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Miss Diane Charman  
Executive Headteacher  
Oakridge Junior School  
Oakridge Road  
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Hampshire  
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Dear Miss Charman

### **Short inspection of Oakridge Junior School**

Following my visit to the school on 22 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 June 2014.

#### **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 specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection will be a section 5 inspection.

Your skillful leadership enables pupils to learn and staff to teach with high levels of enthusiasm and excitement. Leaders have established a culture where only the best will do. As the chair of governing body commented, 'Mediocre is not acceptable.' Staff feel valued and work effectively together, rising to your high expectations. Morale is high. There is a strong sense of teamwork across the school. Governors are positive about the school's role and place in the community. Officers from your local authority use your knowledge and expertise to support other local schools to improve further.

You provide clear direction for the school's future improvements. This includes the careful planning of the school's expansion to three-form entry, ensuring that standards remain consistently high. Leadership tasks are shared effectively between middle and senior leaders. This has accelerated the rate of improvement across the school. The treating of all people equally has a high focus in the school, and pupils and staff live by the school's inclusive values. However, leaders acknowledge that pupils' exact understanding of the nature of diversity and issues of equality in modern Britain is not well developed. There is also not sufficient precision in the

analysis of the progress of different vulnerable groups.

The governors of the school are totally committed to, and ambitious for, each pupil. They speak of always striving for excellence for all pupils. They take every opportunity to validate what they are being told by 'checking the evidence' and speaking to pupils. They ask leaders pertinent and challenging questions. For example, they regularly ensure that additional funding allocated to improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils is used to the maximum effect. As a result, in Year 6 in 2017, in reading and mathematics, disadvantaged pupils made more progress than other pupils nationally. Their attainment was also high.

Pupils enjoy coming to Oakridge and display very positive attitudes to learning. They take great pride in their work. Pupils work together well and respond appropriately to adults during lessons and around the school. They enjoy many aspects of school life, including a wide range of after-school clubs, sport, trips and the recent 'spelling bee'. They were particularly keen to tell me about how much they enjoyed the recent production of 'Pirates of the curry bean'. Parents and carers appreciate the friendly and approachable nature of the school. As one parent wrote: 'This is a great school which puts the children at the centre of all they do. Staff here go above and beyond.'

The previous report highlighted many strengths, including accurate assessment, high attainment and secure self-evaluation. Leaders have ensured that these strong points have been built upon. At the time of the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve the progress pupils made in writing. Your work in this area has been highly successful.

### **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. Records, including the single central record of checks on adults' suitability to work and volunteer at the school, are diligently maintained and stored securely. You work successfully with local agencies to be sure that the needs of pupils and their families are addressed effectively.

Pupils said that behaviour is good in the school. Any falling out is 'sorted the same day'. The annual anti-bullying day has resulted in pupils being able to define clearly what bullying is. On the rare occasions when there is bullying, pupils know that adults will help them quickly resolve it. They told me there are many adults in the school who they can talk to if they are worried. They value the 'worry boxes' that give them an easy way to share their concerns. Pupils know that staff will always listen to them. There are many opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to learn how to stay safe and be healthy, including aspects such as road safety, building site safety and online safety. As a result, their understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a wide variety of situations is secure.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed to look at specific aspects of the school's work, including: the effectiveness of safeguarding; the school's work in promoting equality and fundamental British values; the progress pupils make in writing across the school; and how teaching ensures that the most able pupils are challenged.
- Pupils know that people can be different from each other. They understand the importance of respecting and accepting everyone, and that individual characteristics make us all unique. Pupils have regular opportunities to learn about other faiths. For example, Year 4 recently visited a local synagogue where they learned about aspects of Judaism. Pupils also have the opportunity to understand about democracy and the rule of law, through voting for the school council representatives and the recent visit to the Houses of Parliament. However, the impact this has had on their understanding of equality and British values is somewhat limited. Additionally, opportunities to learn about equal rights, discrimination and prejudice are not routinely built in to the school's curriculum. Leaders appreciate that reviewing the impact of their work on equality, including the careful analysis of the progress of vulnerable groups of pupils, is a suitable focus for the school.
- In Year 6 in 2017, the proportion of pupils who reached the higher standards in reading and mathematics was above that seen nationally. During my visits to lessons, and while looking at pupils' work, I saw clear evidence that the most able pupils are routinely challenged across the curriculum. Teachers provide the most able pupils with activities that challenge their thinking and encourage them to make connections in their learning. Teachers use questioning extremely successfully to deepen learning. They intervene promptly to provide the appropriate level of challenge for pupils. Any misconceptions are swiftly addressed. Recent improvements to assessment, across all subjects of the curriculum, ensure that teachers build on pupils' prior learning and abilities from the very start of activities. As a result, pupils, including the most able, make very strong progress.
- The teaching of writing is highly effective. Lessons, led by energetic teachers, are stimulating and precise. Teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to write which, together with the use of high-quality reading texts, enhance vocabulary development. Effective professional development of staff, including that of support staff, has ensured that subject knowledge is secure. Pupils are very clear on their teachers' expectations for successful work. For example, in a Year 5 English lesson, pupils used the book 'Pig heart boy' by Malorie Blackman to identify features of good suspense writing. They were confidently using these features, including short sentences, rhetorical questions and ellipsis, to write their own effective suspense stories. Work seen in pupils' books, and during our visits to lessons, is of an extremely high calibre, showing rapid progress. Pupils edit their work diligently. These high outcomes in writing are not only seen in English lessons. There are many examples of pupils writing at length in subjects other than English to a high standard. Presentation of work, including handwriting, is consistently positive across all areas of the curriculum.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they strengthen the analysis and appraisal of the school's work on equalities, including their evaluation of the progress of vulnerable groups.

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

Lea Hannam  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher to discuss the school's effectiveness. You accompanied me on visits to lessons to observe pupils' learning, talk to pupils and look at their work. Together, we looked at the quality of pupils' work in books. I considered 46 responses from parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and their free-text comments. I spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day. I also held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority and met with the middle leader responsible for the curriculum. Responses to the staff questionnaires were also considered. I met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body, and formally spoke to two groups of pupils about their school. I evaluated the school's safeguarding arrangements. A wide range of documents was examined, including: the school's self-evaluation; school improvement planning; pupils' progress information; and various school policies. No responses to the pupil questionnaire were received.