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Mrs Gillian Lovatt-Young
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Dear Mrs Lovatt-Young

Short inspection of Shoreham Village School

Following my visit to the school on 26 March 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 last inspection.

Your drive and determination to ensure that pupils leave Shoreham with the knowledge and skills they require to succeed in the future are evident throughout the school. Your vision statement – 'Learning today for tomorrow's world' – neatly encapsulates the ambition shown by staff and the governing body to ensure that pupils achieve well academically and make a positive contribution in their future lives. You recognise the importance of ensuring that this small school is outward-looking. Strong partnerships with local state and private schools benefit pupils and staff by enhancing the curriculum and providing valuable training opportunities.

You know your school well. You are committed to continually improving the school, and the actions you have taken have been effective in continuing to improve outcomes in English and mathematics. Governors provide effective support and challenge. They have a strong understanding of how their skills and experience can best be used to support school improvement.

You have taken effective action to address the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. For example, pupils are now consistently fully engaged in their learning. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They take pride in their work and are keen to do their best. Pupils report that adults quickly help them resolve any disagreements that arise and that bullying is rare. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and

their good attendance reflects this.

You have forged a strong staff team which is proud of the work it does for the pupils at Shoreham. The team is as equally committed to pupils' personal development as it is to their academic success. Frequent opportunities for pupils to perform in the arts and compete in sporting events are provided. The school handball team has enjoyed considerable success, given the small number of pupils from which to create a team.

Parents and carers are unanimous in their praise for you and they appreciate the improvements that you have made to the school during your time as headteacher. They value the interesting curriculum that their children experience. A particular feature of this is the extra activities that are provided at lunchtimes and the after-school clubs. Pupils are grateful for the range of opportunities on offer and told me, 'There's something for everyone.'

You have sensibly considered the workload of teachers, while also ensuring that pupils benefit from a good standard of education. You have thought very carefully about the training needs of your staff to ensure that they have the skills they need to be effective in their roles. Teachers use resources intelligently to ensure that lessons are pitched at the appropriate levels for pupils to make good progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The promotion of effective safeguarding has a high profile throughout the school. Staff receive regular safeguarding training so that they are knowledgeable and well informed about all aspects of safeguarding procedures. Leaders respond quickly and effectively to any concerns raised about pupils' safety and welfare. Governors check regularly to ensure that safeguarding procedures are rigorous and applied consistently throughout the school.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They have an age-appropriate awareness of how to stay safe online, and can describe the actions they would take if they had a worry or concern. One pupil summed up the views of many when saying, 'There's always someone you can go to.' The curriculum includes many opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils are taught how to stay safe on public transport prior to beginning secondary school so that they are well equipped to make the transition safely.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to focus on: how effectively leaders have improved the quality of teaching in mathematics; how well teachers have ensured that pupils, particularly the most able, are sufficiently challenged in lessons; and how well the curriculum prepares pupils for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders have successfully improved the quality of teaching in mathematics. Over time, leaders have developed the school's approach to teaching mathematics so that it equips pupils with the understanding they need to be successful mathematicians.

Pupils say that they 'love' mathematics. Leaders have regularly evaluated the way that mathematics is taught and have made changes where required. Teachers have benefited from effective training and research opportunities and speak very positively about the support they have received. This has resulted in mathematics lessons that have an appropriate balance between helping pupils to learn the basic skills that allow them to move on and enabling pupils to tackle more complex mathematical concepts. In the main, teachers use their strong subject knowledge well, pupils' misconceptions are addressed and pupils build their understanding up securely over time. Sometimes, pupils do not develop their understanding sufficiently to be fully successful in embracing new learning.

- Pupils receive appropriate levels of challenge across the curriculum. The most able pupils are well catered for and, on a number of occasions, they told me that their work was 'not too easy but not too hard'. The proportions of pupils achieving the higher standards in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 have increased. Pupils' books show that they work hard in lessons and make progress across the curriculum.
- You use additional funding for disadvantaged pupils well so that they are able to access more challenging work, especially in English and mathematics. Pupils are challenged to explain their thinking throughout the curriculum. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 considered carefully the impact of propaganda posters on people during the Second World War. Pupils listen carefully to the views of others and, as a result, improve their knowledge and understanding.
- The curriculum on offer to pupils at Shoreham is designed carefully to provide pupils with a wide range of interesting opportunities and purposeful experiences. For example, pupils have enjoyed memorable visits from a local author, which has helped to promote and encourage their interest in reading. Joint visits by pupils in Year 6 and Reception to a local lavender farm have helped pupils develop a useful understanding of how goods are produced. As well as maximising local opportunities, you have ensured that the school equips pupils with an understanding of issues of global significance, such as through the recently established links with a school in Tanzania. A pupil in the early years was seen using a toolbox to role-play helping to construct a new school for the children there.
- The curriculum provides pupils with the opportunity to develop their knowledge across a broad range of subjects. The teaching of music is carefully planned so that pupils' progression over time is considered. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were observed learning how to create their own compositions using a simple written recording of musical notes. In Years 5 and 6, pupils build on this understanding when they all learn to play the recorder. Leaders review the curriculum regularly and have identified the need to make sure that progression is as carefully planned for across all subjects as it is in music.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they improve teaching by sharing the school's already strong practice across teaching as a whole and by continuing to provide effective training for staff
- they improve the curriculum by carefully planning for progression in pupils' knowledge and understanding.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. 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 representatives from the governing body. I also spoke with a representative from the local authority. I visited lessons across the school to observe teaching and learning, to speak with pupils and to look at their books. I spoke with pupils about their experiences of school and observed them at breaktime. I analysed 65 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, and 18 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, attendance and the curriculum; and the school's own survey of parents' views and opinions.