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Karen Davis  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Davis

### **Short inspection of Whitegrove Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 31 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 2012.

#### **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 governors work together effectively to improve the learning and well-being of pupils. You make thoughtful use of external evidence and research to inform your practice. You have identified clearly aspects of teaching and learning which need to improve and have taken action to address these. Your commitment to empowering pupils, and providing personalised support to remove barriers, is helping to tackle any underachievement. The impact of your leadership is evident in the school's culture, which promotes the agreed values, supports learning and celebrates pupils' achievements.

You are supported by highly skilled school leaders, who are well informed and model good practice. As a result, teaching continues to improve. Leaders use a wide variety of training opportunities, including working with other schools, to develop your staff and improve the learning experiences of pupils. Pupils appreciate the challenges and support they are given and enjoy the rewards they gain for successful learning. Parents are pleased with their children's progress and the support they receive, both academically and emotionally. They speak of the 'excellent foundation' that the school provides for their children, in preparation for secondary school.

The last inspection report recommended that the school needed to develop greater consistency in teaching so that pupils made more consistent progress and the most

able pupils were sufficiently challenged. Following that inspection there have been significant changes in staffing and governance. Since your appointment, you have worked effectively with your governing body and the local authority to make improvements, and respond to the changing demands of the new curriculum. The previous headteacher was asked to review the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. You have introduced a new strategy that is helping this group of pupils to learn well.

We discussed some areas for continuing development which included writing and challenge for pupils to work at greater depth. You have evaluated the current position of the school accurately and have responded rapidly to areas of underperformance. However, more time is required in order to improve consistency, including in how well pupils are encouraged to take ownership of their learning so they can achieve more. You are well supported by your leadership team as you continue to improve the progress of all pupils in all year groups. You are helping pupils to develop greater resilience as learners as well as other qualities that will support their future success.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Governors have taken a strong, strategic lead and are secure in their belief that the school is safe. All school policies and practices support the culture of safety. The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are well trained and diligent in their duties around keeping children safe. Staff make effective use of the reporting and recording systems. You have created an environment in which adults have an increased awareness of the risks to children, using the phrase 'it does happen at Whitegrove'. You have relevant experience in safeguarding and work well with the local authority to maintain high standards in this area. You have maintained good attendance for most pupils and carefully track the reasons for absence. You work closely with parents to manage situations that affect attendance. When pupils are at risk, or create risk, they are well supported through one-to-one provision.

Pupils report that they feel safe, they are kept safe and they do not experience any bullying. They are able to describe lessons about keeping safe, including online safety and when using play equipment. Parents are also given guidance on e-safety. They receive advice on the use of social media and the support they can give to their children. Parents describe the school as a progressive and protective environment in which children learn and thrive. They say that their children feel safe and happy at Whitegrove and that they are 'very happy to be part of the Whitegrove family'.

### **Inspection findings**

- To explore whether the school remained good, I agreed with you that I would focus on the following areas: the progress current pupils are making in writing; leaders' effectiveness in identifying the most successful strategies to improve progress for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs

and/or disabilities; and the opportunities given to pupils in key stage 1 to work towards higher levels of attainment.

- You and your leaders have taken effective action to improve the quality of writing. In particular, you now use meaningful and relevant texts that capture the interest of all pupils and help them to engage in their learning. Pupils have more opportunities to write. Training within school, collaboration with other schools and teachers' regular moderation of pupils' writing have all contributed to more recent improvements.
- In early years, I observed children using the theme of dinosaurs to develop their writing, storytelling and mark making. They were able to talk to me about their learning, which they enjoy. In Year 6, pupils of all abilities have positive attitudes and take ownership of their learning. Pupils set themselves targets using the information that teachers share with them. They understand the next steps they need to take to achieve higher standards and improve the quality of their work. However, practice is not yet consistent in all year groups. Sometimes pupils who require additional help in lessons do not receive support quickly enough, while those who are most able are not always moved on to challenging tasks quickly enough.
- We discussed the provision mapping you have in place for pupils identified by leaders as having additional needs. Your philosophy is that barriers to learning should be removed and that individually tailored provision will reflect the changing needs of pupils. Governors work strategically with you to make sure that effective and targeted support is in place for every pupil. You have improved your understanding of pupils' needs, so that disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make rapid progress. You have good relationships with parents and make sure that all parents have the opportunity to talk to staff when they bring their children to school each day.
- During the inspection I observed pupils who need additional help and those who are disadvantaged learning in class and being supported well through interventions outside classrooms. I saw examples of your tailored provision. This included therapy time with guinea pigs and outdoor learning. Pupils' emotional and social needs were being well supported through such experiences and as a result they were better prepared for learning.
- Together, we looked at opportunities given to pupils to work at greater depth. This was a particular focus in key stage 1 since not enough pupils achieved this higher standard in the 2016 outcomes. In the last inspection report there were some inconsistencies in teaching that contributed to the most able pupils not being sufficiently challenged. You have responded to these concerns and have a clear commitment to providing more consistent and coherent teaching to enable pupils to work at greater depth. This is defined by leaders as a 'room at the top for all' approach.
- Pupils' learning tasks include a suitable range of opportunities to work at depth. Displays on walls in classrooms and corridors illustrate high-quality writing for a range of purposes. Teachers use these displays well to help parents and pupils appreciate the standards of work that can be achieved and make clear their high expectations of pupils. These emerging strengths are not yet apparent in all written work.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils in all year groups, particularly the most able, develop strategies to achieve high standards in their writing
- pupils acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to take ownership of their learning and achieve more.

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

Yours sincerely

Ann McCarthy  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I held discussions with you, your deputy and other school leaders about your plans for improvement and your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I also met with a group of governors, including the chair and vice-chair, and an officer of the local authority. Together, you and I visited classes, where we observed learning, spoke to pupils and examined their written work. I observed the start of the school day and spoke with parents. I met with the school council and other pupil representatives. I looked carefully at the 250 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I evaluated documents related to school improvement, safeguarding, pupils' progress and attendance.