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Mrs Janice Box
Headteacher
Edgebury Primary School
Belmont Lane
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Dear Mrs Box

Short inspection of Edgebury Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 5 June 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.

Since that time, the school has undergone a period of significant change, with continuing expansion and new school buildings. This has not deflected you, your leadership team or governors from your core purpose of continuing to improve the school. For example, you have introduced a challenging new curriculum. This is centred on high expectations of what pupils can achieve, as well as on the development of learning and life skills, including teamwork and self-confidence. Pupils benefit from many opportunities to use these skills. For example, they routinely discuss topics they are learning with each other and work together cooperatively.

Pupils enjoy the wide range of activities offered through the wider curriculum. These include, for example, sporting activities such as netball and musical activities such as viola lessons. They say that they particularly enjoy taking part in sporting competitions and performing to an audience. The school's successful wider curriculum underpins pupils' enjoyment of school.

You and your leadership team are ambitious for the school's future. As a result, you have developed a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Following the previous report, and in light of your own analysis, you have successfully improved the progress of pupils across the school in writing and mathematics. You have also increased the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard in reading at key stage 1. Your work to improve the attendance of particular groups of pupils has also

been successful. While the steps you have taken have had a positive impact, you agree that there is still more work to be done.

You and your staff provide a nurturing learning environment for pupils in line with the school's values and vision. Pupils say that everyone is caring at Edgebury. Parents and carers overwhelmingly agree, with one parent saying: 'Staff always have the pupils' well-being at the core of everything they do.'

The governing body is determined to continue improving the school. Governors undertake regular monitoring, including visits to school. This effectively supports their understanding of the work of the school. As a result, they know the school well and provide you with effective challenge and support.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You and your leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture, where all staff understand their roles and responsibilities well. Training for staff is up to date, and regular meetings ensure that they have a good knowledge of local issues. Staff know how to recognise the signs that a pupil may be at risk of abuse. Clear processes are in place so that staff know how to report concerns promptly. Leaders swiftly follow up any issues, working well with outside agencies. This enables them to safeguard pupils' welfare effectively.

Records are maintained to a high standard and are checked regularly by you and by governors. Leaders complete all the required checks to ensure that staff and volunteers are suitable to work in the school.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school and understand how to make the right choices to stay safe out of school. The vast majority of parents and all pupils I spoke to agree that behaviour is good at the school. Pupils understand about different forms of bullying, including online bullying. They say that instances of bullying are rare, but if it does happen, they know they can talk to a member of staff, who will sort it out quickly.

Inspection findings

- Firstly, we agreed to explore how successfully leaders are supporting teachers in improving boys' writing in key stage 2. This was because, over time, boys have made less progress than girls, and while pupils' attainment in writing was broadly average, it was lower than in reading.
- You and the leadership team have employed a range of strategies to improve writing, especially that of boys. These strategies have included using texts chosen to motivate boys to write and developing the curriculum so that pupils are able to write at length in a range of subjects. For example, pupils made effective use of their writing skills in history to make a comparison between life at the time of the Norman Conquest and during the First World War. You have also given pupils the opportunity to write for a real purpose through their regular contributions to the weekly school newspaper, the 'Edgebury Echo'. Pupils, including boys, say that this inspires them and makes them

want to write.

- Work in pupils' books, including those of boys, shows that you have been successful in improving the accuracy of pupils' punctuation and grammar when they write at length. Pupils take pride in their work and routinely present their work well. This has contributed well to leaders' efforts to raise standards in writing for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils, including boys, build up their writing skills quickly. Responding to effective teaching, they use a range of techniques, including complex sentences, to capture the reader's interest. As a result, as confirmed by the school's assessment information, boys are making stronger progress within a picture of overall improvement, and the gap between their performance and that of girls is closing.
- Our second line of enquiry focused on how successfully leaders are supporting teachers to raise pupils' achievement in mathematics at key stage 2. In 2017, although Year 6 pupils' attainment was broadly average and an above-average proportion attained the high standard, it should have been even higher given their starting points. Middle-ability pupils made slower progress than others.
- Through their own analysis of pupils' work, leaders have gained a good understanding of how to improve the pupils' progress. You and your team have introduced effective strategies to target gaps in pupils' knowledge. This has resulted in improvements in their fluency with calculations and problem solving. Pupils are now routinely asked to give reasons for their choices when solving problems. For example, teachers encourage pupils to talk about the calculations they use and which methods may be more efficient. This supports pupils, particularly middle-ability pupils, in acquiring a deep understanding of different calculation methods.
- Teachers set work that is progressively more challenging, which gives pupils opportunities to build on previous learning. Additional adults are effective in supporting targeted pupils through careful questioning to check their understanding and further explanations of things they find difficult. As a consequence, as shown by work in pupils' books and the school's assessment information, middle-ability pupils are making stronger progress than was the case in the past.
- The third area we agreed to explore was how successfully leaders have supported teachers in challenging more pupils at key stage 1 to achieve greater depth in reading. This was because over the last two years the proportion of pupils achieving the greater depth standard was below the national average.
- You and your leadership team had identified this issue and introduced effective strategies to secure improvements. Pupils said that they enjoy reading more now because of these new approaches.
- I heard pupils reading with confidence and expression. They mostly read accurately, taking account of punctuation, and were able to infer why characters behaved in the way that they did. However, sometimes pupils were reading books with vocabulary that was too advanced and so struggled to understand the meaning of the text. This limits their progress and, as you agreed, more work is needed to secure consistently good progress in reading.
- The fourth line of enquiry explored the school's work to improve the attendance of

disadvantaged pupils. This was because their attendance has declined over the last three years and was below the national average in 2017.

- Throughout the year, you and your staff have worked hard to make the importance of attendance very clear to the whole school community. You have employed a range of successful strategies. These include regular communication through the school newspaper and the celebration of high levels of attendance through certificates and in assemblies. You and your team also work closely with parents to understand the reasons why pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should, providing help according to their circumstances. As a result, rates of absence for this group of pupils have fallen, although they remain above the national average. As you agreed, more work is needed to further improve the attendance of these pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- in key stage 1, pupils' progress in reading is strengthened, so that a greater proportion of pupils attain the greater depth standard by the end of Year 2
- the focus on reducing absence rates for disadvantaged pupils is maintained so that their attendance is at least similar to the national average.

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

Yours sincerely

David Lloyd
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, the inclusion lead and subject leaders. I also held meetings with the chair and the vice-chair of the governing body, a parent governor and a representative of the local authority. I visited classrooms with you, reviewed work in pupils' books, listened to pupils read and looked at assessment information. I observed pupils' behaviour around the school and talked with them informally. I talked with a range of staff. I looked at documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, safeguarding records, procedures and practices. I considered 110 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 24 responses to the staff questionnaire.