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Mrs B Letchford
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Letchford

Short inspection of Burghclere Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 18 July 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 July 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school has been through a period of change in staffing since the previous inspection. Since your appointment in November 2015, you have appointed new teaching staff and built a strong staff team. You and your leadership team convey a clear understanding of the most important steps to be taken to improve the school even further. You recognise that work had to be done to recover from the dip in standards and acted with skill and determination to ensure that all staff are clear about your vision for improving the school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent conveyed her thoughts, which encapsulated the views of many by saying, 'I cannot commend the new management enough. They are extremely enthusiastic and committed about making the school the best it can be. As a parent, I have seen many positive changes in my child's quality of learning as well as a huge development in extra-curricular activities on offer. Any comments made in parent liaison meetings are listened to and acted upon immediately. It is a wonderful school.'

You have established an effective system for assessing pupils' achievement. It accurately records pupils' attainment during the year. This supports teachers to plan learning activities linked to pupils' learning needs. Following the dip in outcomes for pupils in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2016, you planned a programme of training and support for staff, introduced an effective system to check on pupils' phonic knowledge and sought advice and guidance from the local authority. As a result, outcomes in 2017 have recovered and a much higher proportion of pupils

than in the previous year achieved the expected standard in 2017.

Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have developed a comprehensive schedule for monitoring the work of the school. They make regular visits to check the effective implementation of the school's policies. Governors meet with staff and pupils to seek their views and find out for themselves whether the actions set out in the school improvement plan are implemented successfully. This process provides governors with the knowledge and understanding to be able to challenge school leaders and hold them to account for school improvement. Governors are able to effectively target funding and support for pupils because they have a good understanding of pupils' achievement across the school. They take their responsibilities seriously and understand how teachers' salaries are linked to their performance.

School leaders have successfully addressed the areas identified in the previous inspection. The newly refurbished outdoor learning areas for children in the early years provide good opportunities for them to engage in a broader range of learning activities outside. This successfully stimulates their imagination and challenges them in their learning. The new curriculum for mathematics combines opportunities for pupils to discuss their thinking and solve mathematical problems regularly.

In the past, expectations were not been high enough. In addition to that, the turbulence in staffing has had a negative impact on the outcomes for some pupils. You have raised expectations and achieved greater staff stability. You know that there is work to be done to ensure that in the future not only do more pupils in each class achieve the expected standard, but that a higher proportion of the pupils achieve a greater depth of understanding, particularly at the end of key stage 1.

Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have developed an improvement plan that focuses on the most appropriate areas to improve. However, the plan does not set out sufficient indicators to measure the success of the plan.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture. The staff and parents who completed the Ofsted questionnaires are in agreement that the school keeps pupils safe. Pupils say that they feel safe. They know that there is always an adult on hand to talk to if they have any problems or concerns. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe online and understand what they need to do if they have any concerns.

Governors check the school's policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe and carry out regular safeguarding audits to make sure that procedures comply with up-to-date guidance. Staff and governors are trained effectively in safeguarding and safer recruitment procedures.

Inspection findings

- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They have very positive attitudes to learning and work well together in lessons. They say that teachers make learning fun and interesting. This is because activities are designed to actively involve them in discussions and practical tasks. In the Year 5/6 class, pupils were eager to discuss sections of the first chapter of 'Oranges in no man's land' by Elizabeth Laird, as they were trying to discover the context of the story, from the passage that they read. Pupils demonstrated effective listening skills and very good relationships with one another and the adults in the class, as they discussed their ideas. The activities promoted effective learning and enabled pupils to gain a deeper understanding of the text.
- Pupils say that the wide range of additional opportunities for learning beyond the school day enables them to take part in sporting competitions and develop a wide range of skills. They enjoy taking part in football, golf, rugby, cricket and the running club and relish the opportunity to play in teams. The additional musical activities that have recently been offered, such as learning the recorder and taking part in the choir, enrich pupils' experiences and help them to cooperate together well. Pupils appreciate the opportunity to learn musical instruments and play in the brass band.
- Pupils are cared for well. Additional support and guidance is provided effectively for pupils with particular needs. Governors have made additional funds available to recruit an emotional learning needs support assistant for those with emotional barriers to learning. This additional support has helped pupils with particular emotional needs to understand and regulate their own emotions and learn successfully.
- Outcomes in writing at the end of Year 6 in 2016 were disappointing. School leaders took effective action to ensure that a higher proportion of pupils achieved the expected standard by the end of Year 6 in 2017. This has been successful. The school results in 2017 show that almost all pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics and significantly more achieved high standards in 2017 than in 2016.
- Pupils in the Reception/Year 1 class and in the Year 1/2 class are taught phonics in groups according to their ability. Adults have good subject knowledge and provide opportunities for pupils to link their understanding of letters and the sounds with which they are associated with their writing and spelling skills. However, some higher prior attaining pupils are not provided with sufficient challenge, and this inhibits their progress.
- Standards at the end of early years have improved, particularly for girls. In 2017, a higher proportion of girls are well prepared for learning in Year 1. Overall, outcomes at the end of the Reception year have steadily improved since 2015.
- Teachers plan lessons well, to enable pupils to make good progress over time. However, in most classes pupils' attainment in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics. School leaders have introduced more opportunities for pupils to discuss their writing and have put a new strategy in place to improve pupils' spelling skills. This is beginning to have a positive impact on outcomes for

pupils.

- School leaders track the progress of pupils over time. They recognise that this needs to be more regular and robust, to be able to pick up any underachievement quickly. Currently, not enough high prior attaining pupils reach a greater depth of understanding in reading, writing and mathematics.
- School leaders evaluate the school's work accurately. They have a good understanding of the actions that need to be taken to ensure that further improvement is secured. The school improvement plan is a useful document which identifies the most important actions that need to be taken to bring about further improvement. The plan includes milestones to check on the school's progress, but currently they are not linked closely enough to the improvements that are expected to be achieved for all groups of pupils across the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school improvement plan includes effective measures to gauge the success of the plan linked to improving outcomes for all groups of pupils
- the proportion of pupils achieving higher standards and a greater depth of understanding in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups increases.

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

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, your deputy headteacher and your special educational needs coordinator. I had a meeting with six governors, including the chair of governors, your senior administrator and a group of pupils. I had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. I scrutinised a range of documents, including information on pupils' achievement, the school's self-evaluation and school development plan, external reports and documentation relating to safeguarding. Pupils' progress in their learning over time was checked by looking at their work in books. We observed learning in all classes together.