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Inez Morse  
Executive Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Morse

### **Short inspection of Punnetts Town Community Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 2 May 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 November 2014.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

The school has had significant leadership and staff changes since the last inspection, including a new executive headteacher, head of school and teaching staff. The impact of your leadership is clearly evident. You have a very clear vision for excellence and for everyone to take responsibility for school improvement, not just senior leaders. Since your appointment, you have been the driving force in improving systems within the school to analyse closely the achievement of all groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. You hold staff to account for how well pupils are doing and you provide the governing body with accurate information about pupils' achievement. You expect the best from all and have established a culture of 'grow your own' leaders from within the school. You have the full confidence of governors, the local authority, staff and pupils. You have not lost sight of the unique and much-loved community feel of the school. The views of many parents are reflected in the comment: 'Punnetts Town is a fantastic local primary school which has a strong community and family identity.'

You identify precisely the school's main strengths and those areas that could be better. You acknowledge that the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection have not been addressed as quickly as they should have been. For example, you know that the most able pupils could achieve even more in some

subjects and that the skills that pupils develop in English and mathematics need to be applied across a range of subjects. The leadership role of subject leaders is underdeveloped. Leaders have been too slow to address this since the last inspection. With a sense of urgency, you are building a team of subject leaders across the federation. The development of their leadership roles and an improved curriculum are at an early stage. As a result, their impact on raising standards is too early to measure.

You have led a successful drive to help pupils think about how to build their resilience as learners. As a result, pupils were keen to tell me about how they are developing their learning behaviours, such as being curious and resourceful. This has helped pupils develop a disposition to learn and resilience as learners.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The culture of the school is to nurture the individual. Pupils' safety and well-being are central to your work. Staff know their pupils and their families well. Several parents commented that all teachers are committed to providing a safe and friendly environment in the school. They trust that they can approach staff and know that their concerns are listened to. There are clear reporting systems in place should concerns arise regarding a pupil's well-being. The school works well with a range of outside agencies to support vulnerable children and their families. You relentlessly enquire about pupil absences to make sure they are not related to safeguarding issues.

All necessary checks on the suitability of staff, volunteers, contractors and governors are carried out and recorded appropriately. Recruitment processes are in line with safer recruitment procedures.

### **Inspection findings**

- Subject leaders have not been checking on and improving the quality of teaching in their subjects, as they were asked to do at the last inspection. You have begun to restructure how subject leadership is organised. Expertise is being pooled across the federation to share the most effective practice in order to check and improve the quality of teaching. Subject leadership, however, other than in English and mathematics, is at an early stage of development.
- Senior leaders have improved how pupil progress is monitored. This has led to timely and effective interventions for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Assessment information is now shared and understood by all staff and governors. Senior leaders and governors check pupil progress more regularly and with more understanding of the importance of all groups making the progress of which they are capable. However, not all teachers are using assessment information to take pupils from their starting points to a higher level quickly enough. As a result,

teaching does not enable all pupils to achieve well at greater depth, and progress is inconsistent across year groups.

- There are many examples of good-quality writing, particularly in upper key stage 2, but not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. The standard of presentation, handwriting and spelling is still inconsistent across the school, as it was at the last inspection.
- Teaching assistants and individual needs assistants generally support pupils with additional needs and disadvantaged pupils well. This helps pupils to gain confidence and participate fully in lessons. The inclusion leader checks the progress of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities closely. Additional funding is used resourcefully, such as in bespoke programmes to help pupils to make better progress and catch up with their peers. As a result, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving and is particularly strong in Year 6.
- Behaviour in lessons, in the playground and around school is good. The vast majority of parents agree. Pupils are kind and respectful to one another in lessons. They enjoy their learning and the close friendships they make at school. They particularly enjoyed their work on 'Just Different' and about alternative cultures and customs, and are proud that in Punnetts Town 'we treat one another equally.' Pupils are being well prepared for life in modern Britain through visits by representatives from a range of organisations and studies of different faiths.
- The curriculum is developing so as to incorporate the development of skills in literacy and numeracy appropriately across a range of subjects, for example in the Year 6 'Land of the Free' topic. However, not all year groups have yet developed a carefully sequenced range of activities designed and implemented to meet the needs of all pupils, including the most able. You are rightly aware of this, and work to build more effective subject teams and to pool expertise has already begun.
- More regular checks on attendance, particularly of vulnerable pupils, has resulted in attendance being in line with national averages. Rates of fixed-term exclusions have reduced from above national averages to zero since the last inspection.
- Governors care deeply about the school, its place in the community, and improving outcomes for its pupils. They visit the school to see for themselves how plans for improvement are making a difference. They have a better understanding of data because they see it more often and have had training in how to interpret information which helps them to check on the progress of different groups. As a result, they challenge senior leaders effectively and hold them to account, contributing strongly to school improvement.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- subject leaders develop a broad and rich curriculum that raises teachers' and pupils' aspirations, and enables pupils to apply their skills across a range of subjects
- subject leaders develop the ability to check and improve the quality of teaching and learning
- teachers use assessment information about what pupils know and can do to plan activities which consistently meet their needs, moving learning on quickly, and as soon as pupils are ready.

I am copying this letter to the co-chairs 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

Lynda Welham  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I held several meetings with you, your head of school and your inclusion leader. I also met with members of the governing body, and had a telephone call with a representative of the local authority. I observed the quality of learning, with you, in all classes. I observed behaviour at playtime and scrutinised attendance records. As well as talking to pupils in lessons, I met with a group of pupils from across the school to discuss their learning. I analysed pupils' progress, in their books and in lessons with you and your head of school.

The range of evidence considered included the school's latest assessment information, the school improvement plan and leaders' self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I evaluated records of lesson observations carried out by you and your head of school. I checked child protection procedures and policies and how the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils was spent and the impact it was having. At the beginning of the day, I had conversations with parents and I took account of parents' comments through the 41 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also considered the views of 16 members of staff.