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Mrs Sarah Luker
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Dear Mrs Luker

Short inspection of Padnell Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 16 May 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 June 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 appointment as headteacher, you have focused firmly on improving pupils' outcomes. You have achieved this by working closely with your senior team, staff and governors to raise the quality of teaching across the school. The improvements have been embedded across the school and are appreciated by staff and parents alike. One parent summarised the thoughts of many, stating: 'We cannot recommend this school highly enough and look forward to our younger daughter attending the school as well.'

Pupils respond promptly to teachers' instructions, form positive relationships and follow the well-developed rules and routines. Pupils relish the opportunity to learn about a broad range of topics and subjects. They present their work carefully and take great pride in their learning and school. This was typified during an English lesson, when pupils in Year 4 wrote a set of instructions to produce a potion, linked to their work on 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. This is a calm and happy school, where all pupils can learn and grow.

Pupils' well-being is well catered for. They are taught how to form and maintain healthy friendships. Pupils apply these skills well during breaktimes, when they play with enthusiasm, mingling with different genders and age groups. Pupils say that the school's most important rule is, 'Treat others how you would like to be treated.' Consequently, this is a school where everyone is respected.

Governors possess an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They ask leaders pertinent questions and follow these up in subsequent meetings and visits to make sure that the school is always moving forward. For example, last year, governors suggested to leaders that the tracking of pupils' progress needed refining. These systems have been improved, with more ambitious targets set.

At the last inspection, you were tasked with improving the teaching of phonics. Leaders spent time reviewing and refining strategies for the delivery of phonics. Their efforts have greatly enhanced phonics teaching and, as a result, reading and spelling have improved throughout the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All adults undergo thorough background checks and safeguarding training before they commence their employment at the school. Governors maintain their good oversight and knowledge of the school's safeguarding arrangements. They monitor these closely. Regular training ensures that staff are confident in identifying and reporting concerns about pupils. When they do, leaders act promptly to get families the help they need.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn how to keep safe on the road by wearing bright colours and following the highway code. They also learn how to keep safe when online and know what to do if they are worried. As a result, pupils are well placed to make good decisions when presented with risk.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look at: the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements; how effectively teachers guide pupils to attain at a high standard; the quality and breadth of the curriculum; and the effectiveness of leaders' evaluations and improvement planning.
- The teaching of humanities, science and religious education is strong throughout the school. Pupils use their well-rehearsed writing skills to record, compare and explain their findings. For example, Year 5 pupils wrote interesting and informative texts comparing the climate, landscape and economy of St Lucia with those of the United Kingdom. Pupils make strong progress in these subjects because lessons are carefully planned and promote their English and mathematics skills well.
- Pupils develop strong calculation skills and regularly practise these in class. Nevertheless, teachers do not always challenge pupils to solve problems and apply their reasoning skills at the level of which they are capable. As a result, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher standard in mathematics is too small.
- Throughout the school, pupils read and write well. They enjoy reading a rich variety of texts and use this experience to inform their writing. For instance, Year 6 pupils imitated Shakespeare's style to produce persuasive letters from Lady Macbeth to her husband. Pupils in all year groups write with flair and

sophistication, with increasing proportions writing at the higher standard.

- Subject leaders possess a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subject area. They use this to inform their plans for improvement. As an example, having noted weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics in some year groups, the lead teacher facilitated training for staff, ironing out differences in the quality of teaching. However, not all leaders sharply evaluate the impact of their work. As a result, some leaders do not refine their action plans in response to pupils' performance.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders' actions are regularly evaluated to check their impact on pupils' outcomes.
- pupils receive an appropriate degree of challenge in mathematics so that a larger proportion attain the higher standard.

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

Stephanie Scutter
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, six governors, year group leaders and the lead teachers for English and mathematics. I held a meeting with a group of pupils and talked with parents as they dropped their children off at the start of the school day.

I visited six classes and reviewed a sample of pupils' current books from all year groups. I evaluated a range of the school's documentation, including: the school improvement plan; the school's self-evaluation, the local authority's review report and documents related to safeguarding.

I considered the responses of 89 parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 45 free-text comments. I also took account of 31 responses to the online staff survey.