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Mrs Jacqui Jennings
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Dear Mrs Jennings

Short inspection of Buryfields Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 7 February 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 May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

You and your leadership team are uncompromising in your drive to ensure that the school's values, 'Excellence, Respect, Achievement', underpin all that happens in the school. You strive to give every child in your care the very best start in life by providing rich learning experiences that motivate even the most reluctant learner. Staff highly appreciate the opportunities given to them to develop their practice through undertaking research projects or attending training courses. Your commitment to developing leaders from within the school has resulted in a strong and stable workforce who are continually seeking ways to raise standards even further.

Staff, pupils, governors and the vast majority of parents and carers recognise and appreciate your strong leadership. Parents, reflecting the views of many, describe the school as 'incredibly well led' and 'an excellent school with passionate staff and strong leadership'.

Since the previous inspection, the progress pupils make and their attainment by the

end of key stage 1 have continued to improve, including in mathematics. In 2016, outcomes were externally moderated. This showed that attainment was above or well above national averages in most areas for almost all groups. The proportion of pupils who achieved standards above those expected for their age is particularly high because work is set at the right level of challenge. Assessment data and work in books indicate that achievement continues to be strong. Disadvantaged pupils are supported well and make good or better progress from their starting points. In 2017, all Year 1 disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard in the national phonics screening check. However, you recognise that there is more to do to ensure that boys with low starting points make faster progress in order to reach higher standards.

During the inspection, the behaviour of pupils around the school was exemplary. They settle quickly to work, show determination to do well and are enthusiastic in their learning. They are polite, listen carefully to both adults and other pupils and enjoy engaging visitors in conversation. Pupils told me that they love their school and all the exciting things they do there. They were keen to tell me about their artwork and that the school has been awarded the Artsmark award. They spoke excitedly about their learning and how they enjoy educational visits, for example to the SeaCity Museum in Southampton, which introduced their Titanic topic.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have made safeguarding a priority. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. Staff recruitment is robust and rigorous. You provide comprehensive training when staff join the school and this is followed up by further training. Safeguarding is a priority at weekly staff meetings and, as a result, all staff at the school are clear about their responsibilities and act upon them. Leaders are tenacious when working with outside agencies to ensure that pupils and families receive the support they need.

Governors are highly effective at monitoring the school's safeguarding work and regularly audit the single central register and safeguarding policies. Governors hold regular meetings with pupils to ensure that they know what to do in a range of situations, for example in the event of a lockdown. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at all governors' meetings to indicate its importance.

Pupils feel safe in school. They clearly understand who to talk to if they have a worry or concern and know that adults will quickly help them. Parents overwhelmingly agree that the school is a safe place where pupils are happy and well-cared-for.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and governors have a highly accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the steps needed to be taken for even further improvement. For example, you identified that, although all pupils made strong progress from

Reception to the end of Year 2, boys, particularly those who had low attainment on entry, were not making the accelerated progress that many others in the school make. As a result, leaders and teachers undertook a research project to identify ways to engage these pupils and, subsequently, implemented new approaches within the classroom. One example of this is the change made to the way boys are set their next learning steps. Boys who I spoke to during my visit were eager to tell me about their targets and showed me examples in their books where they were applying these successfully to their writing.

- Pupils participate in a rich, wide-ranging and exciting curriculum which offers numerous activities to stimulate and motivate learning. Recent changes to the way the curriculum is delivered have engaged boys and girls alike. As a result, evidence in books shows that boys are now more willing to write and are making rapid progress in this area. Regular monitoring by subject leaders ensures that the curriculum is balanced and that all subjects are given appropriate coverage.
- The progress of pupils is closely tracked in all subjects and extra support is given to any who are assessed as working below the expected level. The curriculum is further enhanced by educational visits and visitors to the school, for example drama companies, music workshops, a helicopter pilot and the local Member of Parliament. Another feature of the curriculum is the annual events which pupils told me they 'love'. These range from STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics) weeks, where pupils work in mixed-age groups to solve challenges, to 'Camo Day', where children come to school dressed up in camouflage to raise money for armed forces charities. Many different sports are taught, including golf, basketball and tennis. Pupils also participate in local tournaments and competitions.
- There are only small numbers of disadvantaged pupils at the school. Similarly, there are few pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils are extremely well supported. Their needs are quickly identified and appropriate programmes are put in place. Their progress is carefully monitored against individualised targets and their work adjusted as needed. Over time, these pupils make similar or better progress from their starting points compared to other pupils.
- There is high mobility of service pupils within the school, with about one fifth of all pupils joining or leaving during an academic year. These pupils are well supported, settle quickly and achieve well, making similar progress to other pupils in the school. The Buryfields Flyers Club gives timely support to pupils who may have a family member serving abroad. Pupils say that they enjoy the club, especially when they can bring a friend with them. Military parents speak highly of the school and its induction process for pupils joining during an academic year. 'As a forces family, this is the third school that my son has attended and it's the best so far' is just one of many positive comments made during the inspection.
- In the past, the progress of boys, although in line with the national average, was not as rapid as that of girls by the end of key stage 1. This was especially the case for those boys entering school in the early years with skills and abilities that are lower than found typically for their age. As a result, you made changes to the curriculum, the transition between the early years and Year 1 and the way boys

are given learning targets. You also adjusted learning and customised resources to reflect individuals' interests. These changes are having a positive impact. I saw evidence in books and in lessons of boys making rapid progress across the curriculum. Nonetheless, you are fully aware that your journey to achieving your aspirational target of every pupil in the school making accelerated progress by the end of Year 2 has only just started. There is further work to do to achieve this.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they build on current work to accelerate the progress of pupils with attainment that is below typical on entry into the school.

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

Brian Macdonald
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher to discuss the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. I held discussions with year group leaders, subject leaders and members of the governing body. I held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. Together we observed learning in every year group. I looked at the school's documentation relating to governance, safeguarding and pupils' progress and attainment. I took account of the 60 responses to the online pupil survey and spoke to pupils, both in class and formally in a meeting. I considered the 30 survey responses submitted by staff and the 65 parent responses to Ofsted's confidential online survey, Parent View. I also spoke to several parents before school and considered 56 free-text responses submitted via Parent View.