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Mr C Davey  
Headteacher  
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Wilkinson Way  
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East Sussex  
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Dear Mr Davey

### **Short inspection of Seaford Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 7 March 2017, 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 January 2013.

#### **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 arrival in September 2016, you have acted quickly to analyse the outcomes of the national tests. Working with your senior team, you have put in place effective actions to address areas of relative weakness. In particular, you have ensured that all teaching staff focus on the teaching of mathematics and on outcomes for girls and disadvantaged pupils. Your open and transparent manner means you have won the confidence of both staff and parents, who fully support the changes you and other leaders have brought in. Pupils' learning and well-being are at the heart of everything you do. Pupils love coming to school because they are excited about their learning.

Parents I spoke to informally at the school gate and those who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, also appreciate the impact you have had. They believe that the caring atmosphere, approachable teachers and the wide range of opportunities available to their children are the most positive features of the school. One said: 'My children are very happy and always come back buzzing about what they have learnt.' Parents are also complimentary about the effective transition arrangements between the adjacent privately run Nursery and the Reception class. A very high proportion of parents believe their children are well taught and making good progress.

At the time of your last inspection, the lead inspector identified a number of strengths in the school. These included pupils' rapid progress in their learning, their good behaviour and their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development. The lead inspector recommended that, in order to make teaching more effective, pupils should be given more challenging work to do and that they should be more actively involved in their own learning. Leaders have addressed this so that now pupils are increasingly challenged to do their best. Teachers ask questions that require pupils to explain their thinking and give them work to do that stretches their understanding.

However, you are not complacent. Based on your analysis of the school's performance in the national tests, you have identified what needs to be done to ensure Seaford Primary School keeps on improving. You have correctly identified teaching and outcomes in mathematics, in particular for girls, as well as the progress and attendance of disadvantaged pupils, as key priorities.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

All staff recognise the role they play in ensuring that pupils are happy and safe. The school is warm and welcoming, and pupils know that if they are worried about something they will be taken seriously. Teachers help pupils to stay safe by making sure that they know about the risks they face in everyday life, including when using the internet. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but that if it does occur, teachers deal with it promptly. Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and in the playground. They are considerate to one another and know to befriend any pupil in the playground who has not got someone to play with.

The weekly Rainbow Group sessions, chaired by older pupils, enable pupils from all year groups to talk about issues in the school that concern them. Last year, leaders introduced a salad bar into the lunch hall following representations from the Rainbow Groups, demonstrating pupils' awareness of healthy lifestyles. The school continues to make outstanding provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in an assembly, pupils were moved by a talk from a veteran of the second world war.

Leaders ensure that rigorous checks are carried out on the suitability of all who work or volunteer in the school. Teachers, support staff and governors receive up-to-date safeguarding training. Governors check that staff know how to act on what they have learned. The five members of staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding have received appropriate training to enable them to carry out this role. They encourage staff to report all and any concerns they have about pupils' welfare, and follow up all such concerns very carefully. When it is necessary to make a referral, leaders are tenacious in ensuring that social services staff give the case the highest priority.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to focus on the following aspects of the school's work:
  - the effectiveness of the curriculum in developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding

- how well current pupils are doing, in particular in mathematics
  - the impact of actions to improve the progress and attendance of disadvantaged pupils
  - how well subject leaders drive improvements in the school
  - the effectiveness of governors in holding leaders to account for the progress pupils make across the school.
- The broad, balanced and thoughtfully constructed curriculum excites and enthuses pupils. They speak with animation about their learning. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education because they develop secure skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of subjects. You have ensured that parents have access to comprehensive information about the subjects their children study, how parents can help, and how pupils' progress will be measured. Teachers share your commitment to ensuring that pupils benefit from the widest range of learning experiences. They willingly run clubs and organise educational visits to enrich and extend the curriculum. Pupils themselves also run many clubs for their fellow pupils, which gives them valuable experience in taking responsibility.
- You have rightly identified pupils' progress in mathematics, particularly girls' progress, as a priority. Leaders have reviewed the curriculum and have taken steps to understand girls' attitudes to mathematics. They have made wise decisions about how learning in mathematics is organised and about how pupils are supported. These changes are helping to improve progress for all pupils, including girls. The needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are catered for well. Pupils who have fallen behind or who need to catch up are quickly identified and receive effective help. As a result, current pupils in all year groups are making stronger progress in mathematics than at the same stage last year.
- You use pupil premium funding to good effect. You carefully identify any barriers that prevent disadvantaged pupils from doing as well as they should, and put in place the right, tailored support. As a result, most disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making similar rates of progress to other pupils. Where differences remain, they are diminishing rapidly. You are aware that disadvantaged pupils attend less regularly than other pupils in the school. You work effectively with parents to ensure they understand the importance of regular attendance. As a result, rates of absence for disadvantaged pupils are beginning to fall.
- Your subject leaders share your passion for pupils' entitlement to a good, all-round education. Subject leaders are well informed about best practice in their subject areas. They make regular checks on how well pupils are doing and give teachers precise advice on how to further improve their pupils' outcomes. The rigorous approach of your subject leaders means teachers know what they need to teach, and pupils know their next steps in learning.
- Your governing body are conscientious in carrying out their duties. They understand the importance of keeping pupils safe and have undertaken appropriate training. Governors check the school's safeguarding practices

regularly. They hold you to account rigorously for the progress pupils make, and challenge you and other leaders to ensure that any relative weaknesses are addressed, and strengths sustained. Governors ensure that any additional funding received from the government is spent wisely.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all pupils, particularly girls, continue to make strong progress in mathematics
- differences in progress and attendance between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally continue to diminish.

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

Yours sincerely

Gary Holden  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, other leaders, teachers, pupils, the chair of the governing body, and members of the governing body. I also spoke on the telephone with the local authority's standards and learning effectiveness officer linked to the school. I took into account 68 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as 50 free text responses. I also took into account 13 staff survey responses. I observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and around the school. I spoke to a number of parents at the beginning of the school day. With you, I visited classes in all key stages and scrutinised a sample of pupils' work. I analysed a number of documents provided by the school, including information about pupils' progress, and records of safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. In addition, we discussed your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness.