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Mrs Elizabeth Wood
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Wood

Short inspection of Sandwich Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 28 February 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 April 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leaders have continued to move the school forward with high expectations and a shared vision. You know the school well and are rightly keen to seek opportunities to work with other schools. Governors are proactive and hold school leaders to account effectively. Staff enjoy working at the school and are proud to be part of a strong team. Collectively, you have the confidence of parents and the wider community. Recent staff turnover means that there are a number of new leaders. There is an effective programme of induction in place; however, its full benefit is not yet evident.

The school's culture ensures that everyone is included in a caring environment. Staff are welcoming and work closely together so that all pupils are known as individuals. As a result, pupils behave well and are keen to learn. During my time in the school, I observed pupils who were attentive and who enjoyed taking part in a range of activities. Pupils enjoyed a lesson about adjectives linked to their project on pirates, and others worked hard on notetaking linked to their project on the rainforest. Pupils are polite. Pupils spoke happily and confidently about their school, and were eager to talk about work they had found challenging.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors highlighted the many strengths still present at the school, including the strong sense of teamwork with shared goals, the quality of teaching, resulting in good pupil progress overall, and good pupil behaviour. Inspectors also identified the need to ensure that pupils' skills in writing

were developed further. Pupils now have a wide variety of writing opportunities, across a range of topics, and as a result standards are similar to those in other schools. As we discussed, recent changes in staff mean that leaders are undertaking a programme of induction to ensure that all teaching gives pupils the chance to achieve their best.

Since the last inspection, school leaders have continued the process of effective self-evaluation in order to identify priorities to improve the school. You were able to describe accurately the school's many strengths, as well as the areas that need to be improved. Relevant action points on the school's plan for improvement include raising standards in mathematics in Years 1 and 2, development of the Reception outdoor playground, and supporting new staff. Governors monitor the plan closely against challenging targets to help keep improvements on track.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children are in place and meet current requirements. Records are up to date and staff are trained at an appropriate level. Everyone knows what to do to keep pupils safe.

Pupils have lots of opportunities to learn about safety. They are reminded regularly about e-safety in lessons. An annual school safety week ensures that pupils know how to stay safe, for example, near the water or railway lines.

You promote safety in all aspects of the school's work. Staff supervise pupils well throughout the day. Pupils say they are happy to talk to staff if they have any concerns. The school is maintained well, although the school development plan identifies facilities, such as the library and the playground, that you want to improve further. All parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire are confident that their children are safe at school, and are well looked after.

Inspection findings

- Visits to classrooms and a review of mathematics workbooks show that pupils, both boys and girls, are making strong progress. However, pupils are not always doing as well as they could, because there are too few opportunities to develop reasoning and problem-solving skills. Pupils told me they enjoy mathematics and having challenging problems to solve. Leaders have rightly identified mathematics as an area for development. We agreed there is more work to be done to ensure that pupils are consistently challenged to achieve their best.
- The school's few pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are monitored closely. Staff know them well. Their progress is tracked closely, and additional funding is used in a variety of appropriate ways to help these pupils achieve well. In writing, a wide range of opportunities with clear objectives and appropriate levels of support is provided. Consequently, most disadvantaged pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good or better progress, often from low starting points.
- Up-to-date policies for medical conditions and the administration of medicines are

in place. Individual plans are devised according to the needs of the pupils. You have six fully qualified first aiders and appropriate training and administration records were seen.

- Leaders and governors monitor pupils' attendance closely. Currently, the attendance of all pupils is slightly above that of pupils in other schools. Effective steps are taken to follow up the small number of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special needs and/or disabilities who have low levels of attendance. Pupils appreciate the stickers and certificates given as rewards for attending school. They know that it is important to come to school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- further opportunities for problem-solving and reasoning are provided in mathematics, to enable all pupils to make good progress and to attain at least the expected levels
- staff in new middle leadership roles continue to develop their effectiveness, and their impact on improving teaching and learning is maximised.

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

Yours sincerely

Dr Rosemary Addison
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you; the chair of the governing body, accompanied by three other governors; and a group of pupils. I also met with a representative of the local authority. You accompanied me on visits to all classrooms, talking to pupils and assessing their work. I looked at a range of pupils' mathematics and writing books. I observed pupils' behaviour in the classrooms and around the school. I took into account 11 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 10 written comments. I also considered 22 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. I scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness and improvement planning, the school's website, safety records, minutes of meetings, various policies and pupils' progress information.