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Mr James Hartley
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Dear Mr Hartley

Short inspection of The Victory Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 February 2019, 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 April 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You have continued to provide effective leadership to the school and further strengthened the work of senior leaders. Your unflinching commitment to the pupils and the wider community has resulted in your school having inclusivity at the very heart of all it does. Pupils and staff demonstrate the school values of kindness, respect, determination, teamwork and excellence in their day-to-day work. You and your leaders have a deep and carefully formed understanding of the needs of the school community. Actions to support pupils and families are effective in enabling pupils to achieve well and are valued by parents. One parent summed up the views of many when they said, 'I feel this school is doing a great job. It is a caring, supportive and positive environment for my children.'

Pupils are proud of their school. They understand their role in making the school the harmonious learning community that it is. They behave well in lessons and are curious and interested in what they learn. The strong relationships between pupils and adults are a particular strength of your school. Pupils are keen to share their achievements with adults and they receive genuine and warm praise when they do so. This results in pupils who are confident to tackle new learning and try new experiences. Pupils in the early years were observed demonstrating effective teamwork and cooperation when they were constructing their own Great Wall of China using resources within the classroom. Pupils within the specialist provision are very much part of the school. They transition smoothly between their own classroom and other classes within the school because of the help available to them from the

well-trained and skilful staff who support them.

The local governing body and trustees of the multi-academy trust share your ambition for the school. They have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness and provide useful challenge and support through their well-focused visits. Visits from the trust regional director have been particularly helpful in identifying strengths and areas to develop in teaching.

You have responded effectively to the areas for improvement at the previous inspection. You have been innovative in your approaches to encouraging pupils' better attendance. Two very popular daily breakfast clubs have supported improved attendance, particularly for pupils who require additional nurture. These approaches have resulted in a reduction in the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Pupils' attainment has continued to improve. Pupils make particularly strong progress in reading as a result of the effective actions that you have taken to strengthen teaching.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding, which reaches into the wider community. The shared appointments of staff with responsibility for safeguarding have resulted in strong links with the local secondary school. These links support pupils and families well, particularly when pupils move from the primary to secondary school. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and this is also the view of parents and carers. The curriculum is designed to ensure that pupils know how to stay safe in a range of situations. Pupils can explain how to stay safe when they are online and are aware of risks that they could encounter. Pupils say that adults respond quickly and helpfully to any concerns that they raise.

Leaders ensure that training is effective and results in continuous improvement to safeguarding procedures within the school. Staff are able to describe the impact of training on their work. All staff are vigilant and promptly report any concerns that arise. Effective action is taken to ensure that concerns are addressed in a timely way, including when working with external agencies. The local governing body provides effective oversight of the work of the school to keep pupils safe, including ensuring that recruitment checks are carried out and that information is recorded accurately.

Inspection findings

- Leaders accurately evaluate the quality of teaching. They have a deep understanding of the strengths and areas for the development of staff and take decisive action where weaknesses are identified. Teachers benefit from expert guidance and support from leaders within the school and the trust. Support is carefully designed to meet the needs of teachers. This has resulted in the quality of the majority of teaching within the school being effective in promoting pupils' learning. Teachers typically display good subject knowledge, effective use of assessment and the ability to design tasks in English and mathematics that allow pupils to achieve well.

- Leaders have a clear vision for the curriculum and have made improvements in the content of what pupils learn across a range of subjects. The curriculum is designed to develop pupils' knowledge within individual subjects. Where appropriate, links between subjects are made. For example, in Year 2 pupils produce art work based on their learning in history about the Great Fire of London. 'Knowledge organisers', which explain to teachers and pupils the most important vocabulary and knowledge within topics, have been introduced for most subjects. These are helping ensure that pupils grasp the most important learning within lessons.
- Pupils enjoy what they learn and are eager in lessons. However, their presentation of written work in subjects other than English and mathematics is not consistently good. The curriculum is designed around key questions that pupils work to answer over sequences of lessons. The questions encourage pupils to think deeply and build their knowledge over time.
- The curriculum includes many opportunities for pupils to develop their moral and ethical understanding. An example of this was observed in Year 3 where pupils were learning about humanism in a religious education lesson. Pupils were able to relate what they were learning to their own character. One pupil explained that what they were learning would 'help us to be role models'. This aspect of the school curriculum and culture is very strong.
- Leaders accurately evaluate how well different subjects are taught and the strengths and weaknesses across the curriculum. However, the changes that have been made are not yet fully embedded. In some year groups and some subjects the vision for the curriculum is not yet fully realised.
- Leaders have made improvements to the English curriculum. Writing lessons are based on interesting and engaging texts that teachers have chosen with the support of leaders. Boys are more interested than previously in what they are learning about and as a result are keen to write more. The approach to the teaching of writing is consistent across the school. Pupils' understanding of the features of different types of writing is developed through the use of checklists that help support understanding. Teachers have focused on developing pupils' understanding of grammar and provide opportunities for them to apply what they learn in longer pieces of writing. Disadvantaged pupils are well supported in class and through a range of effective interventions. Pupils' books show that over time they apply what they have learned and make good progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- middle leaders implement the vision held by senior leaders and further develop the wider curriculum
- the pride that pupils have in their school is reflected in the presentation of their work across the curriculum.

I am copying this letter to chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive

officer, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Portsmouth. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

James Freeston
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, senior leaders and the chair of the local governing body. I also met with a representative from the academy trust. I visited lessons across the school, to observe teaching, speak with pupils and look at their books. I spoke with pupils about their experiences of school. In meetings with curriculum leaders we discussed their roles and actions in school. I analysed 28 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, and 35 responses to the staff survey. A range of documents were examined, including the school's self-evaluation; the school's improvement plan; documentation relating to safeguarding, the spending of the pupil premium and the curriculum; and the school's own survey of parents' views and opinions.