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Mrs S Allen
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Dear Mrs Allen

Short inspection of Bolnore Village Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 February 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.

You have provided strong leadership and clear vision to ensure that every child has the opportunity to do their best. You have shown drive and commitment to continue to improve the school. Other leaders skilfully support you in improving teaching and pupils' progress. Parents, pupils and staff are overwhelmingly appreciative of the work the school does and rightly hold you in high regard. This is a happy, purposeful school that seeks to develop pupils into well-rounded, confident individuals who are interested and motivated to learn about the world around them.

Areas for improvement identified in the school's last inspection report included: increasing the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in mathematics in Year 2 and in reading at the end of Reception, as well as establishing clear targets for the most-able pupils. Additionally, inspectors felt that lessons needed to be more closely matched to pupils' needs. Work in pupils' books and the outcomes of national assessments indicate that you have successfully addressed these priorities.

Pupils did not achieve well enough at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015. You know this and have swiftly taken the right actions to make sure this does not happen again. You and other leaders have taken decisive action to remedy any weaknesses in teaching.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding is effective. The school makes appropriate checks on all adults, including volunteers, to ensure their suitability to work with children. Staff receive regular training and understand how to raise concerns. The school works effectively with a range of external agencies to provide additional support to pupils and their families where appropriate. Pupils say they feel safe in school and feel confident to ask for help when they need it. Pupils know how to stay safe in a variety of situations, for example when using the internet. Pupils learn about assessing and managing risks through their Forest School experiences.

Inspection findings

- You and the governors are resolute in your determination to drive continuous improvement across all areas of the school. Together, you have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Action plans, including those drawn up by literacy and mathematics leaders, set out high expectations and challenging targets for the future. You are not complacent. Your robust and critical review of pupils' achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015, and the subsequent actions you have taken, has led to pupils making more rapid progress.
- Governors play an active role in evaluating the school's effectiveness and know the school well. They give of their time generously and visit the school frequently to see for themselves the impact of leaders' actions. They use their wide range of skills and experience to hold leaders to account effectively. They are vigilant in checking that safeguarding training and recruitment checks are in place.
- Middle leaders have made well-judged changes to how English and mathematics are taught, so that pupils have many opportunities to deepen and consolidate their learning. These leaders are carefully monitoring the impact of their work on pupils' progress.
- Leaders have taken appropriate action to improve standards in pupils' writing in Key Stage 2. Pupils begin to learn their letters and sounds earlier in Reception. As a result, they are better prepared to tackle writing tasks in Key Stage 1. Work in pupils' books shows they are writing at length more frequently for a variety of purposes and subjects. Pupils are more inspired to write, particularly boys, because they are given a greater choice of topics to write about. Pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors are frequently spotted and corrected by teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, pupils are making good progress in writing.
- Teachers provide helpful and constructive feedback to pupils. Pupils understand how to improve their work and are clear what their next steps

to achieve success are. Pupils talk articulately to each other and adults about what they are learning and what they need to tackle next.

- Leaders have rightly focused on improving standards in mathematics in Key Stage 2. Teaching focuses sharply on addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge and deepening their understanding, so they are better able to solve problems for themselves. As a result, pupils are making good progress.
- The quality of teaching continues to be good. Teachers plan interesting and stimulating activities that are closely matched to pupils' needs. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, pupils identified successfully how language had been used in a range of poems to express the poets' thoughts.
- Teachers clearly explain what pupils need to do to be successful and how they can reach the highest levels of learning. Teachers set appropriately challenging work and pupils are keen to attempt more difficult tasks. As a result, pupils, including the most able, make good progress. Gaps between the progress of different groups of pupils have either closed or are closing rapidly.
- Generally, teachers and teaching assistants use their subject knowledge well to ask good questions that draw out and check pupils' understanding. Occasionally, gaps in teachers' knowledge prevent this from happening.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is actively developed. For example, pupils talk with enthusiasm about fund-raising they have undertaken in order to care for an elephant in Kenya as well as the opportunities they have to study different faiths and cultures.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They work hard, listen carefully and want to do well. They treat each other and adults with respect. They enjoy taking responsibility, for example by becoming members of the school council.
- The majority of pupils attend school regularly and are punctual. However, despite the school's determined efforts, some pupils are absent from school too often.
- Corridors and classrooms are full of interesting and high-quality displays that include useful prompts for literacy and mathematics learning. Additionally, displays about spirituality, charity fund-raising, Forest School, British values and school trips reflect the diverse and varied learning opportunities open to pupils.
- While the local authority rightly regards the school as requiring 'a light touch' in terms of support, its work to check the accuracy of teachers' assessments in mathematics has been useful.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers' subject specialist knowledge develops, particularly in mathematics, in order to fully challenge pupils to reach the highest standards
- attendance of pupils who are regularly absent from school improves.

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

Yours sincerely

Lisa Moore
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, subject leaders for literacy and mathematics, a group of pupils and members of the governing body. I met with a representative of the local authority. I spoke with parents at the end of the day and with pupils at different times during the inspection, including breaktime. I looked at the 120 responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire), the 116 comments provided by text message and the 17 responses to the pupil survey. I visited a number of classrooms with you to speak to pupils, look at their work and observe their learning. I evaluated a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, development plan and safeguarding records.