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29 September 2017

Mrs Anna Jones  
Headteacher  
Shamblehurst Primary School  
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Southampton  
SO30 4EJ

Dear Mrs Jones

### **Short inspection of Shamblehurst Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 19 September 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 June 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. The previous headteacher left at Easter in 2016. A part-time interim headteacher was in post during the summer term. Your deputy headteacher took up post in January 2016. Since your appointment in September 2016, you have conveyed your strong and convincing vision for improving the school. A new school vision and values have been established. You recognised that standards had slipped and that assessment information on pupils' achievement was not accurate. You introduced a new curriculum in line with government expectations and also set up a new assessment system. You and your leadership team communicate a clear message to all staff about the most important actions 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 skilfulness and resolve to ensure that all staff are clear about the improvements in teaching that were necessary.

Responses to the parent, staff and pupil questionnaires are overwhelmingly positive. All staff who responded to the staff questionnaire are proud to be a member of staff at the school and say the school has improved since the previous inspection. Parents, too, are exceptionally positive about the school. One parent conveyed her thoughts, which captured the views of many, by saying, 'The school has improved massively over the past year in so many ways, from teaching in the classroom to

the way it is run.' Another commented, 'The new headteacher has made positive improvements and the school is already showing progress. Issues are dealt with swiftly and effectively.'

You have successfully implemented an effective system for assessing pupils' achievement. Staff have responded well to training and now accurately record pupils' attainment. You have ensured that external checks to confirm the accuracy of assessments have taken place. Teachers' planning is effectively linked to pupils' learning needs. Following the dip in outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2016, you took effective action to increase rates of pupils' progress. 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 reading, writing and mathematics in 2017.

Governance has also been through a period of change. A new chair of the governing body was elected in February 2017. Governors have worked well together to support school improvement. They know the school well and make regular visits to check the work of the school. Their monitoring provides them with the knowledge and understanding to be able to challenge school leaders and hold them to account for school improvement. Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Self-evaluation is accurate. The school improvement plan concentrates on the most appropriate areas to improve the school further.

The new curriculum provides more opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and backgrounds, but standards in teaching had declined since the previous inspection. Work is still to be done to increase the proportion of teaching that leads to outstanding learning. School leaders know that this area identified in the previous inspection is still to be achieved.

In the past, expectations were not high enough and the school had been slow to implement the new curriculum and an effective assessment system. As a result, standards had declined. The quality of teaching was too variable. You have successfully raised expectations and improved provision in the early years. You know that there is work to be done to ensure that a higher proportion of children than currently in the early years are prepared well for learning by the time they start in Year 1. You also recognise that outcomes for pupils at the end of Years 1 and 2 in the phonics screening check are not high enough. You have already taken steps to improve the quality of phonics teaching and to ensure that outcomes for children in the early years are raised. But the impact of this work is at an early stage of development.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

School leaders have established an effective safeguarding culture. The school is a calm, purposeful environment for learning. Pupils say that they feel safe. Those who completed the pupil questionnaire agree. They know that there is always an adult they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils understand how to

keep themselves safe online and understand what they need to do if they have any concerns. The vast majority of parents and all staff who completed the Ofsted questionnaires agree that the school keeps pupils safe.

Governors monitor the school's policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe. Staff and governors are trained effectively in safeguarding and safer recruitment procedures. Regular meetings ensure that staff and governors are kept up to date with current guidelines.

### **Inspection findings**

- Pupils are enthusiastic learners. They have very positive attitudes and behave well in lessons. They enjoy the opportunities provided for them to learn because activities are interesting and stimulating. Pupils talked with enthusiasm about the activities they engaged in during the science week earlier in the term.
- Outcomes at the end of Year 6 in 2017 improved in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics together rose by 20% from the previous year. The percentage of pupils achieving a greater depth of understanding rose by 9%.
- Outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 2 also improved, particularly in writing and mathematics. Results are 28% higher in writing and 22% higher in mathematics than in 2016. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined rose from 55% in 2016 to 86% in 2017.
- Teachers have responded well to the training and support they have received since you took up post in September 2016. Those who responded to the staff questionnaire all agree that professional development is used well to challenge, encourage and support them to improve their teaching. You use the teachers' standards to hold teachers to account and ensure that all teachers deliver well-planned lessons to enable pupils to make good progress over time.
- School leaders identified that assessments of children in the early years were unreliable. They sought advice and guidance from the local authority. Improvements in the environment for learning in the early years now ensure that opportunities for children to engage in all areas of learning are provided both inside and outdoors. However, these developments are relatively new and outcomes for children in the early years dipped in 2017, because the quality of teaching was too variable.
- Variations in the quality of the teaching of phonics have had a negative effect on the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Outcomes dipped in 2017. School leaders have now implemented new strategies and provided training for teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that their knowledge and skills enable them to teach phonics well. These strategies are at an early stage of development.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of teaching improves even further, so that a higher proportion leads to outstanding learning
- outcomes for children in the early years improve, so that a higher proportion of children achieve and exceed a good level of development
- a higher proportion of pupils achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check.

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 English and mathematics subject leaders. I had a meeting with six governors, including the chair of the governing body, your school administrator and a group of pupils. I met with a representative from the local authority. Pupils' progress in their learning over time was checked by looking at their work in books. We observed learning in six classes together. 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.