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Dear Mrs Tomkinson

Short inspection of White Rock Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 March 2019 with Dr Richard Steward, 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 July 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. As the school has grown, you, governors and staff have focused diligently on securing the school's continuing success. Your very effective partnership work with the deputy headteacher lies at the heart of the school's strong leadership. You are fully supported by a determined and knowledgeable governing body. You sustain a successful focus on developing the skills of other leaders in the school. Consequently, leaders and staff feel empowered and fulfil their responsibilities diligently and effectively. They benefit from clear communication and work well together, identifying and tackling the right priorities for development.

Almost all the parents and carers who responded to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey, highly value the school and its support for both pupils and the local community. This was summed up by one parent who wrote, 'We cannot praise the school enough. The staff go above and beyond to provide care, support, encouragement and a really rich varied educational diet for our children.' Several parents who spoke to an inspector expressed a similar appreciation of the school.

You have maintained and built on the strengths identified at the time of the previous Ofsted inspection. Your inspirational leadership continues to drive further improvement. Relationships between pupils and adults and among pupils themselves are consistently strong. As a result, pupils enjoy school and a very large majority sustain good rates of attendance. Pupils behave exceptionally well, especially during assemblies. They maintain enthusiasm and interest in learning and

make especially strong progress in reading. The pupils respond positively to teachers' questions and help each other to learn. This underpins their good progress. You have acted decisively to establish nursery provision so that younger children can benefit from the expertise of your early years staff. This has strengthened your ability to successfully meet the wider needs of the increasing numbers of children seeking entry to the school.

You and your leadership team have responded well in the areas for improvement identified by the previous inspection. You have made sure that science and technology are taught effectively across the school. Pupils' personal and social understanding are developed well. You have also continued to provide high-quality professional development for staff to secure good teaching and pupils' learning in mathematics and writing. Our inspection and your own improvement plan have both identified a need to sustain this focus. It includes enabling those pupils who can reach them to achieve high standards.

Safeguarding is effective.

A strong culture of safeguarding pervades all aspects of school life. Senior leaders, including governors, ensure that the school's policies and procedures fully meet statutory requirements and guidance. Leaders have completed high levels of training in safeguarding. They provide frequent training for staff to keep them up to date in safeguarding procedures. Staff at all levels ensure that procedures are consistently followed to keep pupils safe. Leaders enlist specialist support when required. They deploy administrative staff in making regular checks to secure effective safeguarding and record-keeping.

The overwhelming majority of parents who spoke to an inspector or responded to Parent View agreed that children feel very safe at school. Pupils typically stated that: 'We feel safe here.' Others described the warm relationships they share with each other and staff. When questioned, pupils also made reference to the online safety team and how they are helped to stay safe when using computers online.

Inspection findings

- Inspectors' first key line of enquiry evaluated the effectiveness of leaders' and teachers' efforts to improve pupils' progress in mathematics, particularly across key stage 2. You have continued an effective programme of staff training to strengthen teachers' skills in teaching mathematics. Our visits to classrooms showed that teachers are using their knowledge of individual pupils to interpret and apply agreed curriculum and teaching strategies effectively. Teachers and support staff provide extra 'pre-teaching' based on pupils' needs and ability to ensure that all are ready to learn in class. Pupils gain a boost in confidence and understanding and engage well in the appropriately challenging work presented to them. One pupil experiencing this support said, typically, 'I can use what I have learned to help others now.'
- Pupils' responses to teachers' questions in class show the positive development of their ability to reason and tackle mathematical problems. For example, pupils in

Year 6 translated coordinates accurately and reflected on and shared their ideas productively. Teachers are deepening pupils' understanding, and this is strengthening their resilience in tackling more difficult work. As a result, pupils make good and improving progress through the school. Currently, an increasing proportion of pupils are deepening their learning in mathematics and mathematical terms, including at key stage 2. You are resolutely developing pupils' reasoning skills, with the specific aim of increasing numbers attaining the higher standard by the end of Year 6.

- The second key line of enquiry considered the degree to which leaders and teachers have been developing pupils' writing. Improving pupils' progress and raising their attainment in writing have been a priority for the school. Evidence in pupils' books shows they are developing the stamina to write at length. The pupils' good work is also evident in their neat presentation and handwriting. Their sentence construction shows increasing complexity and accuracy. Most pupils are responding well to teachers' guidance. In particular, this is successfully developing their ability to edit and improve their own work.
- You have established a curriculum that stimulates pupils' interest. Topics such as adaptation in science and tasks such as writing a letter to Anne Frank in history also provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect and advance their writing skills. Pupils who spoke to inspectors were able to explain their thinking. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 expressed the view that they are doing more writing now than in the past. A strengthened confidence and interest in writing was evident. They commented, 'We like being challenged, especially in writing.' Your current focus on increasing pupils' skills in planning their writing and on writing for a particular purpose and audience is having a positive impact on their progress. You are sustaining this drive for improvement so as to raise the proportion of pupils attaining high standards in writing at the end of Year 6 to a level matching pupils' attainment in reading.
- The final key line of enquiry evaluated the effectiveness of the school's use of the pupil premium and actions taken to improve the progress made by disadvantaged pupils. Inspection shows that you are planning and using the pupil premium and supporting disadvantaged pupils with increasing effect. Disadvantaged pupils benefit from having their needs and skills identified and targeted well. Most disadvantaged pupils make good and improving progress through the school. They are writing with greater confidence and the overall quality of their writing is improving. However, some disadvantaged pupils are not consistently developing their handwriting and spelling as well as their classmates. Some have difficulty constructing accurately punctuated sentences. The majority of disadvantaged pupils are also improving their progress in mathematics. In particular, pupils benefit from the 'pre-teaching' support, which helps them to access learning more successfully in class. Disadvantaged pupils benefit from effective teaching of reading, including phonics. Consequently, they make consistently good progress in reading. For example, Year 2 pupils who read to an inspector used their phonics skills well to break unfamiliar words down and read them. Pupils also enjoy reading because the books presented to them are interesting and match their ability closely.
- Disadvantaged pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life and make

good progress in developing their personal qualities. Your determined efforts have secured pupils' above-average overall rate of attendance. However, your monitoring identifies poor attendance by some disadvantaged pupils and this inhibits their progress. You acknowledge that, as standards continue to rise, so the challenge of ensuring that disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as their peers remains.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- strengthened teaching of writing and mathematics is sustained to improve pupils' progress further and to raise the proportion achieving higher standards at the end of key stage 2
- actions are maintained to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, including enlisting the full support of their parents in raising pupils' attendance so they can derive full benefit from all the school has to offer.

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

Yours sincerely

Alexander Baxter
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, my inspection colleague and I held meetings with you and other staff who have leadership responsibilities. I met with the members of the school's governing body and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors visited classrooms with you and the deputy headteacher and scrutinised samples of pupils' work in books. We talked with individual pupils during visits to classrooms and observed them reading and checking their work. The team inspector heard selected pupils reading and talked to them about their reading at home and school. I checked a range of documents relating to safeguarding with you and your administrative staff. I also examined details of pupils' attendance and pupils' progress, as well as the school's self-evaluation and development plan. The team inspector spoke to several parents as they brought their children to school. Inspectors took account of 171 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey, and 90 additional written comments from parents.