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Beverly Smith
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Dear Mrs Smith

Short inspection of Eling Infant School and Nursery

Following my visit to the school on 4 May 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 your school was judged to be good in June 2011.

Context

Since the previous inspection, one additional teacher has been appointed to the school. There have been significant changes to the membership of the governing body, and three new governors took up their role very recently. There have been two different chairs of the governing body since June 2011.

In September 2015, the school opened a new Nursery class that provides places for up to 16 children, on a part-time basis.

The headteacher is due to leave the school at the end of this term.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Parents, governors and staff all describe the school as having a family atmosphere with good-quality teaching. This is because you have successfully built and maintained a team of strong practitioners at the school. Together with the senior leadership team, you put the needs, education and well-being of pupils at the forefront of all that you do. Furthermore, leaders and managers actively seek the

views of parents and pupils to make the school a place where all pupils are happy, safe and want to come and learn. Your strong working partnership with parents enables the school to work closely with parents for the benefit of pupils.

The Nursery class was created in response to parental wishes and to help strengthen the language and communication skills of the youngest children. This provision is developing well and caters effectively for the needs of young children.

The leadership in the school inspires staff to do their best for their pupils. Consequently, staff share expertise and ensure that the quality of teaching, particularly at key stage 1, is consistent in content and of high quality for all pupils.

You have ensured that the school has remained focused on the areas identified for improvement since the school was last inspected. You and your leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school. Consequently, you have helped to raise the expectations of what different groups of pupils can achieve. This is leading to the majority of pupils making good progress given their different starting points. At the time of the previous inspection, one area for improvement was for pupils to get better at checking their own work. Evidence seen during the inspection highlights that this has become well embedded across key stage 1.

The quality of teaching and learning, as well as the school's evidence about the progress pupils make and the work in pupils' books, all show that the vast majority of teaching and learning in the school is good. However, further improvements are needed in some aspects of teaching in the Reception Year. This is particularly to ensure that boys make sufficient progress in reading and writing to be ready for Year 1.

Governors have taken responsibility for different subjects and are becoming well informed about different aspects of the school's work. They attend relevant training about child protection, safer recruitment and managing personnel issues. Governors hold leaders and managers to account for the progress made by pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils. However, they do not always make enough use of published data about pupils' outcomes to do this as rigorously as they should.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school's arrangements to ensure that children are safe are good. Senior leaders and governors undertake risk assessments and ensure the school provides a suitable and safe environment in which pupils can work and play. Teachers complete good risk assessments for educational visits and off-site activities. This helps to ensure that all staff are alert to any potential risks and are especially vigilant when pupils are off-site. The school works effectively with a range of different agencies to support the needs of their most vulnerable pupils. This helps these pupils to develop their confidence, make friends and work and play happily with others. Staff and governors have undertaken training about the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. However, this has yet to become a well-established aspect of the school's curriculum. Nevertheless, the school provides good

opportunities for pupils to learn about fundamental British values. Pupils learn about the rule of law, democracy and their rights and responsibilities.

Inspection findings

- Staff, pupils and parents feel valued, respected and well supported. This contributes to the school being a happy place for all to work and learn.
- Together you and your senior leadership team track and monitor the attendance and progress of pupils closely. This has enabled senior leaders to challenge underperformance and help to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Consequently, standards, have risen since the school was last inspected. As of this year, gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics are closing. Furthermore, intervention strategies to support those at risk of underachieving are effective.
- You have developed a comprehensive and detailed strategic plan and self-evaluation document. These documents map out the work of senior leaders to secure further improvements in the school. This has led to better outcomes for pupils, including for those who have special educational needs or disability and for disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors challenge the school about the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. However, they do not always make sufficient use of published data to drill down about the progress of all groups of pupils.
- Leaders and managers work hard and effectively to raise levels of attendance. A parent support adviser targets families whose children do not attend school regularly. This, together with incentives for pupils to improve their attendance, is leading to lower levels of absence. Nevertheless, some disadvantaged pupils are still not attending as well as they should. While the school tries to support parents, you do not always take a firm enough stance with those parents who do not make sure their children attend school regularly.
- You act quickly to improve areas of underperformance. For example, senior leaders undertook a detailed analysis of those aspects of the phonics screening check in which pupils underachieved last year. (Phonics refers to letters and the sounds that they make.) As a result, there is now a stronger focus on the teaching and learning of blending and reading words with common suffixes. Consequently, this year, more pupils than was the case last year are set to reach the expected standard of the phonics check in Year 1.
- Staff share your high expectations about the quality of teaching and learning. This has led to some significant strengths in the quality of teaching and learning at key stage 1.
- At key stage 1, teaching makes effective use of stories and rhymes to strengthen pupils' language and communication skills. Pupils are encouraged to repeat rhymes and recount stories orally and in writing to improve their understanding of sentence structure and to enrich their vocabulary. Teaching in this part of the school typically makes good use of questions to challenge pupils and to check their learning and understanding. This enables teachers to recognise those pupils who need additional support and who are

ready for more challenge.

- Teaching encourages pupils to think of their next steps and to talk about what they are learning. As a result, pupils are becoming particularly skilled at checking their own learning and progress. Pupils appreciate the use of success criteria to help them check how well they are progressing.
- Teachers make effective use of the 'Hampshire model' to assess the progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics. This is improving teachers' knowledge of the national curriculum and of what pupils are expected to learn. This in turn is strengthening the subject knowledge of teaching and support staff.
- In all three of the key stage 1 classes observed, pupils were learning the value of different coins. The most able were challenged to make the same amount using different combinations of coins. In one lesson, the teaching assistant provided good levels of challenge by asking pupils how many 10 pence pieces it would take to make £1, and then how many different combinations of coins could be used to make £1.
- The work seen in pupils' books shows that pupils' writing is developing well from a low starting point. In Year 1, many write sentences clearly demarcated with full stops, followed by a capital letter. They include adjectives in their writing such as when writing about Little Red Riding Hood.
- In Year 2, pupils' writing demonstrates that they can spell common words confidently and are beginning to use punctuation well. Pupils' writing reflects an awareness of writing for an audience and the importance of making stories sound exciting and interesting.
- Pupils observed in the early years are developing good levels of self-confidence and are generally well motivated. Most engage well in the range of activities laid out for them to choose from.
- The proportion of pupils currently on track to reach a good level of development by the end of Reception is slightly better than last year. However, not all pupils make good progress in the Reception Year. Boys in particular are not making sufficient progress in their reading and writing to prepare them well enough for Year 1.
- At key stage 1, girls are currently achieving as well as boys. In their response to the questionnaire a small minority of pupils identified that they did not always feel well challenged. Inspection evidence showed that pupils would benefit from greater challenge, particularly the most able, in writing.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are now identified more swiftly than has previously been the case. As a result, the school provides more effective early intervention to meet the additional needs of pupils. Consequently, while the progress of this group of pupils was slow last year, it is now much better.
- From the responses to the parental questionnaires and in discussion with parents during the inspection, it is clear they believe that the school is well led and managed.
- Parents welcome the opportunity to come into school once a month to observe teaching and learning in what the school calls 'welcome to learning' sessions. Parents told me how much they appreciate being able to see for themselves what and how their children are taught. Many appreciate the

homework provided for their children and how this consolidates what has been taught at school.

- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is good. In discussion with parents and from their responses to the questionnaire, parents agree that pupils in the school are well behaved. They are also strongly of the view that their children are happy and safe. Several parents stated how much their child 'loves coming to school'.
- All of the staff that responded to the staff questionnaire are proud to work at the school.
- The local authority considers the school to be a low priority and therefore not in need of much support. Local authority officers provide helpful guidance to school leaders about how the school could be improved further. You have made good use of this advice to help to continue to secure good and improving teaching and learning at key stage 1.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils make greater progress in developing their reading and writing in the Reception Year, so that by the end of the early years pupils, especially boys, are well prepared for Year 1
- the progress pupils make in writing accelerates, and that more pupils exceed age-related expectations
- levels of attendance continue to improve by tackling persistent absenteeism with even greater rigour
- the role of governors is developed so that they can analyse and interpret published data confidently, in order to provide greater challenge to leaders about the progress made by different groups of pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the director of children's services for Hampshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Gehane Gordelier
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, your senior leadership team, seven governors including the vice-chair, and a representative from the local authority. Informal discussions were held with pupils. I also spoke with a few parents during the course of the school day. I undertook a learning walk with you and the assistant headteacher, observing teaching and learning in every class. I looked at a sample of work in pupils' books. A range of school documentation was

scrutinised including the school's strategic plan and self-evaluation, the school's information about the progress pupils are currently making and their attendance, and a report from the local authority. I took account of 17 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View), eight responses to the questionnaire completed by staff and 22 responses to the questionnaire completed by pupils. Documentation and records about how you keep pupils safe were also reviewed.