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Lorraine Phillips  
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Dear Mrs Phillips

### **Short inspection of Crofton Anne Dale Junior School**

Following my visit to the school on 7 December 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 March 2015.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your arrival, shortly after the last inspection, you have led the school with determination and high expectations. Despite a significant number of staff changes, including at senior level, you have created a cohesive team with high ambitions for all pupils. As one parent commented, 'The staff are very upbeat and always seem to work towards a greater goal.'

You work successfully with the head of school. Together you have ensured that staff share your vision and drive to improve outcomes further. Leaders' evaluation of the school is thorough and accurate. Close monitoring of teaching and learning, and high accountability, has ensured that any weaknesses are swiftly addressed. This has resulted in an improving picture of progress for current pupils.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance levels are high. Pupils told me that their lessons are fun. As one parent wrote, 'Our daughter loves attending, raves about her teachers and the way they make learning fun.' Pupils love many aspects of school life, such as going on outings, playtimes and cookery. They told me that it is easy to make friends at Crofton Anne Dale Juniors.

The last inspection identified strengths in behaviour and relationships. Leaders have maintained these strengths. Behaviour of pupils was excellent when I visited lessons. Pupils work hard, are polite and show great interest in what they are learning. Relationships throughout the school are strong. Pupils show great respect

to each other and to their teachers. Staff morale is high. All staff who responded to the Ofsted staff questionnaire are proud to work at Crofton Anne Dale Junior School.

At the time of the previous inspection, leaders were asked to ensure that disadvantaged pupils attain in line with their peers. There has been some success here, and in most year groups disadvantaged pupils' attainment is in line with their classmates. However, there is still work to be done to improve the progress that disadvantaged pupils make, particularly, but not solely, the most able disadvantaged pupils.

The school's curriculum covers a wide range of subjects and topics. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning, saying that they get to do lots of creative activities. For example, on entering the school, you are currently greeted by a First World War soldier, made by Year 5 pupils as part of their topic about Remembrance. Leaders have thought carefully about the specific design of the curriculum. Your chosen approach is ensuring that pupils' attitudes and approach to learning are well developed, as well as developing pupils' knowledge and skills. As a result, officers from your local authority use your expertise in curriculum development to support other local schools.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a very strong culture of safeguarding which permeates through every aspect of school life. Records are meticulously kept, and any necessary actions are completed without delay. Staff regularly receive up-to-date training on a range of safeguarding issues. Local risks are well understood. Staff are highly attentive to pupils' welfare needs, striving to do their very best for all pupils. Close links are established with external agencies. As a result, vulnerable pupils and their families receive the support they need. The school's single central record shows that all checks on the suitability of adults to work or volunteer in the school have been completed.

Pupils told me that they feel safe in school. They said that bullying is rare but, when it does happen, 'teachers help us sort it out'. Pupils appreciate the 'rainbow room' where they know they can go and be listened to if they have a worry or concern. Older pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe online. Parents, too, think that their children are well looked after at Crofton Anne Dale Juniors. As one parent wrote, 'The welfare of all the children is at the top of the school's agenda.'

### **Inspection findings**

- At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed that we would focus on: how effectively leaders ensure that pupils make strong progress in mathematics; how effective the teaching of writing is, particularly, but not solely, for boys; and how leaders use the additional funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make

strong progress.

- In 2018, the proportions of pupils reaching the expected and the higher standard in mathematics were in line with the national averages. However, over the last few years, pupils have not made enough progress in mathematics by the time they leave the school. Leaders have responded effectively to improve this for current pupils. They have introduced new teaching strategies which have resulted in pupils being confident and competent in using practical resources. As a result, pupils have many strategies to work out calculations independently. The curriculum provides a strong balance across the different aspects of mathematics, incorporating reasoning and problem-solving through all topics. The subject knowledge of staff has improved through effective professional development, and successful support and challenge from middle leadership. As a result, current pupils are making better progress in mathematics. However, during my visits to lessons, and while looking at pupils' books, it was apparent that the most able pupils were not challenged as well as they could be. Focusing on ensuring that work is not too easy for this group of learners is a key next step for the school.
- The progress that pupils made in writing by the end of key stage 2, in 2018, was in line with the national average. However, boys made less progress than girls. In order to improve progress for boys in writing, leaders have carefully considered topics and texts that will interest both genders. For example, in a Year 4 English lesson, boys enthusiastically told me about a book featuring Wilton the intestinal worm, linked to their learning about the digestive system. As a result, their interest and engagement levels were high, and they were producing work of a high standard. Pupils of both genders clearly enjoy their English learning.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to write at length across the curriculum, with a clear purpose and audience. Pupils know how to improve their writing using editing and redrafting skills, as well as the clear next steps identified by their teachers. Current assessment information and progress in pupils' books show that in writing the progress of boys and girls across the school is now similar.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged pupils in the school. They carefully track and monitor disadvantaged pupils' progress. As a result, any pupil falling behind is swiftly identified. Disadvantaged pupils in most classes attain in line with their classmates. However, the plan for the use of the additional funding is not precisely targeted to the current needs of disadvantaged pupils in the school, specifically the most able disadvantaged. It has not been precisely evaluated, so leaders cannot provide clear evidence of which strategies have been the most successful.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils are routinely challenged in mathematics
- there is greater precision in the planning and evaluation of the pupil premium funding so that disadvantaged pupils make more progress and greater

proportions attain the higher standards.

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 the head of school to discuss the school's effectiveness. We visited classrooms to observe pupils' learning, and to talk to pupils about their work and their attitudes to learning. We looked at the quality of work in pupils' books. I considered 61 responses from parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text comments. Responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire and staff questionnaire were also considered.

I met with two governors, including a co-chair of governors, and spoke to a representative from the local authority on the telephone. I had a meeting with a group of pupils to discuss their views about the school. In addition, I met with two middle leaders. A wide range of documents was examined, including: school improvement planning; information about pupils' progress; and various policies. I also examined the school's website.