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15 March 2018

Mr Duncan Mills
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mr Mills

Short inspection of The Bay Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 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 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You lead the school with determination that all pupils will receive the best standard of education possible. You work successfully with the head of school to ensure that its vision, 'believe, inspire, excel', is shared by the whole school community. As a result, you have created a very caring and inclusive environment. You both have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and are forensic in your approach to understanding how to improve the school further. Staff enjoy working at The Bay. Relationships are warm and respectful. As one parent commented, 'They [staff] work tirelessly to support the children and their wider families, so all can succeed.'

Pupils enjoy coming to The Bay and are keen to work hard. They think their school is friendly and that teachers help them when they get stuck, 'but not too much'. They enjoy the many sporting opportunities they have access to. Pupils behave well in lessons and work well together. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 4, pupils listened attentively to each other's ideas about how to solve a problem involving money. Many parents and carers commented on how happy their children are at school. They appreciate the highly effective provision for pastoral care. As one parent wrote, 'All the staff seem to go above and beyond for the children. Nothing is too much trouble.'

The previous inspection report highlighted the school's many strengths, including strong relationships, effective leadership and supportive partnerships with parents and carers. You have maintained these strengths. Since the last inspection the

school has joined a federation which has boosted the pace of school improvement by effectively sharing expertise. At the last inspection leaders were asked to ensure that tasks set for pupils were at the right level so that pupils worked hard and were fully engaged in their learning. You have taken effective action to improve this. I saw pupils working enthusiastically in lessons and enjoying their learning. However, we agreed that the level of challenge for middle-attaining pupils and the most able could be improved further in mathematics and reading. The previous inspection report also asked leaders to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching. Leaders are aware that there is more to be done to improve the quality of teaching. They are working to improve this rapidly through effective support and challenge.

You have an accurate view of what the school does well and what could be even better. In Year 6 in 2017, pupils' progress in writing was above that seen nationally. However, the progress these pupils made in mathematics was below the national average. You have responded swiftly to improving the teaching of mathematics. We did agree, though, that these improvements need to be more fully embedded across the school. In Year 2 in 2017, reading attainment was below the national average. You recognise there is still work to do to make sure that reading assessments are used more effectively so that pupils are challenged at the right level and outcomes in reading in key stage 1 improve.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders and governors fulfil their statutory safeguarding duties well. They have ensured that staff are trained regularly and that a culture of vigilance permeates the school. Policies and procedures are fit for purpose and day-to-day routines are secure. You work successfully with local agencies to be sure that the needs of pupils and their families are addressed effectively. The chair of governors regularly checks that the school's safeguarding processes are secure. Staff and governors understand their roles and responsibilities for keeping pupils safe very well.

Pupils now attend school regularly. There is an improving trend in the attendance of all pupils. Leaders monitor attendance carefully and work effectively with families to help pupils' attendance to improve. As a result, the number of pupils who are persistently absent is decreasing rapidly.

Pupils said that they feel safe in school and know who to talk to if they have any worries. They said that bullying is extremely rare, but when it does happen, 'the teachers would try as hard as they can to sort it out'. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, for example when using technology or riding a bicycle.

Inspection findings

- In order to improve the progress pupils make in mathematics, leaders have introduced new ways of teaching which focus sharply on reasoning and problem-solving. This has been supported effectively by the local authority. Pupils' work, especially in Year 6, indicates that this new approach is beginning to extend pupils' understanding and application of mathematical skills and knowledge.

However, we agreed that this is not yet embedded across all year groups. The progress made in mathematics by Year 6 girls in 2017 was well below the national average. This is not the current picture in the school. My classroom visits confirmed that girls enjoy their mathematics lessons and are very engaged in their tasks. Recent assessments show that girls and boys have similar attainment. The progress of both groups is strong.

- In 2017, in Years 2 and 6, not enough pupils met the higher standards in reading and mathematics. My classroom visits, including scrutiny of pupils' work, showed that in most classrooms pupils are challenged with tasks at the right level for them. You know that increasing the proportion of the most able and middle-attaining pupils who reach the higher standards is the right focus for further development.
- Leaders have improved teachers' assessment skills so that most are effective in moving learning on swiftly. You have sharpened the teaching methods used to develop pupils' comprehension skills in reading. Nevertheless, leaders appreciate that there is a need to develop the assessment practice in reading in key stage 1 further, to ensure that more pupils meet the expected standard.
- The capacity for further improvement is clear to see. School leaders and governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and have identified the right priorities for improvement. The governing body carries out its statutory duties effectively. Governors are knowledgeable and support you well. They take every opportunity to check what they are being told. They ask leaders pertinent and challenging questions.
- Leaders, including middle leaders, have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching in the school; they monitor teaching and learning thoroughly. Leaders have a clear strategy to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well, so that they make good progress from their starting points.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they develop more opportunities for reasoning and problem-solving in mathematics, to deepen pupils' understanding so that their progress continues to improve
- reading assessments are used more effectively to ensure that more pupils meet the expected standard in reading in key stage 1
- they increase the levels of challenge in reading and mathematics for the most-able and middle-attaining pupils, so that more attain the higher standard throughout the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Lea Hannam
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and the head of school to discuss the school's effectiveness. Accompanied by you and your head of school, I visited lessons to observe pupils' learning, speak to pupils and look at their work. Alongside the mathematics and English leaders, we assessed the quality of pupils' work in books. I also met with the school's early years leader and the designated safeguarding officer for the Isle of Wight. I considered 58 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire and the comments some of them wrote. Staff questionnaires were also considered. I spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day and with a representative from the local authority on the telephone. I met with four governors, with the chair of the governing body joining us on a conference call, and spoke to a group of pupils about their school. I evaluated the school's safeguarding arrangements. A wide range of documentation, including your self-evaluation and school improvement planning, pupil progress information, records of leaders' checks on teaching, attendance information and policies, was examined.