

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



16 June 2017

Miss Susannah Milligan
Headteacher
Milborne Port Primary School
North Street
Sherborne
Dorset
DT9 5EP

Dear Miss Milligan

Short inspection of Milborne Port Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 June 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 October 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. As headteacher, you have a clear vision for Milborne Port Primary that is shared by your staff and governors. You are determined that all pupils receive the best possible education. To this end, you have deployed staff effectively to secure high-quality teaching across the school. You understand fully the school's strengths but also know that there are still areas to work on, such as improving pupils' progress in writing at key stage 2.

You have tackled successfully the recommendation in the previous inspection report to increase pupils' awareness of a wider range of communities and cultures. Pupils now have a good understanding of cultural diversity through links with other schools and the introduction of special events. Fund-raising activities, such as the 'welly walk' for poor farmers in Africa, enable pupils to show their compassion for people less fortunate than themselves.

A major strength of the school is the engagement that pupils show in their learning. Parents are very appreciative of the deep understanding you and your staff have of their children's capabilities. You use this knowledge well to create a varied and interesting curriculum that inspires pupils to work hard and develop positive attitudes to learning. This prepares them well for the next stage in their education.

You have placed a strong emphasis on improving the education of disadvantaged pupils, which has led to their making faster rates of progress. You have taken

effective action to raise standards of writing in key stage 2, and of mathematics in key stage 1. However, you recognise the need for further work in both these areas.

Safeguarding is effective.

The culture of safeguarding is strong because you and your governors give this the highest priority. You ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and your records are suitably detailed and of good quality. Staff training is up to date and covers recognising the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. You are vigilant in assessing any possible risks to pupils' health and safety and take decisive action to address any concerns swiftly. Governors check regularly that staff follow their policies and procedures. Leaders understand how to recruit new staff safely and ensure that their suitability to work with children is thoroughly checked before they take up their posts.

Most pupils attend regularly and are seldom late for school. Leaders work effectively with other professionals, such as the parent support adviser, to help families and to encourage regular attendance.

Inspection findings

During the inspection I met with you to discuss the school's progress since the previous inspection. We agreed the following lines of enquiry: how successful leaders have been in improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, how well leaders have raised standards in writing in key stage 2, the achievement of the most able pupils in mathematics in key stage 1, and how well the school keeps pupils safe.

- In 2016 disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well as others, particularly in writing. You now monitor the achievement of disadvantaged pupils closely. You ensure that teachers plan learning that precisely matches individuals' needs and give pupils clearer guidance to help them improve their work. You make good use of additional funding to provide them with intensive, personalised teaching. Additional activities, such as the 'current affairs' club for girls, develop their self-esteem and increase their confidence as learners. The clear impact of your actions is that these pupils' progress has accelerated this year. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are achieving as well as their classmates in all subjects.
- Last year you were disappointed in the results in writing at key stage 2, especially of the most able pupils. Consequently, you strengthened teaching by providing additional training for staff and deploying their skills to better effect. Teachers have raised their expectations of pupils' achievement and provide clear guidance for pupils to produce good-quality writing. A revised approach to teaching phonics, spelling and grammar is developing pupils' skills systematically.
- During my visit, we noted that pupils write regularly for extended periods and with obvious interest in response to the stimulating tasks which teachers provide. For example, we observed Year 5 and 6 pupils using powerful language effectively when writing about a scene from a video they had watched. We looked at a wide range of work in pupils' books, noting that increasingly, pupils

are able to review and make improvements to their writing for themselves. However, when writing in subjects other than English, they do not consistently write to the same high standards as in their English books, making spelling mistakes or missing out punctuation. Nonetheless, most Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve the standard expected for their age this year and a greater number of the most able pupils are set to achieve beyond this.

- Last year, standards in mathematics were below those seen nationally at key stage 1. As a result of effective additional training, teachers now plan how to develop pupils' mastery of mathematical skills more thoroughly and provide pupils with greater levels of challenge. Because of this, pupils' proficiency in calculation and their understanding and use of place value have improved. Pupils consolidate and extend their skills through challenges using the 'mathletics' programme on tablet computers. Work in pupils' books and their achievements in tests this year indicate that more pupils are working at and beyond the standards expected of them than previously. However, you and your leaders recognise that more needs to be done to deepen the most able pupils' mathematical understanding further and enable them to solve more complex problems.
- Pupils speak with warmth and enthusiasm about their school. They enjoy the responsibilities they undertake such as being 'peer mediators'. They appreciate the good care and kindness shown to them by staff and this is reflected in their good behaviour and the way they support each other in and around school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching consistently extends pupils' writing skills across all subjects so that they achieve the highest possible standards
- pupils in key stage 1 continue to develop their mathematical reasoning skills to enable them to solve more complex problems across all areas of mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Sandra Woodman
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and discussed the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress and improvements since the previous inspection.

Together, we observed learning in classrooms and looked at a large number of pupils' books. I listened to several pupils reading from key stage 1 and key stage 2. I met with pupils to talk about their experience of school life. I held meetings with middle leaders and with four governors. In addition, I spoke with a representative of the local authority. I looked at a range of written evidence, including documents relating to safeguarding and attendance information. I took account of the views expressed by 22 parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and their written comments, as well as the views of 14 members of staff who returned the questionnaire and the 18 pupils who completed the online survey.