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6 November 2018

Mrs Emma Brown
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Dear Mrs Brown

Short inspection of North Lancing Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 October 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 March 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 have a passionate commitment to securing the very best provision for the pupils of North Lancing. You have a very well-informed understanding of the strengths of the school and what needs further improvement. You have used this as a basis to look outwards and secure the skills, training and experience you need to drive the school forward effectively. Improvement initiatives are well researched, meticulously planned and delivered so that they can have maximum impact. You also ensure that improvements are embedded and sustainable, by monitoring progress carefully using a wide range of information. As a result, morale is high and standards are rising. Pupils thrive and enjoy coming to school.

Governors are highly effective partners in school improvement. They are well informed and supplement the information they receive by regular visits to see things for themselves. This helps them to hold leaders to account effectively, providing both support and challenge. They have a detailed and comprehensive understanding of how effectively additional funds are used, such as pupil premium funding.

Pupils and parents highly regard the happy and friendly atmosphere of the school. Pupils told me that children are kind to each other most of the time, and that when occasionally things go wrong adults resolve issues. Pupils value the productive and supportive relationships they have with their teachers. They told me, 'The teachers

are kind; they help you progress in a good way.' Parents appreciate the high levels of care and commitment shown by the staff to their children. Comments such as, 'brought out the best in my children' and 'a happy community,' were made throughout the Ofsted Parent View responses. One parent summed up the thoughts of many saying, 'My child loves going to school and has made progress in all sorts of ways.'

You have maintained the strengths identified at the previous inspection. Teaching is good because teachers have strong questioning skills which they use to extend pupils' thinking or to establish if they are confused and need support. They build strong relationships based on good-humoured mutual respect. As a result, pupils engage happily and confidently in their learning.

Standards are rising. This is reflected both in the books of current pupils and in the 2018 provisional outcomes of the national assessments in Years 2 and 6. Nevertheless, you acknowledge that in key stage 1 expectations could be raised, particularly for the most able pupils, and that this would accelerate progress still further. A focus on developing some aspects of the wider curriculum, for example science, is also needed to ensure that pupils' skills and understanding are fully developed.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Processes and systems for recruitment are clear and follow appropriate guidelines and documentation. Record-keeping is meticulous.

Child protection is at the heart of the school. Concerns are reported, recorded and acted on in a timely fashion. Recent adaptations have further strengthened systems. Staff and governors are trained well in safeguarding pupils and know the key factors that may put them at risk. Pupils told me that they feel safe at the school, which echoed the surveys completed by staff and parents. They have an appropriately well-informed knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, particularly when online.

Inspection findings

- Attendance is improving. Current overall attendance is in line with national averages. Nevertheless, leaders know that there are some groups of pupils, for example those who are disadvantaged, whose attendance is not as regular as it should be. Effective support is provided for any individuals and their families who find regular attendance at school a challenge.
- We looked together at the provision for disadvantaged pupils. Current disadvantaged pupils are making good progress from their starting points. In the 2018 national provisional end of Year 6 assessments, disadvantaged pupils made better progress than other pupils nationally. In writing and mathematics their progress was accelerated when compared to that of their peers. Resources are spent wisely to support pupils, including those who are most-able disadvantaged, in developing skills and having experiences that prepare them well for the next

stages of their education. Recent initiatives to raise the profile of reading across the school, including for disadvantaged pupils, have had a positive impact. As a result, pupils use a wider range of vocabulary in their writing. Pupils told me that they enjoy reading; those who read their work to me did so confidently and fluently.

- We also looked at the early years provision in the school. Children get off to a good start in Reception Year. They make good progress from their starting points, which are often below those seen typically for their age in areas such as speech and language. The early years environment is exceptionally well developed to provide a range of stimulating and purposeful learning activities for children. Opportunities for them to develop their early writing skills and to practise writing are plentiful, both inside and outside the classroom, for example by recording on big bits of cardboard or by manipulating dough.
- During the inspection, children in Reception Year were playing and learning happily together, even though they had only been in school for a few weeks. Children acquire early phonics skills well because phonics is taught systematically and in a way that interests and engages them. Staff are highly skilled in using questions well to engage children. This ensures that their speaking skills are developed effectively.
- Pupils in key stage 1 make good progress from their starting points. In the 2018 national assessments, more pupils attained the expected standards for their age at the end of Year 2 than proportions seen nationally. Proportions of pupils attaining at higher standards were in line with those in other schools. This represents good progress from their starting points. Current pupils benefit from a focus on using apparatus to ensure that they understand mathematical concepts. Nevertheless, some pupils, notably the more able, do not have enough challenge within lessons to ensure that their learning is deepened and extended.
- We also looked at how effectively pupils learn across the wider curriculum. Regular trips and innovative teaching help their learning to be enjoyable, connected and memorable in a range of subjects. For example, pupils learning about how Michelangelo painted the Sistine Chapel, painted on paper taped underneath tables while laying under them. Art and physical education are particular areas of strength. Pupils told me, 'Sport is a big thing. We have a lot of sporty teachers. They encourage you to join in.' However, while pupils enjoy their learning in some curriculum areas, such as science, their skills are not yet fully developed. Leaders have appropriate plans in place to support teachers in improving pupils' scientific enquiry skills.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- expectations of pupils in key stage 1 are raised, particularly for the most able, so that progress from starting points is accelerated further
- pupils' skills are consistently developed across the wider curriculum.

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 Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Gordon
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, we met regularly together, along with your deputy. I also met with members of the governing body and with staff. I spoke to a member of the local authority on the telephone. I reviewed documentation, including information about pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. Together, we visited classes across the school. In lessons, I observed pupils learning, looked at their books, heard them read and spoke to pupils about their work. I had a meeting with pupils to gather their views of the school. I took into account the views of parents I met in the playground, and considered 268 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 65 free-text responses. I also analysed 38 responses to the Ofsted staff survey and 24 responses to the pupils' survey.