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Miss Amie Bowers  
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Dear Miss Bowers

### **Short inspection of Rudgwick Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 16 November 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.

Senior leaders are particularly effective and respected by parents, pupils and staff. You have an accurate, reflective and honest view of the school's strengths and priorities. Over time, you have acted swiftly and effectively to tackle staff underperformance. Your new middle leaders know the school well. They have clear plans to improve the outcomes for the most able pupils in mathematics and English even further. However, it is too soon to fully see the impact of their actions.

Your school values are clearly evident in everyday school life. Teachers are calm, clear and courteous towards pupils, which leads to excellent behaviour in the classrooms and around the school. One parent wrote on Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, that you are 'an amazing leader, generating great enthusiasm and loyalty among the staff and children'. Others praised teaching and support staff, telling me that they feel that staff 'make the children feel valued; they have time to listen and encourage the children to push themselves in a comfortable environment'.

At the time of the last inspection, you were asked to ensure that pupils achieve as well in reading as they do in writing. In 2017, pupils made good progress by the end of key stage 2 in both reading and writing. The proportion of children who

achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is consistently above the national average. In July 2017, at the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who achieved at the expected standard in reading increased to well above the national average.

Classroom visits showed the school to be a welcoming and happy place. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils in Year 2 were seen working well together to improve their metaphorical language. In Year 4, pupils were enthusiastically appraising their partner's poetry. Year 6 pupils talked excitedly about their woodland lesson in the school's grounds and told me that they thoroughly enjoy opportunities to 'be adventurous while learning'.

Parents have very high regard for the work of the school. Almost all parents who responded to Parent View would recommend the school. The wealth of positive comments received show that parents value the culture of the school and their relationships with staff and school leaders.

Governors know the school well. They regularly update their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses by asking searching questions of leaders.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of a high quality. A strong culture of safeguarding resonates throughout the school. Leaders maintain a safe and secure environment in which pupils can flourish and learn. Designated safeguarding leaders liaise effectively with external agencies in the best interests of pupils. Leaders log their actions and communication with outside agencies diligently.

Leaders ensure that training for all staff is regularly updated to fully meet the needs of the school. Adults spoken to during the inspection were clear about what they should do if they have any concerns about pupils' welfare.

Pupils receive and understand advice about staying safe in different situations. These include, for example, the risks associated with being online. Bullying incidents are rare, but pupils are confident that, when they do happen, they are dealt with well by teachers. Pupils say that they feel safe and that they have trusted adults in school. All parents and staff who responded to online surveys feel that pupils are safe.

### **Inspection findings**

- During this inspection I looked at how effectively you addressed the dip in results of the phonics screening check in 2017, the progress that pupils make from their starting points in writing across the school, the progress that the most able pupils make in English and mathematics and leaders' systems to track the impact of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.

- Historically, pupils made good progress and achieved above the national average in the Year 1 phonics screening check. You were disappointed by the dip in outcomes in 2017, however, and took prompt action to address this. A consistent approach, along with support and training from external providers, has quickly improved teachers' expertise in teaching phonics. Consequently, pupils are now making good progress.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2016 and 2017, pupils who had left key stage 1 working at the expected standard in writing did not make strong progress. Leaders have addressed this by providing many opportunities for pupils to write in different styles across the curriculum. This is helping pupils to use their writing skills in a range of contexts. Pupils are responding well to this approach. They are proud of their writing, which is well presented across subjects. As a result, progress in writing is good. A new programme has been introduced to teach spelling, which is having a direct impact on raising standards for pupils. You recognise that further evaluation of this programme is necessary to ensure that all pupils are suitably challenged in their learning.
- Senior leaders have given more responsibility to middle leaders for developing the curriculum and checking on the effectiveness of teaching. Middle leaders are rising to the challenge well. They are introducing new initiatives to increase the proportion of pupils who are working at greater depth in English and mathematics. Teachers are receiving helpful support and training to deepen pupils' understanding in mathematics. Senior leaders recognise that it is too early to measure the effectiveness and impact of these initiatives.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including those who are working at significantly lower levels than their peers, make good progress. Leaders, including governors, place a strong emphasis on making sure that all pupils benefit from consistently effective teaching. Individual plans have small steps of progress clearly identified and draw effectively on the specialist advice that other professionals provide. Your analysis of these groups of pupils shows good awareness of the complex nature of pupils' differing needs. You recognise that leaders and governors need to deepen their understanding of the full impact of pupil premium funding.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress provide a complete picture of the impact of pupil premium funding
- leaders at all levels continue to build on the work already started, so that all pupils who have the potential to work at greater depth or reach high standards do so.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools

commissioner and the director of children's services for West Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marcia Goodwin  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the chair of the governing body and six other governors, middle leaders and senior leaders. I spoke with a local authority adviser on the telephone.

I met with six pupils from Years 1 to 6 and spoke with many other pupils informally. I observed learning across the school jointly with you. I looked at examples of pupils' work and spoke with pupils during lessons.

I scrutinised a variety of documents, including the school's own evaluation of its performance, records of checks that leaders make on the suitability of staff to work with children and information relating to attendance. I also visited the breakfast club.

I took account of responses to questionnaires from 58 pupils and 15 staff. I also considered 94 responses from parents to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, read letters from parents and spoke to parents before school.