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Mrs Tracy Robinson
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Robinson

Short inspection of Motcombe Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 23 January 2018, 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 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 provide incisive and determined leadership at Motcombe Infant School that has ensured that standards have risen dramatically in recent years. You have communicated a clear vision for the school community that is based upon high expectations for pupils to achieve of their best and behave well. You are particularly skilled in motivating your staff to support you in achieving these aims. Your senior leaders support well your drive for further improvements. Teachers and support staff strive to ensure that teaching and learning opportunities for pupils are of a high standard. Importantly, staff state that they are proud to work for Motcombe Infant School. Your hard work, and that of your team as a whole, has ensured that the school is moving from strength to strength.

Pupils say that they love coming to school. They particularly enjoy the interesting lessons that are planned for them and the educational trips that enrich their learning. They say that teachers help them do their best in lessons by challenging them with work that makes them think hard. Pupils also say it is a very friendly and caring school. They know, for instance, that staff are there to help them and that there is always someone to talk to if they have a concern or a worry.

You have ensured that the school's values and 'golden rules' are firmly embedded, and that they support pupils to behave particularly well in lessons, and when at play. These high expectations are modelled effectively by staff. You are keen to

ensure that pupils know why good behaviour is important. The many opportunities that pupils have to reflect upon and learn about the school values, and wider fundamental British values, are helping them to discover the joy in learning.

Motcombe Infant School is prized by parents and carers. Many I spoke to commented about leaders' and teachers' caring and nurturing attitudes toward their children. As one parent said, 'It's a truly happy and wonderful school. This is all down to the caring staff and the engaging and varied learning that takes place every day.'

Leaders have addressed successfully the areas for improvement since the last inspection. Most pupils are now achieving highly and making strong progress from their starting points. This is because you have strengthened teaching and ensured that learning is closely matched to pupils' individual needs. Leadership is also stronger. You encourage senior leaders to take on greater responsibilities and provide them with excellent opportunities to develop further their leadership potential.

Most pupils make rapid and sustained progress across the curriculum. Leaders monitor very closely the progress and attainment of all pupils and ensure that teaching and learning are scrutinised effectively. You use this information to inform your school development planning to improve outcomes for pupils. Leaders are aware, however, that some disadvantaged pupils and some who speak English as an additional language are not yet achieving well enough.

Safeguarding is effective.

Your effective procedures to keep children safe provide a strong safeguarding culture at Motcombe. For instance, the school's single central record of employment checks on staff is thorough and accurate. The pre-employment checks you make and the rigorous practice you employ when recruiting new staff and volunteers demonstrate a firm commitment to keeping children safe. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

You provide appropriate training to ensure that staff know what actions to take to protect children from harm. You work hard with senior leaders to continually strengthen staff members' vigilance in safeguarding children. When necessary, you do not shy away from challenging parents and carers to address better the welfare needs of their children. You work very closely with other child-protection professionals, such as social services and the police, to protect children from harm. Importantly, you challenge others when you feel the service that they provide is not good enough. You ensure that any vulnerable children or families receive the care and additional support they need.

You provide many opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils I talked to could tell me how to stay safe online. They knew that it was important to keep passwords safe, and to always tell an adult if they saw something on the computer that scared them or caused them worry.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we focused on how effectively leaders ensure that boys achieve well in reading and writing. We also scrutinised leaders' actions to promote pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Finally, we evaluated leaders' work in ensuring that disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well.
- Boys are achieving well in writing throughout the school. This is because teachers plan skilfully learning that enthuses them to write. Topics which interest them inspire boys to read and discover relevant information about historical events. For example, in learning about HMS Titanic, a range of information texts and other inspiring learning resources captured boys' interests. They were keen to share their newly acquired knowledge, and demonstrated rightful pride in the work they had completed.
- You provide pupils with a range of opportunities to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. For instance, your school values celebrate diversity and individuality. In teaching about marriage in different cultures, you challenge stereotypes by demonstrating that same-sex relationships and protected characteristics are the norm.
- Pupils' understanding of fundamental British values are developing well. Through your many enrichment days, pupils learn about how these values are upheld, for instance by the armed forces, the police and the government.
- Pupils enjoy working, playing and celebrating together. This strong sense of community shines through in everyday school life. For instance, the pleasure that the pupils felt in singing together so joyously in assembly at the end of the day was palpable.
- You have high aspirations for disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language. You make generally effective use of additional funding to provide extra support and care for these groups of pupils to achieve well, particularly in developing their language and communication skills. However, some pupils within these groups are not yet achieving as well as they should. You know that more needs to be achieved to improve outcomes for these pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the majority of disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language achieve highly across the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Dom Cook
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Together with you, I visited lessons across key stage 1. I spoke to pupils and examined work in their exercise books. Meetings were held with senior leaders, including the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the assistant headteacher and the acting assistant headteacher. I met with the chair of the governing body. I took into account 36 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including written responses. I also analysed 60 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and 27 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. A range of documents were reviewed, including: the school's development plan; leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness; the school's single central record of recruitment checks made on staff; information about pupils' achievement; records of pupils' behaviour and attendance; and minutes of governing body meetings.