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Mr Steve Davies
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mr Davies

Short inspection of Rose Street Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 25 April 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 December 2012.

This school continues to be good.

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

In the five years since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in leadership and staffing. You were appointed in April 2015, as executive headteacher for both schools in the Sheerness West Federation. You quickly identified that there had been a decline in aspects of Rose Street Primary School's performance since the last inspection and took decisive action to remedy this. You have strengthened the leadership of the school by drawing on strengths within the federation. All leaders benefit from the links between the two schools. You work closely with the senior leader, who is head of both schools. Appropriately, improving teaching and learning has been, and continues to be, a key priority. The effective new leadership team that you have established shares your commitment, determination and ambition to forge further improvements. Typical comments expressing the views of many staff were: 'We feel valued and trusted, and able to use and extend our professional skills' and, 'Recent changes in leadership have certainly improved the execution of my role within school. I feel valued and trusted, and this impacts on my decision-making and well-being.'

Rose Street is an inclusive, happy and nurturing school with high aspirations for pupils' academic and personal achievement. You successfully turned around pupils' attitudes and behaviour, which had declined after the last inspection. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, and now have positive attitudes towards all

aspects of their learning. You saw this as crucial and it is evident that this is helping pupils to learn well and enjoy their time in school. The school has rapidly expanded to become a two-form entry primary school. Pupils appreciate the additional space available to them from the very recently completed new building. A group of pupils agreed that, 'It's bigger now, we have more space and we like it.'

By the end of Year 6 in 2016, too few pupils had made the expected progress from their end-of-key-stage-1 starting points. While their progress in writing was not significantly different from the national figure, progress in reading and mathematics was significantly below that found nationally. As a result, the proportion of pupils that reached the expected standard was below that found nationally in reading and mathematics. Too few pupils reached the higher standards. You, leaders and governors were rightly disappointed in these results and felt they did not fully reflect pupils' achievement in class. You have taken effective actions to ensure that this is not the case for pupils currently in Year 6, in particular by making sure that the quality of teaching and learning has strengthened.

You have an effective monitoring schedule. All leaders, including governors, have a very clear view about what the school does well and where it could do even better. Leaders track pupils' progress carefully and make sure that any additional help needed is quickly provided. Your plans for improvement are incisive and focused on further improving outcomes in pupils' academic, creative and personal development. You are mindful of the issues identified as needing improvement from the last inspection as well as clearly identifying current key priorities. Pupils demonstrate confidence in using and applying their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding. They clearly articulate their thinking and learning. You have correctly identified that providing the most able pupils with appropriate levels of challenge remains a priority.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is an effective culture of safeguarding in the school. Pupils said they feel safe and happy in school and well looked after.

Three well-trained designated safeguarding leaders ensure that there is always a highly effective, trained, safeguarding lead available to staff should they have a concern. The family liaison officer and the pastoral support team all make a significant and effective contribution to ensuring pupils' safety and well-being, and in particular through providing appropriate support to pupils and their families who may be vulnerable.

All staff and governors are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding. They know their roles and responsibilities in ensuring the welfare and safety of all pupils well. Policies and procedures relating to safeguarding are up to date. You are currently moving to an online system to further strengthen the procedures for staff to raise any concerns, and for leaders to continue to take appropriate and timely action. All of the required checks are made on the suitability of adults to work in the school

and are recorded carefully and efficiently on the single central register.

You work extremely hard, including the appointment of a dedicated attendance officer, to promote pupils' regular attendance. Although attendance remains a little below national figures, it has improved and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced. The attendance officer is vigilant in tracking attendance for groups and individuals, and follows up all unexplained absences.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection we agreed to focus on the following aspects of the school's work: the progress current pupils are making across key stage 2; the achievement of the most able pupils; the achievement of disadvantaged pupils; the development of pupils' phonics skills; leaders' capacity to continue to improve the school; and the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures, including how well you are improving pupils' attendance.
- Leaders' assessment of pupils' progress and the work in their books show that pupils in key stage 2 are generally making good progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding. An increasing proportion of pupils are making more rapid gains in their learning. There is a little unevenness across the year groups but achievement is clearly improving. You acknowledge, however, that there is scope to provide greater challenge and ensure that teachers' expectations are even higher. This will support the most able pupils to secure greater depth in their learning and achieve as well as they can.
- You and governors keep a close check on the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils to make sure its use is making a difference. Although there remain some differences between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils compared to other pupils nationally, current information shows that their progress is improving. As with other groups of pupils, there is some unevenness across the year groups. However, you have again correctly identified that for some disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most-able, progress should be further accelerated to ensure that they catch up. Your appointment of a 'pupil premium champion' to lead in this area underpins your commitment to making sure this happens.
- The proportion of pupils who reached the required standard in the 2016 Year 1 phonics screening check was below that found nationally. These results represent a dip compared to the previous two years, when the proportion was above the national figure. You attribute this to previous weaker teaching. Your assessment information indicates that the proportion on track to reach the required standard in the current Year 1 is set to return to the previous above-average level. During the inspection, I observed pupils using their phonics skills well to help them read and write unfamiliar words.
- You and the head of school have a track record of outstanding leadership in your federated school. Your leadership is now having a positive impact on Rose Street. This is evident in its improving performance as a good school, after a period of turbulence in staffing and leadership. You are successfully developing strong teams of senior and middle leaders. You have refreshed and inspired leaders at

all levels who share your ambition and determination to provide the best possible learning and personal experiences for the pupils. All leaders know they are accountable for pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning. The governing body, which provides effective governance for both schools, ensures that targets for further improvement are challenging and aspirational. There were too few responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, to draw any conclusions. However, several parents commented that they were looking forward to a period of stable staffing and leadership.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged and that teachers' expectations are high, to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they can
- differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most-able, and other pupils nationally continue to diminish at a rapid rate.

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

Margaret Coussins
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the head of school, senior and middle leaders and a group of pupils. I also met with the chair and the vice-chair of the governing body and the local authority improvement adviser. I took into account 16 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, which included eight written comments. I considered the 30 responses to the staff survey. Leaders accompanied me on my visits to all of the classes. I examined pupils' work in their books and talked to them about their learning and their views of the school. I observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and around the school. I sampled a range of documents and records including: information about pupils' progress; leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and learning; the school improvement plan and documents relating to safeguarding. We discussed your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness.