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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Emma-Jane Charles
Headteacher
Stoke Park Infant School
Abbotsbury Road
Bishopstoke
Eastleigh
Hampshire
SO50 8NZ

Dear Mrs Charles

Short inspection of Stoke Park Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 9 May 2018, 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 May 2014.

This school continues to be good.

Leaders have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since joining the school in January 2015, you have led the school through a number of positive changes with vigour and confidence. You are highly regarded by the school community and have the full support of the staff, families and governors. They all speak about you with the highest of regard and are pleased with how you continue to improve the school.

During your time at the school, you have developed and crafted your leadership team so that leaders consistently strengthen teaching and improve outcomes. You are a collaborative leader and you work tirelessly to successfully get the best from all. You have evaluated accurately what the school does well and what could be even better. Your plans for the school are aspirational, which has helped the whole school community to flourish. Parents and carers are very positive about Stoke Park Infants. One parent said, 'This is a great school. Good staff, good head, lovely environment.'

Your speech and language centre is an integral part of the school. It is well led and provides very well for the pupils who access it. Those who attend are integrated well into mainstream school. They also experience specialist sessions such as 'Busy Bees', in which speech and language skills are used in practical situations. Because of this, pupils at the centre make good progress.

Leaders have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the

last inspection. Outcomes for writing are now consistently strong both for pupils at the expected standard and for those children achieving greater depth. Progress information is now used more efficiently to identify specific groups of pupils who may be falling behind their peers. It is also used skilfully to shape developmental work for school initiatives, for example, in phonics.

Pupils clearly find Stoke Park Infant School a very happy place to be. They embrace their unusual, round-shaped building and classrooms on three floors and make excellent use of the space. They gain much from the extensive grounds and woods. They are consistently engaged in learning because teachers make it fun. Relationships across the school are warm and respectful, and there is a real sense of community. Pupils work and play happily together and enjoy each other's company throughout the day. They relish school life and have only positive things to say about it. One pupil said, 'We enjoy learning – all of it!'

Safeguarding is effective.

Arrangements to keep pupils safe are effective. For instance, when recruiting staff, leaders carry out all relevant checks to ensure that all staff are safe to work with pupils. Governors are equally vigilant and have set up a safeguarding committee in order to be confident that the school carries out best practice in this area.

You have also ensured that there is a culture of keeping pupils safe. All staff have a very clear understanding of their responsibilities in protecting pupils. They know what to do if they have concerns and are clear about safeguarding procedures. The school keeps systematic records and follows up any areas of concern in a timely manner.

Parents are positive about the level of support that staff provide pupils. All the parents who responded to the online survey said that their children are happy and safe at Stoke Park Infants.

Most importantly, pupils feel really secure. Relationships are very positive across the school and pupils feel that they can talk to any member of staff if they have a problem. One pupil said that staff 'make us feel safe'.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we looked closely at specific aspects of the school's provision, including: the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and attendance; how pupils' behaviour is managed; pupils' achievement in phonics; and how well the school has developed greater depth in pupils' understanding in mathematics.
- You have introduced a number of successful strategies that make sure that pupils attend school more regularly. You have analysed reasons for a drop in attendance in 2017, communicated to parents the importance of pupils being in school every day and celebrated and praised good attendance. Supporting these actions, you have set up an effective monthly monitoring meeting. Attendance

has improved but you are aware that more needs to be done to improve it further.

- The number of fixed-term exclusions was higher than the national average in 2017. This has been reduced this year, and pupils' behaviour across the school is well managed and extremely positive. Through careful analysis of behaviour, you have put in place a range of effective ways to support children who find school challenging.
- Leaders have rightly focused on developing pupils' phonics skills following a decline in 2017 outcomes. You have raised the profile and expectations for phonics by refocusing the daily phonics session and checking that interventions are effective. Teachers routinely reinforce phonic skills in other subjects.
- You have also strengthened the way that phonics outcomes are monitored throughout the year. Information is regularly fed back to teachers so they can eradicate barriers to further progress. Pupils' phonic skills are improving and there is clear progression of skills across the age range. Current internal information indicates that pupils are making positive progress in this area.
- Last year, the number of pupils achieving greater depth in mathematics was below national levels. You have taken positive steps to improve this. For instance, you have worked with teachers to develop reasoning and problem-solving skills, made sure that they use real-life resources and held information sessions for parents.
- Consequently, pupils' confidence in reasoning and problem solving is developing. Children work well in mathematics, both independently and in groups. They are tasked to challenge each other and are set open-ended problems. Some books show that they are making good progress in this area. These developments have started to improve standards but, as you agree, they are not yet consistent.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- attendance continues to improve
- teachers provide further opportunities for pupils to use their reasoning skills in mathematics so that more pupils reach a greater depth of 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 Hampshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Felix Rayner
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I visited classrooms to assess the progress pupils are making and talked to them about their learning. I observed pupils' behaviour throughout the day. I held discussions with you, senior and middle leaders and the chair of the governing body and three other governors. I spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I talked to parents at the start of the school day and considered 70 replies to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire and 18 replies to the staff survey. A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including the single central record of staff checks, safeguarding documents, pupils' progress and attainment information, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, and records of visits by the local authority.