling behind is identified and extra support provided quickly. This approach has been highly effective in securing rapid progress in reading and more recently, in writing, including for the disadvantaged pupils. The most-able pupils are regularly challenged to extend their reading and writing skills across all areas of the curriculum.

Staff are proud to work at the school and are highly professional. They appreciate the training you organise for them, particularly opportunities to work with experienced practitioners from other schools. This enables teachers to compare examples of pupils' learning and progress. Expectations are raised because staff continuously reflect on their teaching in the light of the new curriculum requirements. This contributes strongly to the effective and accurate assessment practice evident throughout the school.

You have addressed the next steps for the school that were identified at the previous inspection. A good range of opportunities for pupils to write regularly, across all subjects, is now in place. As a result, pupils' progress in writing has accelerated. The large majority of pupils are on track to achieve standards expected for their age by the end of the year. Teachers model neat, legible handwriting and provide pupils with many opportunities to write at length. The quality of pupils' presentation of their work is continually improving. This includes children in the early years, who thoroughly enjoy making their own books in their dedicated writing area.

You have worked effectively to improve pupils' attendance. The school's breakfast club has been an important contributory factor. This, alongside close working with families, means that pupils are now attending school more often, including disadvantaged pupils. However, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is still too high. You and the governors recognise this and have prioritised it as an area for further improvement.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The school's policy reflects the Secretary of State's most recent guidance. Staff receive regular update training about child protection. Due to this, everyone working at the school understands the procedures in place to ensure the safeguarding of pupils. Staff and parents who completed the online survey confirm that pupils are safe at the school.

Staff recognise any warning signs, including potential risks presented by extremism, radicalisation, female genital mutilation and when pupils are potentially missing from education. Leaders act swiftly if concerns are raised and alert other agencies, including the local authority.

The curriculum ensures that pupils develop a good awareness about how to stay safe in different situations. During 'Health and Safety Week', pupils were visited by a range of professionals, including the local police officer. They were taught how to

stay safe in the local area and are able to articulate what 'stranger danger' means. Leaders organise workshops for parents to raise awareness, including on the subject of online safety.

## **Inspection findings**

- All leaders monitor the school's work carefully. They accurately evaluate its effectiveness and correctly prioritise the areas to be improved to ensure that pupils' outcomes continually improve. They have rightly identified the need to improve some pupils' attendance and have brokered the support of an education welfare service to help this work.
- Governors know the school well. The information they receive enables them to have a comprehensive view of the progress made by all groups of pupils. They ask challenging questions and hold leaders to account if they notice any areas of underperformance. They meet regularly to monitor leaders' impact. They are also supportive, attending events and regular meetings with leaders.
- Teaching is typically good in all parts of the school. Pupils enjoy their lessons, behave well and cooperate with their classmates, because relationships are trusting and positive.
- Pupils achieve well. At the end of Year 2 they achieve above national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's assessment information and pupils' current work in books indicate that these standards are likely to be sustained in 2016. Previous gaps between the disadvantaged pupils and others are closing rapidly and the proportion of pupils likely to exceed the expected standard in reading and writing is set to rise this year.
- Teachers have an in-depth understanding about their pupils' progress and interests. This enables them to plan engaging learning activities that motivate pupils and meet their needs. Teachers consistently follow the school's assessment and marking policy. As a result, pupils make rapid progress in their learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide a range of opportunities for pupils to read and write across all curriculum areas. For example, pupils in Year 2 science lessons wrote about dinosaurs and space travel using detailed facts based on their research. Their writing also included effective use of grammar, punctuation and spelling strategies.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) is highly effective. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard at the end of Year 1 is well above the national average, including disadvantaged pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs or disability also make strong progress. The school expects that all pupils will meet this benchmark at the next check.
- Securing pupils' love of reading is at the heart of the school's work. They visit the local library regularly. Classroom book corners are engaging and include a range of high-quality children's literature, information books and newspapers. Additional reading lessons are provided for any pupil in danger of falling behind. Reading provision in all classes ensures that all pupils, including the most able, read widely and often.

- Progress in mathematics lessons and work books is also good. Pupils are expected to use and apply their knowledge to solve problems. However, progress is not as rapid for the most-able pupils in mathematics as it is reading and writing, because they are not sufficiently challenged in some activities, which reduces the amount of progress they are able to make.
- Teaching and leadership in the early years is good. Children make good progress across all areas and are prepared well for Year 1. Detailed and accurate assessments are made when children join the school. These show that the majority of children start school with skills that are below those expected for their age, in all areas of learning. Parents are encouraged to contribute to ongoing assessments about their child's development and they receive regular reports about their progress.
- The proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year has risen over recent years, and is now close to the national average. The school's own tracking information, and children's work in books, indicate that this is likely to continue to improve in 2016, including for disadvantaged children who currently receive additional support.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- progress of the most-able pupils in mathematics is accelerated
- attendance continues to improve, including for pupils who are persistently absent.

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

Yours sincerely

Kirstie Fulthorpe  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you and members of the leadership team, including the early years leader. I also met an administrator and the Chair of the Governing Body. I held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. Together, we visited all of the classes to observe teaching and learning. I looked at a sample of books, including for a selection of disadvantaged pupils. I spoke to pupils in the playground and dining hall. I evaluated the school's most recent information relating to pupils' progress. Other records were also scrutinised, including documents relating to safeguarding and attendance. I evaluated the responses of 14 staff and 11 parents to the inspection's online questionnaires.