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Mrs Jo Cooper  
Headteacher  
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Hampshire  
PO2 8NW

Dear Mrs Cooper

### **Short inspection of Stamshaw Infant School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 November 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 December 2014.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your strong and dedicated leadership has ensured that the school's vision of 'helping stars to shine brightly' permeates through every aspect of school life. You support your staff well and they are all proud to work at the school. You are highly respected by the whole community. As a result, local universities and your local authority use the knowledge and expertise of staff at Stamshaw Infants to support the development of other schools and trainee teachers. Leaders ensure that the school is inclusive. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive bespoke support. Those pupils who fall behind in their learning have timely intervention to help them catch up.

Pupils told me how much they enjoy coming to Stamshaw Infant School. They behave well, work hard and are eager to learn. They love many aspects of school life, including exciting trips, playing with their friends and school lunches. They take their leadership roles, such as a school councillor or an eco-warrior, very seriously. Pupils adore the school guinea pigs, Buttons and Flash, saying that, 'They help us to be happy and care for each other.' Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, with 100% of parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, saying that they would recommend the school. As one parent commented, 'We feel confident when leaving our children that they will have a great day and always come home full of things to tell us.' Another parent added, 'The school is an asset to the local area.'

The previous inspection report highlighted the school's many strengths, including a caring and supporting learning environment, and effective partnerships with

parents. These remain strengths of the school. Parents are welcomed wholeheartedly into the school and are encouraged to be part of their child's learning journey.

At the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve the planning of activities to challenge children in the early years. Your actions to address this have been very successful. Children get off to a flying start in Reception. Staff provide children with exciting learning opportunities and tailor them to their individual next steps and interests. They help children to develop good independence skills. Leaders were also asked to improve school improvement planning. The school's improvement plan clearly identifies the right priorities. It provides an effective tool to help the school develop further.

The curriculum at Stamshaw Infants is broad and vibrant. Pupils develop their understanding of what it means to be an active citizen within a global context, effectively. For example, children have recently raised money for an orphanage in The Gambia. The school's star values, which the pupils gain and then wear with pride, encourage the pupils to persevere in their learning, believe in themselves and work well in a team. As a result, pupils respect others and are well prepared for life in modern Britain. However, we agreed that the most able pupils' subject-specific knowledge in subjects other than mathematics and English is not as developed as it should be.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

School leaders and governors fulfil their statutory safeguarding duties well. Policies and procedures are fit for purpose and day-to-day routines are secure. Records are very detailed and communication between staff is strong. Any safeguarding concerns are followed up swiftly. A real strength of the school is how well you and your staff know all of your pupils. Relationships across the school are extremely positive. Vulnerable pupils and their families are supported well. As more than one parent said to me, 'The staff go above and beyond to help us.' Pre-employment checks to ensure the suitability of all adults who work or volunteer in the school are fully in place. Leaders have good relationships with other agencies.

Attendance figures have been below the national average for primary schools in recent years. The proportion of pupils frequently absent has been high. Leaders engage well with parents who find it difficult to get their children to school on time and on a regular basis, and offer a range of support. However, despite a slight improving picture, leaders know that ensuring that all pupils attend school regularly is a continual focus for the school.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They are confident that there is always an adult to talk to if they have any worries. Pupils told me that the behaviour of other children is good and that their friends are 'kind and thoughtful'. As one pupil said, 'There is no fighting in our school.' Parents too think that their children are safe and well looked after at Stamshaw Infants. As one parent commented, 'All children are clearly valued and nurtured.'

## Inspection findings

- The mathematics curriculum provides a strong balance of problem-solving and reasoning. Pupils can explain their thinking well, using correct mathematical vocabulary to generalise and explain. As a result, from their typically low starting points, pupils make good progress in mathematics. Provisional performance information indicates that in 2018, by the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected and the higher standard in mathematics was in line with national.
- My classroom visits, including scrutiny of pupils' work, showed that pupils, including the most able, are challenged well in their mathematics and English learning. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were encouraged to work systematically to solve a number problem involving money. However, during our scrutiny of pupils' work, we agreed that lessons and activities are not sufficiently challenging in other subjects for the most able pupils. Where this is the case, learning is too easy and does not require this group of pupils to think deeply or hard enough.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders have an astute view of the quality of teaching in the school, of which they are proud. They give precise and developmental feedback to improve teaching further still. Leaders are highly ambitious for every pupil in the school. They understand the barriers facing their pupils well. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress at Stamshaw Infants. You have high expectations of staff and have invested in developing leaders at all levels. Middle leaders are knowledgeable about the school's needs and they support and develop their colleagues effectively. Governance is strong. Through their regular visits to school, governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They rightly seek to verify what leaders tell them. Governors hold leaders to account about all aspects of school life, including pupils' achievement and school finances.
- There is a high level of expertise on the staff team in the teaching and assessing of writing. As a result, pupils make strong progress in this subject. Provisional performance information indicates that, at the end of key stage 1 in 2018, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in writing exceeded that which was seen nationally. Pupils write accurately, paying great attention to their basic skills. Strong phonics knowledge is applied to their writing and as a result, the progress that pupils make in spelling is good. Pupils know how to improve their writing, using editing to good effect. Leaders have had particular success in improving the writing of boys.

## Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- rates of attendance match or exceed national averages for primary schools, with a sharp focus on those who are regularly absent
- teaching in subjects other than mathematics and English fully challenges the most able pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Portsmouth. 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 deputy headteacher to discuss the school's effectiveness. Together, we visited classrooms to observe pupils' learning and talk to them. We looked at the quality of work in pupils' books. I considered 23 responses from parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text comments. I also spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day. Responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaires were considered and I had a meeting with a group of pupils to discuss their views about the school.

I met with six governors, including the chair of the governing body, and also met with middle leaders. I held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. I evaluated the school's safeguarding arrangements. A wide range of documents was examined, including: the school's self-evaluation; school improvement planning; the pupil premium strategy; information about pupils' progress; and various policies. I also examined the school's website.