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Mrs J Rushton  
Headteacher  
Avening Primary School  
High Street  
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Dear Mrs Rushton

### **Short inspection of Avening Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 11 February 2016, 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 October 2010.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection.

- As headteacher, you provide inspiring leadership which motivates and challenges teachers to provide the very best learning opportunities for pupils.
- You, along with staff and governors, know the school extremely well. You continue to build on its many strengths, having successfully tackled those areas identified as needing improvement during the previous inspection. You have improved pupils' progress in reading and writing. This is clearly reflected in the 2015 results, which were significantly above the national averages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' current progress shows that they are continuing to achieve well in these areas.
- Teachers make sure that pupils know what they need to do in order to improve their work. Pupils describe how they value teachers' guidance and the time provided for them to reflect and act upon the advice about how to improve. Pupils recognise the positive impact this has on their learning and progress.
- You and your staff have developed a curriculum that excites pupils. This is making them want to learn and providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills they need for the next stage in their education.

- Pupils and parents talk passionately about the school, especially the school's strong and caring ethos. This is allowing pupils to develop into confident and articulate young people who demonstrate a positive attitude to their learning.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You, your staff and governors do not underestimate your crucial role in keeping pupils safe. Therefore there is a rigorous culture of safeguarding tightly threaded throughout the school. All who work at the school receive high-quality training to keep them well informed about all types of risks to children's safety. You carefully evaluate the risk of each activity, for example when pupils use the local environment to enrich their learning. Pupils are confident that they can share any concerns that they may have with an adult. They feel safe and describe how the school is a happy place where they are well looked after and cared for.

You ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. You demonstrate a dogged determination in following up and resolving any concerns. You work effectively with outside agencies to reduce risk to pupils and to keep them safe.

### **Inspection findings**

- Staff, pupils, parents and governors are overwhelmingly complimentary about how you lead the school. You demonstrate a passion and drive to ensure that the school continues at pace on its journey to outstanding. The strengths identified at the previous inspection remain with many more accumulated since you took up post in 2012.
- The school, through accurate evaluation, knows exactly which areas need to improve. In particular, you know that the progress pupils make in mathematics is not yet strong enough, especially when compared to the impressive progress they are making in reading and writing. There is convincing evidence of you taking effective action to rapidly bring about improvement in this subject. For example, teachers are implementing the school's 'rainbow maths' well and this is quickly improving pupils' skills of mental recall. They apply these skills confidently to other aspects of their mathematics.
- You have a strong and committed teaching team. Like you, they are ambitious and share your drive to secure the best opportunities for pupils to do as well as they can. Staff describe how they always look forward to coming into work. Consequently, pupils in your school are enthusiastic learners. This is helping them to achieve well.
- There are year-on-year improvements in the outcomes for pupils in the early years. The proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development continues to rise and is now above national averages. This ensures that they are well prepared to start in Year 1.

- Disadvantaged pupils are making good progress in their learning. This is because teachers have the same high expectations of all pupils irrespective of their starting points or background. This progress demonstrates how additional funding is spent wisely.
- You have a highly skilled and astute governing body. The governors provide you with a good level of support and challenge. For example, following a governor questionnaire to parents, homework was highlighted as a concern. As a result, you quickly set in motion a plan of action to improve the school's approach to setting homework. You continue to monitor homework carefully, listening to parental views and adjusting policy where necessary. You are outward-looking and constantly seek out good practice to bring back to your school. Equally, you willingly share your own good practice with other schools in the network. You relish these opportunities which ensure you are never complacent and always striving to improve the quality of education for your pupils. For example, your involvement with the local pre-school provider is improving the children's transition into school. As a result, children joining the Reception Year arrive ready to become effective and confident learners.
- Pupils enjoy their time at school and this is reflected in their regular attendance and the strong progress they make. Pupils speak positively about the wide range of trips they go on and the sports that they are actively encouraged to participate in. They describe how they are taught to treat everyone fairly and with respect, including appreciating that everyone is different. They are very aware of how to keep safe. They appreciated the recent visit by the police to discuss internet safety and the dangers of stereotyping. Pupils eloquently summed up their school, saying: 'this is a really small school with a really big welcome'.
- Parents are effusive in their praise of the school. They appreciate the hard work and dedication of you and your team in providing their children with the best possible start to their education. A typical comment from parents is: 'this is an amazing school in which my child is very happy, challenged and making excellent progress'. Parents welcome the care and guidance their children receive, for example, 'we feel privileged to have such caring and hardworking staff. It is an extension of our family.' Consequently, parents have total confidence in the school providing a high-quality education for their children.

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

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- effective leadership of teaching remains a priority so that the proportion of pupils making outstanding progress, particularly in mathematics, continues to increase.

Yours sincerely

Jen Southall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and five governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. I listened to an officer from the local authority outline the improvements the school has made under your leadership. I spoke with parents at the start of the day to listen to their opinions. I also looked at the survey results from Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered the comments provided by text message. Together, you and I visited every class to observe teaching and look at pupils' work. I met with a group of pupils to gather their views. I evaluated the accuracy of your self-evaluation and school development plan along with other documentation. I checked the effectiveness of your safeguarding arrangements and your work to ensure the regular attendance of your pupils.