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Sarah Jones
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Dear Ms Jones

Short inspection of Roman Way Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 24 January 2017, 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 May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

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

You and your acting deputy headteacher promote high aspirations for pupils, which permeate the school. You lead your staff with determination, encouraging a strong team ethos through a culture of positive communication. Staff are proud to be part of Roman Way Primary School, and support each other in working hard for the benefit and welfare of pupils. Parents have confidence in the school, trusting leaders to look after their children and provide them with excellent opportunities to learn and develop. As one parent described, 'staff take time to get to know each pupil as an individual, so they can work to their strengths and draw the best out of them.'

Pupils are happy and confident learners who conduct themselves with maturity in lessons and around the school. Many welcomed me with a cheery 'good morning' when they arrived at the start of the day. Pupils understand and demonstrate the important values that represent life in modern Britain. They work well together in class and help each other with their learning. Democratically elected members of the school council consider thoughtfully what improvements pupils across the school would like to see to their learning environment and how they can achieve them. Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular sports, arts and music activities that support their wider development.

Since the previous inspection in May 2013, former and current school leaders have focused effectively on the areas identified for improvement. Pupils practise their writing skills in science and topic work as well as in their English work. Consequently, they write fluently in a range of styles and with increasing stamina. This focus on improving writing led to Year 2 and Year 6 pupils achieving well above expectations in 2016. In key stage 1, pupils learn how to interpret information from a text, and apply these skills effectively as part of their learning. In both key stage 1 and key stage 2, a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics gives rich opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge and skills to solve problems. This helps an increasing proportion of pupils to achieve at least the expectations for their age in mathematics, although some do not currently make rapid progress over the course of key stage 2. Pupils know what teachers expect of them during lessons and how their learning builds over time. Teachers use questioning to check pupils' understanding, although their questions could sometimes be directed more carefully towards those who most need to be challenged or need to make the most rapid progress.

You, other leaders and governors know that there is work to do to make the school even better. You recognise that, while achievement and progress in writing are consistently strong across the school, they have been weaker in reading and mathematics across key stage 2 in the past. Leaders' checks on pupils' progress are becoming more detailed, but do not currently track the progress of different pupils from their starting points as forensically as they could. This prevents leaders and teachers from ensuring that some pupils who are already achieving age-related expectations are challenged and supported to make stronger progress and achieve even more.

Safeguarding is effective.

The safety and welfare of pupils is central to your work and that of your staff. Leaders ensure that all adults working in the school understand their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe. Staff and governors are appropriately and regularly trained in line with current requirements, which are captured accurately in the school's policies. Leaders check carefully the suitability of any adult coming to work in the school and keep appropriate records of this information. They work closely and sensitively with pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, using expertise from beyond the school to provide helpful support for families who need extra help.

Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school, and trust adults to help them with any difficulties or worries they may have. They learn how to keep themselves safe, through activities such as 'bikeability week' and e-safety lessons. Parents reflect that the nurturing ethos and positive relationships enable school staff and families to work together for the benefit of the pupils.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, I focused particularly on the following aspects: how leaders ensure that teachers' assessments of learning are accurate; how well

leaders ensure that the quality of teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is consistently strong across key stages 1 and 2; how effectively safeguarding procedures ensure that all pupils, particularly the more vulnerable, attend school regularly and are safe; whether pupils currently in key stage 2 are making better progress than in the past.

- Leaders work effectively to make sure that teachers' assessments of pupils' work are accurate. Teachers now use the new assessment model routinely across the school. They work closely together, supported well by the local authority and staff from other schools in the federation, to check that they are assessing pupils' achievement consistently.
- Leaders support teachers well to develop their skills and make sure teaching is consistently good. Ineffective teaching has been eliminated. Where teaching is strongest, it builds closely on pupils' prior learning, so that progress is rapid.
- Leaders strive to ensure that all pupils are prepared well for their next stage of learning. Pupils who are not working at the level expected for their age are helped effectively to catch up. Leaders recognise the need for some pupils to make more rapid progress in reading and mathematics during key stage 2, and for more pupils, particularly the most able, to achieve a greater depth of learning by the end of key stage 1.
- Leaders have improved the quality of writing at key stage 2, with high proportions of Year 6 pupils achieving at least the expected standard in 2016. Pupils currently in the school are on track to achieve even more highly. Leaders are now rightly focused on improving progress and standards in reading and mathematics, and there are early signs that this work is having an impact.
- Pupils currently in the school are on track to achieve better outcomes in reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 than has been the case in the past. Leaders use extra help effectively to enable disadvantaged pupils to make rapid progress so they catch up with their peers nationally.
- Leaders recognise that pupils in key stage 2 need to make rapid progress in reading and mathematics, to improve on their previous underperformance. They know that more rigorous tracking of pupils' progress from their individual starting points will help teachers to make sure that future learning challenges and supports pupils to make rapid gains in their learning.
- Leaders work successfully to ensure that pupils come to school regularly. As a result, attendance is improving across the school. Leaders understand some of the challenges faced by individual families, and work sensitively but effectively with them to get pupils into school. Their focus on celebrating good attendance is encouraging more pupils to come to school every day.
- The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is declining but remains high. Leaders know why many of these pupils have missed too much school in the past, and provide these pupils and their families with appropriate support. Leaders remain determined for all pupils to be in school every day.
- The early years foundation stage leader adapts the curriculum creatively to capture the interests and meet the needs of different groups of pupils. She makes the most of opportunities to encourage all pupils, especially boys, to

practise writing more frequently. The positive difference this is making is evident in the displays of pupils' writing in the classroom and in the activities that pupils participate in enthusiastically during the day.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- monitoring of pupils' learning is focused rigorously on progress from different starting points, as well as on overall achievement
- teachers plan learning that challenges all pupils, especially the most able, to make strong progress from their starting points
- a higher proportion of pupils achieve a greater depth of learning by the end of key stage 1, and progress in reading and mathematics across key stage 2 improves to match the high standards achieved in writing.

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

Yours sincerely

Kathryn Moles
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I visited lessons with you and your acting deputy headteacher, to look at learning and talk to pupils about their work. I met with you and your deputy headteacher, the early years foundation stage leader, designated safeguarding lead, a group of pupils and a representative from the governing body. I spoke to a representative from the local authority and a local headteacher who works with school leaders across the federation. I spoke to some parents at the start of the day and considered 10 responses to the Parent View questionnaire and two letters received on the day of the inspection. I also took into account 10 responses to the staff online questionnaire. I reviewed a sample of work from pupils in Year 3 and Year 5, as well as a range of school documents. I considered the school's safeguarding arrangements, including the record of recruitment checks on adults working in the school.