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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Mrs Leiza Harris & Mrs Kay Sadler  
Headteachers  
Grange Junior School  
Franklin Road  
Rowner  
Gosport  
Hampshire  
PO13 9TS

Dear Mrs Harris & Mrs Sadler

### **Short inspection of Grange Junior School**

Following my visit to the school on 7 March 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 January 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 became co-headteachers of the school in April 2015. Together, you act with determination to maintain the ethos and to make the school even better. Your investment in developing leaders across the school is helping to ensure that everyone plays their part in getting the best out of pupils. Staff, governors and parents have confidence in your leadership. They recognise and value how you place pupils at the heart of everything you do. Staff commit to and support this vision, encouraging pupils to aim high and do well. As one member of staff said: 'Leaders are driven to ensure that the best opportunities are afforded to all children and staff.'

Pupils enjoy being part of your school. They are confident and happy, and work well together in lessons. They respect each other and the adults that support them, both with their learning and with other problems they may have. If they occasionally do not meet the school's high expectations, they understand and respond to the clear systems in place that help them stay safe and get things right next time. Pupils look for ways to help themselves and each other when they 'get stuck' with their work, but know that teachers will support them if needed. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility within the school, such as being a 'Grange guardian' or a member of the school council. They understand that this helps them develop the skills they will

need as citizens in modern Britain.

Since the last inspection in 2013, there have been many changes to the staffing in the school. As well as you becoming co-headteachers, a number of teachers have left and joined the school, including some who hold middle leadership roles. By reviewing and adapting leadership roles within the school, you have made sure that staff at all levels are held increasingly to account for how well their work helps pupils achieve and flourish. Governors improve their understanding of the school's work by working closely with staff. This is helping governors to ask challenging questions, so they can be sure that leaders' work is making a difference to outcomes for pupils. Your focus on improving the quality of teaching across the school has led to pupils' progress in writing now being well above the national average.

You and your staff are now working hard to make similar improvements in mathematics. Teachers work together to make sure pupils have the opportunity to apply their learning in mathematics to solving problems. However, pupils are not currently challenged consistently well. Consequently, pupils who finished key stage 2 in 2016 made below-average progress and achieved well below others nationally. This was particularly the case for those who were middle and high attainers at the end of key stage 1.

You recognise that, although your pupils make good progress in reading and writing over the course of key stage 2, they do not achieve as well in reading and mathematics as other pupils nationally. This is because their starting points are typically low. You know that leaders and teachers need to make sure teaching meets pupils' individual needs more closely, and that progress must be monitored carefully. This will enable pupils to make rapid progress throughout their time at the school and help them to catch up with their peers nationally.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Caring for pupils and keeping them safe are the cornerstones of everyone's work at Grange Junior School. Leaders work together effectively to make sure everyone understands pupils' individual needs, especially those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Pupils and their families value the home-school link workers' helpful, sensitive and practical support. This encourages pupils to attend school regularly and helps them to start each school day ready to engage with their learning.

Leaders work closely with the local authority to support pupils at risk of permanent exclusion, and those whose health affects their attendance at school. Meeting these pupils' specific behavioural and emotional needs in the long term sometimes means their attendance at school drops in the short term, while they benefit from other support away from school. Consequently, attendance figures are currently slightly below the national average. Leaders and staff are relentless in their actions to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.

Leaders, staff and governors understand their safeguarding responsibilities, and carry them out diligently. They take part in regular training to keep their understanding up to date. Leaders make rigorous checks on all adults working in the school, and keep careful records. They make sure that policies are appropriate and meet statutory requirements. Key staff work closely with experts from beyond the school to take appropriate action when concerns are identified about a pupil's welfare. Leaders keep high-quality records of their actions and share appropriate information usefully with staff who need it to support the pupil and their family.

### **Inspection findings**

- I considered how carefully leaders and governors ensure that pupil premium funding helps disadvantaged pupils to attend school regularly and make good progress. Almost half of the pupils in the school are supported by this additional funding. Leaders use the funding wisely to remove barriers that would otherwise prevent pupils from attending school regularly and engaging with learning.
- Although pupils' attendance is good overall, the disadvantaged do not yet attend school as regularly as all pupils nationally. Leaders can show where support from the home-school link workers has resulted in better attendance for many pupils, including the disadvantaged. Where attendance remains too low, leaders work with determination and persistence to get pupils into school regularly.
- In 2016, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 achieved similarly to their peers in school, and to other pupils nationally, in writing. Current disadvantaged pupils are catching up with their peers in school and nationally in Years 3 and 5, but less consistently in Years 4 and 6. Leaders and teachers are working carefully to support these pupils to make more rapid progress.
- Leaders recognise that their evaluation of the difference that teachers' work is making to pupils' progress has not been as sharp since the recent national changes to assessment. New structures and processes have been put in place this year to support leaders in monitoring the progress of different groups of pupils from their starting points more effectively. Leaders recognise that there is further work to do to ensure that all teachers use pupils' progress information consistently well to identify and plan targeted next steps for underachieving pupils. Governors acknowledge that comparing disadvantaged pupils' progress and achievement more closely with those of other pupils nationally would sharpen their awareness of how effective work to diminish the differences in their achievement is being.
- I visited mathematics lessons and looked at pupils' work to evaluate how consistently teaching is helping all pupils to make better progress and achieve better outcomes in this subject than in the past. Leaders, governors and teachers know that improving fluency and levels of challenge will help all pupils, especially the most able, to make more rapid progress. Teachers now use consistent approaches to plan learning that stretches and challenges pupils to apply their knowledge and skills. However, the most able pupils do not make as rapid progress as they could because their work does not directly challenge them to move on quickly from their prior learning.

- I reviewed pupils' work and the school's performance information, to consider whether progress in reading and mathematics is accelerating. This would enable more pupils to achieve age-related expectations by the end of Year 6 than in the past. Leaders have ensured that staff assess pupils' work accurately and rigorously, working alongside colleagues in other schools to ensure aspirations remain suitably high. The proportion of pupils achieving the age-appropriate milestones in reading, writing and mathematics in each year group is accelerating, although outcomes in Year 6 are not yet secure.
- Leaders and teachers have responded to previous underperformance in reading, developing a carefully structured approach to how it is taught. In lessons visited during the inspection, pupils worked purposefully to engage with a range of texts and develop appropriate skills. Leaders and governors are confident about the impact their work will have on pupils' achievement in reading, because their focus on improving the teaching of writing resulted in strong progress last year. Pupils' current achievement in reading is showing signs of improvement and increasingly rapid progress.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching consistently challenges pupils, especially the most able in mathematics, to move on quickly from their previous learning, so that their progress accelerates
- they embed and refine how teachers, leaders and governors use pupils' progress information to evaluate sharply the impact of their work, and identify pertinent next steps to accelerate progress.

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**

We visited every class together to look at pupils' work and talk to them about their learning. I met with you, your special educational needs coordinator, and groups of pupils, staff and governors. I spoke to a representative from the local authority on the telephone. I also spoke informally to parents on the playground at the start of the day, as well as considering 19 responses to the Parent View questionnaire and 18 free-text responses. I looked at a range of the school's documents and policies, including those relating to safeguarding and pupils' progress. I looked at English,

mathematics, science and topic books from a small number of pupils in Years 3 and 5. I took into account questionnaire responses from 20 members of staff and one pupil.