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Mr Matthew Greenhalgh
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Dear Mr Greenhalgh

Short inspection of Bordon Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 3 May 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 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 lead your dedicated staff effectively to provide a learning environment where pupils feel safe and want to do well. Everyone plays a part in making the school better, fulfilling the school's values of 'Learning Together Achieving Together'. Parents, pupils, staff and governors are rightly proud of their school. As one member of staff commented, 'This is a great place to work and we all strive to provide the best possible outcomes for the children.' This is evident from the atmosphere around the school, which is calm and purposeful.

Bordon Infant School is a happy place, where your confident pupils enjoy their learning. From when they arrive and are greeted at the start of the day, pupils flourish because staff know them well and work to meet their needs. As one pupil said, 'This school is very nice and my teachers treat me like I should be treated'. Pupils who join the school other than at the start of Reception Year are welcomed and supported, so that they settle quickly into school life. Throughout the school, pupils engage purposefully with activities that develop the skills they need for future learning. They enjoy their work and are not deterred when they make mistakes. Parents appreciate the quality of care and education in the school, which they would recommend to others. All parents who responded to the Parent View online questionnaire said that their children are happy, taught well and make good progress.

You became headteacher just after the previous Ofsted inspection in 2012. In the

five years that have followed, you have built successfully on the school's existing strengths. You have developed systems and structures that enable leaders to see which aspects of the school are working well and which need further refinement. Staff share the high-quality training they receive effectively with each other, and apply it in their everyday work. This helps staff at all levels to work towards clear expectations based on making the greatest difference to pupils.

Leaders recognise the next steps that will help to move the school forward. When achievements in phonics and the early years foundation stage were not good enough in the past, you and other leaders took effective action. This led to rapid improvement in these areas. You are now working towards accelerating rates of progress, particularly for the most able and those who are disadvantaged. Central to this is developing pupils' learning behaviours, so that they seek and take increased opportunities to challenge themselves to move beyond their comfort zones.

Your dedicated governors recognise and value the investment that all staff make in providing a high-quality experience for your pupils. Governors are active in their roles and understand their responsibilities, such as those relating to safeguarding and the monitoring of the school's performance. They recognise the need to develop further their relevant knowledge and expertise, especially since the recent departure of some more experienced governors. They are already taking action to gather information that will help them to do this. This will enable them to hold leaders increasingly to account for the difference their work is making to pupils' achievements.

Safeguarding is effective.

Parents recognise overwhelmingly how well staff support and care for all of the pupils in the school. Appropriate safeguarding policies are supported effectively by regular and comprehensive staff training. Leaders use a systematic approach to ensure that any concerns about pupils' welfare are raised, recorded and acted upon. Staff make good use of experts from beyond the school to provide extra help for pupils and families who may need it. Leaders keep detailed and confidential records of their work, reviewing regularly to check that they are doing whatever they can to meet individual pupils' specific needs.

Pupils attend school regularly. Absence figures are consistently below the national average for primary schools. Leaders check attendance regularly, and take prompt action if an individual pupil's attendance dips. They support and challenge pupils and families as appropriate to ensure that attendance improves where needed. Consequently, attendance continues to improve and the small proportion of pupils who are persistently absent continues to decrease. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance has improved, and is now above that of others in the school.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we considered how well leaders ensure that pupil premium funding enables disadvantaged pupils to continue catching up with others nationally. We also looked at how the teaching of phonics is developing so that more pupils can meet the phonics screening check standard than have in the past. We considered whether or not pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making more rapid progress by the end of key stage 1 than they have in the past. We also reviewed to what extent the early years foundation stage meets the needs of different groups of learners equally, so that they make comparably good rates of progress.
- Many of the disadvantaged pupils in the school have a recognised special educational need. Leaders and teachers know individual pupils and their needs well, and plan to meet them carefully. Staff focus on engaging pupils with their learning, so they can make increasingly rapid progress, and this has also led to improvements in their behaviour. Leaders ensure that additional funding, especially for children who are looked after by the local authority, is used well to support individual and specific needs.
- Disadvantaged pupils make better progress than they have in the past. The proportion who achieve a good level of development by the end of the early years foundation stage has increased for the past three years, but remains below that of others nationally, and in the school. In key stage 1, disadvantaged pupils are making at least expected progress overall and achieving similarly to their peers in school in some areas. However, this is not consistently the case in reading, writing and mathematics across Years 1 and 2. Some disadvantaged pupils need to make more rapid progress across all of their time in the school, so that they can achieve at least in line with other pupils nationally by the end of Year 2.
- Improving the quality of phonics teaching has been an absolute focus for the school over the past 18 months. Leaders have invested in effective training that has developed staff expertise in this area. Staff adopt a consistent approach to how phonics is taught across the school, while responding flexibly to the needs of different groups of learners. As a result, pupils' understanding of phonics has strengthened, particularly across and Year 1.
- The proportions of children securing a good level of development in Reception Year, and the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check, both increased to national levels in 2016. Current assessments indicate that this achievement has been sustained in 2017. Pupils transfer their phonics knowledge increasingly to their wider learning, which helps improve their standards in reading and writing.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well at your school. The special educational needs coordinators work effectively

together to identify and address individual pupils' needs. They focus on ensuring that all staff have the knowledge and expertise to provide pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities with high-quality teaching in the classroom first and foremost. This provision is complemented well by specific extra support beyond the classroom.

- Leaders' careful tracking shows that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make increasingly swift progress over time. Some make such rapid progress from their relatively low starting points that they meet age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- The early years foundation stage leader and her team recognise the different learning experiences that children have had before they arrive at the school. They explore and develop opportunities to engage with families and pre-school providers to support children in settling quickly into school life. Staff review children's achievements regularly, together, using what they learn to direct their future planning. This helps children to make increasingly good progress from their relatively low starting points.
- You and the early years leader understand the next steps in improving the quality of provision, so that it meets different learners' needs equally. In 2016, similar proportions of girls and boys in school achieved a good level of development. However, girls did not achieve as well as girls nationally, whereas boys did better. Leaders continue to evolve learning opportunities within the Reception Year classes that will ensure that all children make similarly rapid progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- governors continue on their journey to develop and refine their expertise and experience, so that they can hold leaders increasingly to account
- rates of progress continue to accelerate in reading, writing and mathematics, especially for the most able and the disadvantaged, through developing increased opportunities for pupils to challenge themselves.

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 all classes, together with you and one of your assistant headteachers, to look at pupils' learning and talk to them about their work. I met with you, other leaders, and groups of pupils, staff and governors. I had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I spoke informally to parents at the start of the day, and considered their views through 47 responses to the Parent View questionnaire and 38 free-text responses. I spoke to pupils informally in lessons and at playtime, to gather their views about the school. I also took 19 responses to the staff survey into account. I reviewed a wide range of other documents and records, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, policies and other details on the school's website, and information about pupils' attendance and achievement. I considered the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements by looking at the school's records of recruitment checks, safeguarding and associated policies, and other, anonymous safeguarding information shared by leaders.