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10 July 2017

Ms Jane Kanisius  
Headteacher  
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Dear Ms Kanisius

### **Short inspection of Inkpen Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 27 June 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 October 2012.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and the teachers know the pupils well. You understand what they know and can do and set appropriately challenging targets. You are ambitious for all pupils and treat them as individuals.

At Inkpen, pupils get on well together, value their teachers and enjoy their lessons. Parents speak highly of the school, the staff and the caring atmosphere. They said that children do well because the staff know them well. Parents are confident that their children are happy, safe and making good progress. The oldest pupils provide a positive role model for the younger pupils and they take this very seriously. Younger pupils look up to the older ones and value the care they provide.

You, alongside other leaders, have taken effective action to maintain and build on the strengths identified in the last inspection. Together, you have addressed the recommendations to improve standards in writing and to develop the influence of leaders.

The teaching of writing has improved since the last inspection. You have ensured that pupils have a thorough and accurate grounding in the basic skills of phonics, grammar and punctuation. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in activities that interest them. For example, pupils in Year 1 use their secure knowledge of phonics to have a go at spelling more complicated words

in their writing. Pupils value the feedback they are given. They understand what they can do well and the areas of their work that need to improve. As a result, the standards that pupils reach in writing are at least in line with national averages and often above them.

Leaders and governors now use a good range of evidence to monitor the school's performance. Since the last inspection, you have sought out opportunities to develop your expertise and that of your teachers, for example through your contribution to teacher-training programmes. You also have a detailed knowledge of what each pupil understands and can do. As a result, you understand the strengths of the school and the areas that need development.

As we discussed, current monitoring of pupils' progress does not sufficiently focus on the impact of teaching over time. However, the small number of pupils in each year group means that nationally produced data does not give a true picture of the impact of teaching over time. Your tracking of pupils' learning, from their starting points, is detailed and accurate. You are aware that you now need to use this information to evaluate the progress pupils make in the longer term and identify areas that need to improve. Governors rightly recognise the improvements in the school since the last inspection. They are aware of the areas that still need to improve.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Since the last inspection, safeguarding remains securely in place. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Parents are confident that the school takes very good care of their children. Pupils feel safe at school and know that all adults will look after them should they need help or if they are worried. Pupils and parents agree that bullying and unkindness are extremely rare because of the positive relationships that exist between staff and pupils. Leaders ensure that vulnerable pupils are well supported, for example through ensuring that all staff understand how to meet the needs of pupils with specific difficulties.

Leaders take all aspects of the safety and well-being of their pupils extremely seriously. A good example of this is work governors and leaders have undertaken to overcome the challenges presented by the separate buildings on the school site. They have worked closely with the local authority and their plans for improvement are now underway.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look in particular at the following aspects of the school's work:
  - the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements
  - how effectively leaders ensure that teaching meets the needs of the most able, enabling them to make sufficient progress to reach the higher

standards.

- how well leaders have addressed the recommendations of the previous inspection
  - how effectively the school promotes good attendance for all pupils.
- The school has high expectations for the progress that all pupils make. As a result of the very effective teaching they receive, many pupils currently make more progress than is expected for their age. This enables the most able pupils to achieve higher than average outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. While this high achievement is well established in reading, it is more recent in writing and mathematics. This is because the teaching and expectations of reading are well established and consistent but more recent in writing and mathematics. You are aware of the need to ensure that all expectations and teaching are equally consistent.
- Middle leadership roles have been introduced since the last inspection. This has led to a more collaborative approach to school improvement. Middle leaders have received training and been given time to carry out their roles. They have developed the skills and confidence they need and now make a positive contribution to the success of the school. Recent improvements to the teaching of mathematics provide a good example of the effectiveness of this collaborative approach. Middle leaders worked with you, as headteacher, to increase the consistency of teaching across the school. Each leader contributed her expertise so that successful approaches in other areas were adapted for mathematics. You are rightly focused on continuing to use this successful approach to improve the quality and consistency of teaching.
- With middle leaders, you are more effectively plugging gaps in what pupils know and can do. Improvements to the teaching of the basic skills of English and mathematics have resulted in the earlier identification of gaps in pupils' learning. The use of proven catch-up programmes leads to pupils making rapid progress. A good example of this is the newly introduced support for reading and writing for individual pupils in Years 1 and 2. The combination of early identification and rapid progress results in gaps being tackled earlier and more effectively.
- Rates of attendance are consistently higher than the national average. The attendance of some groups of pupils appears lower than average. However, these figures are affected by the small number of pupils in the groups concerned. Leaders are diligent in their efforts to ensure that all pupils attend regularly.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently high so that a greater proportion of pupils make more than expected progress in writing and mathematics
- they use the tracking of pupils' learning from their starting points to evaluate the impact of teaching over time and identify areas that need to improve.

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

Yours sincerely

Phil Minns  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection I met with you to discuss a range of issues including safeguarding, pupils' progress and attendance. I also met with governors and your leadership team. Together, you and I visited classrooms, saw pupils working and looked at pupils' work. I spoke to parents at the start of the day and met with a small group of pupils to gather their views. I observed the behaviour of pupils at breaktimes and spoke to them about the school. I reviewed school documentation, including the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding. I took account of 21 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 13 written comments and one letter received during the inspection. I also considered 10 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and seven responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.