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Mr Simon Beardall
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Dear Mr Beardall

Short inspection of Ridgeway Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 June 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 July 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have created a harmonious learning community, comprising a united team of staff who model a deep respect for learning that you wish to see in pupils. As a result, pupils' attitudes to their work are excellent. They pay close attention to teachers and teaching assistants, and learn quickly.

Your teachers' high expectations of pupils' outcomes ensure that pupils achieve consistently well throughout the school and that progress is consistently good. You also ensure that your staff display caring attitudes towards all pupils. As a result, pupils themselves are extremely well behaved and are both considerate and reflective in their outlook. They work and play happily together, and are welcoming to visitors.

You have attended to the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection effectively. Pupils receive regular opportunities to work both independently and collaboratively. They listen to, and value, each other's ideas and produce work of high quality. Teachers also give pupils a good understanding of how successfully they have completed their work, and a clear idea of precisely what they need to do next in order to improve. Teachers keep detailed records on pupils' progress, along with any areas of work where pupils are unsure. Teachers then give those pupils effective support to understand these areas, and check that pupils have improved.

While teachers match the work they set for most pupils closely to their needs, you agree that the most able pupils have not consistently been given challenging tasks

that make them think deeply. As a result, these pupils have not made as much progress, or attained as highly, as they could have.

The governing body is highly effective in its strategic role. As well as giving you strong support, governors challenge you and senior leaders rigorously to continue to improve. They, like you, are very ambitious for the school's future. They are adamant that the drive for improvement must continue until, and even after, Ridgeway becomes outstanding. While your subject leaders provide good levels of information to governors, not all leaders have yet had opportunities to undertake lesson observations and work sampling. As a result, they cannot pinpoint precisely where any teaching is less effective and then help to improve this.

You ensure that staff teach pupils very well about the culture of Britain, its history and its fundamental values. For example, on the day of the inspection, pupils had invited their parents in for a video show after school. Pupils presented impressive and engaging short films they had made about Britain and, among other things, the importance of obeying the law. On the same day, pupils were also asking visiting members of the Women's Institute about their childhood, and how it contrasted with life in modern Britain. You ensure that the emphasis on British culture is reflected in many vibrant displays around the school. Pupils I met showed a genuine respect for cultures different from their own and explained how they believe that diversity and difference is a good thing.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your staff place the highest priority on keeping pupils safe. All staff have received effective training on the different forms of abuse, including in the recent area of national concern of radicalisation. They know the different warning signs that might suggest a pupil is being harmed. They are also extremely clear about the need to report any concerns they have immediately, and how this must be done. You ensure that, on all interview panels, at least one member has undertaken safer recruitment training. You also ensure that the school's single central register is kept up to date and obtain appropriate references for all employees before they begin their employment at Ridgeway.

During my inspection, I met pupils from many different year groups. They told me how they feel very safe in school. They say that there is very little name-calling or bullying, because everyone gets on so well. However, if they are worried about anything, they can talk to any member of staff, who will quickly help them. Pupils are also taught well about how to keep themselves safe from, for example, strangers and roads. When using the internet, they understand the immediate actions to take if they view anything that causes them any concern.

Inspection findings

- You and governors have evaluated the school accurately as a good school. You have examined a wide range of recent and current evidence and believe that, while the school's provision and outcomes are very positive overall, the weaknesses you have identified means that it is not yet outstanding. You and

governors have both a strong ambition to address these as quickly as possible, and a good capacity to do so.

- Staff are united and have a clear understanding of the priorities set out in the school development plan. Those staff who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire feel well supported in their role. They believe that you give them good professional opportunities to improve their effectiveness. Those who were working at the school at the time of the last inspection confirm that Ridgeway has continued its trend of improvement.
- Governance is highly effective. Governors have accelerated the rate of the school's improvement by challenging you and senior leaders to continue to improve all aspects of the school's provision. They are very aspirational for the school's future, and are unafraid to withhold a pay rise if a teacher's performance does not justify an increase in their salary. They ensure that pupils are kept safe and the school's budget is well spent.
- Parents express good levels of support for all aspects of the school's work. A large majority believe that the school is well led and managed, and a very large majority would also recommend the school to other parents. The school remains oversubscribed. One parent summed up the views of many others by saying that, 'My son loves going to Ridgeway. It has a friendly, inclusive culture and the children, their parents and the staff are all justifiably proud of their school.' A very large majority of parents, along with all those I met during the day, confirm that the school keeps their children safe.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points. By the time they leave the Reception Year, a higher proportion than the national average attain a good level of development. The proportion passing the Year 1 phonics screen check has improved considerably from 2013, when it was below the national average. It was above the national average last year, and the proportion expected to pass this year is set to increase again.
- Teachers ensure that pupils are very well prepared for secondary school by the time they leave. Attainment at both key stages 1 and 2 has been significantly above the national average for the past five years. However, no Year 6 pupils attained Level 6 last year. In 2014, though around one in five pupils scored a Level 6 in mathematics, none achieved this in reading or in writing.
- The proportions making the progress expected of them, and more than this, are at least in line with, and in most cases above, the national average. Information provided by the school confirms that pupils' progress is good.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils in any single key stage is too small to be able to report on their comparative achievement without the risk of identifying those pupils. However, you ensure that pupil premium funding is spent effectively in supporting disadvantaged pupils to learn quickly from their starting points. As a result, these pupils make progress that is at least as fast as, and often faster than, others in the school.
- Pupils I met during my visit told me that teachers make lessons both fun and interesting. They enjoy lessons in subjects other than mathematics and English. For example, they learn French throughout key stage 2 and Mandarin, a Chinese language, in Year 5. Pupils described to me how they enjoy role play in foreign languages by, for example, ordering meals and drinks in restaurants and asking for the bill. They memorise vocabulary and use songs and rhymes to build their confidence. Pupils' books I looked at during the inspection show that

they express ideas with increasing accuracy and complexity as they become older.

- Pupils' attitudes to their work is excellent. They are curious, keen to learn new things and make as much progress as they can. They listen respectfully to staff and work well both independently and together. For example, children I saw in the Reception class were building a castle for the Queen, using wooden blocks. Staff take care to provide children with choices so they can make decisions and explain these to each other.
- Pupils' work that I examined during my visit shows that their skills in writing and mathematics are high. They are productive and present their work neatly. From a young age, pupils write creatively and with confidence. For example, a Year 1 child had written 'It is a warm moonlight night. The stars are shining brightly and trees are statues stuck in the ground.' Pupils write using increasingly complex punctuation and vocabulary across a wide range of genres. Pupils also learn to use and apply their skills in number quickly. For example, in Year 2, pupils had learned to express amounts of coloured flowers with pictograms. In Year 6, I saw pupils explaining to their teacher how they could convert, for example, 16 sixths into two and two-thirds. Pupils' progress is brisk because confident teachers move the learning on quickly and address any misconceptions pupils have effectively.
- Teachers' assessments of their pupils' progress are accurate. Teachers have ensured that they have moderated these with other schools and, as a result, have a clear and shared understanding of the skills and knowledge expected from pupils of different ages.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should:

- develop the role of subject leaders so that they are consistently effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching is outstanding across the school
- ensure that the most able pupils make rapid and sustained progress and attain as highly as they are capable by being given work that consistently challenges them.

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

Yours sincerely

Roary Pownall
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, representatives of the governing body and the subject leaders for English, mathematics, computing, physical education and science. We visited all classes to observe teaching and learning. I looked at pupils' work across the school. I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and met with groups of them at breaktime. I considered the views of 17 parents posted on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, alongside the school's most recent questionnaire. I also met with parents at the end of the school day. I read a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, plans for school improvement, and information on outcomes for pupils currently in the school. I studied information related to attendance, anonymised examples of teachers' appraisal, and examined safeguarding documentation. I examined the school's website to check that it meets requirements on the publication of specified information. I looked at the range of views expressed by staff and pupils, through Ofsted's questionnaire, about the school.