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Ms Kay Wood  
Headteacher  
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Atkinson Drive  
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Isle of Wight  
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Dear Ms Wood

### **Short inspection of Summerfields Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 18 December 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 November 2014.

#### **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 your deputy headteacher work well together. Your shared determination to avoid complacency motivates you both to ensure that standards in the school remain not only just 'good' but 'good enough' to meet your high expectations. This has brought renewed vigour to the school's work, particularly over the last 18 months. Staff have confidence in your leadership, and work supportively together to fulfil your vision. As a result, pupils' learning and emotional needs are met successfully.

Leadership across the school has improved since the last inspection. New leaders of English and mathematics are now in post. They have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses within their areas of responsibility. Supported well by the local authority, they have taken successful steps to develop the quality of teaching across the school, modelling effective practice for their colleagues. As part of the senior leadership team, English and mathematics leaders keep a careful eye on the standards that pupils achieve in these subjects. They use helpful systems to identify where weaknesses exist, tackling them appropriately. Staff now use these systems with better precision than in the past, lending confidence to their assessment of pupils' performance. Governors challenge leaders effectively about the difference their work makes to the standards that pupils achieve. As a result, progress remains good in reading and writing, and is improving in mathematics, where it was weaker by the end of key stage 2 in 2018.

Leaders have reviewed and developed the approach to teaching and learning across the school. They are focused on developing how teachers plan work that challenges pupils more precisely than in the past, so that pupils make consistently good progress, regardless of their starting points. While this work remains ongoing, its impact is emerging successfully. During the inspection, opportunities for pupils to deepen their thinking in mathematics were evident. Similarly, in English, pupils' learning across the wider curriculum is stimulated by the range of texts they experience. This is beginning to increase the proportion of pupils who achieve a greater depth of learning by the end of key stage 2. Pupils who spoke to me told me that they feel challenged by their work. They enjoy the opportunities they have to demonstrate their knowledge by 'acting as a teacher' and supporting others who are finding particular learning activities difficult.

Your school is a happy and nurturing place. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Well-rehearsed routines at the start of the day help to settle them quickly, so that they can make the most of their learning time. Most parents and carers who expressed a view were complimentary about the school's work, describing a caring and supportive environment that supports their children well and caters for their academic needs. One talked about it as a school where 'staff and pupils take great pride in the school and in doing their best every day'. A few parents expressed less positive views. Leaders promote a spirit of openness across the school that is helping to tackle these concerns but have yet to reassure this very small minority of parents.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Staff and governors rightly place great emphasis on this aspect of the school's work. Leaders make sure that policies and procedures are fit for purpose. Useful training ensures that staff and governors understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, enabling them to act with confidence. As a result, pupils feel very safe and well looked after. They particularly value the work of the family liaison officer, who they trust to listen to their worries and, as they put it, help them to find a solution. They learn about how to keep themselves safe in an age-appropriate way. Pupils talked maturely to me about how to keep themselves safe when using the internet, showing they understood how to manage potential risks successfully.

Leaders know pupils and families well, which supports their effective safeguarding work. They make careful checks on adults working in the school, keeping suitably vigilant records. Staff understand the importance of passing on any information that leads them to be concerned about a pupil's welfare, no matter how insignificant it might seem. Leaders' careful records help them to identify promptly any emerging pattern of concern that may require further action. They are diligent in their work to secure support from beyond the school, including from the local authority. This ensures that appropriate extra help is put in place to keep pupils safe.

## Inspection findings

- Alongside reviewing safeguarding arrangements, the inspection was focused on: the effectiveness of teaching of mathematics; pupils' attendance; and standards in writing, particularly in key stage 1.
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics last year was disappointing. The proportion of pupils who reached at least the expected standard by the end of key stages 1 and 2 was below the national average. Leaders took swift action to address this area of weakness, looking carefully at why pupils did not do as well as they did in reading and writing. They identified that mathematics teaching did not enable pupils to secure a deep level of knowledge and understanding. Consequently, pupils found it difficult to calculate accurately and quickly, and to apply their learning successfully in a familiar context.
- Changes to how mathematics is taught have rejuvenated this part of the school's work. Teachers shape learning thoughtfully to support pupils' progress well. Adults' useful questions encourage pupils to explain their thinking and to use their prior learning to help them solve unfamiliar problems. Pupils rise to this renewed challenge, persevering when they find tasks difficult. They make effective use of resources to help them to calculate quickly and accurately. Consequently, standards in mathematics have risen across the school, and are now comparable to those seen in English and other subjects.
- Leaders have acted decisively to tackle a recent decline in pupils' attendance. They make sure that pupils and their parents understand the importance of coming to school every day and the positive impact it has on pupils' academic success. Leaders monitor pupils' attendance carefully, which enables them to react swiftly when it starts to dip. As a result of leaders' determined work, absence has declined notably over the last year, and is now below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school has also declined.
- In 2018, Year 2 pupils' standards of writing were also lower than other pupils nationally. A number of factors contributed to this weaker performance, which was a surprise to governors. This identified some variation across the wider school in the accuracy of teachers' assessments of how well pupils were achieving, which has now been addressed. Leaders are now focused on strengthening how writing is taught across the school. They have deployed staff creatively across the school to spread expertise across both key stages 1 and 2. They have identified that spelling accuracy remains a factor that impedes pupils' progress in writing.
- Leaders have given careful thought to reducing variability in the quality of teaching across key stages 1 and 2. You have deployed staff carefully across the school to share expertise and experience effectively between colleagues. Leaders' work to develop the precision of teachers' planning is improving the consistency and effectiveness of learning across year groups and subjects. During visits to lessons, we saw pupils responding well to their teachers' high expectations, despite the excitement of 'Christmas jumper' day. Work in pupils' books shows them to be making good progress and, in the case of Year 3, catching up from

their historical underperformance. Year 2 pupils are not currently attaining as well in writing as they are in reading and mathematics.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- current work to develop the precision of teachers' planning leads to pupils making consistently good progress over time from their different starting points
- improvements in mathematics are sustained, so that pupils achieve as well as they do in reading and writing by the end of key stage 2
- pupils retain their spelling accuracy as their writing develops.

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

Yours sincerely

Kathryn Moles  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you and your deputy headteacher to discuss a range of issues, including the school's self-evaluation. Together, we visited all classes to observe learning, talk to pupils and look at their work. I also reviewed a sample of pupils' writing and mathematics books from across the school, working alongside you, your deputy headteacher, and your leaders of English and mathematics. I met with groups of staff, pupils and governors, and spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I took account of 16 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 13 free-text comments, as well as speaking informally to some parents at the start of the day. I also considered survey responses from six pupils and 21 members of staff. I scrutinised policies and information on the school's website and leaders' records of pupils' attendance and academic achievement. I also checked the school's safeguarding arrangements.