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Mrs Elizabeth Grainger  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Grainger

### **Short inspection of Shalfleet Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 27 November 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, together with your senior leaders and governors, know the school's strengths well, and you know what needs to be done to improve the school further.

Pupils enjoy their learning, which, in turn, supports their good attendance. Throughout the school, pupils listen well to their teachers and participate enthusiastically in their lessons. They cooperate well with each other in class and at breaktimes. The school's ethos is friendly, and pupils readily welcome visitors and new classmates who join the school. Key stage 2 pupils told me that they like everything about their school, including the many opportunities for clubs that extend the school day. They say that bullying is unusual, but that teachers are helpful and, if pupils have any concerns, these are quickly addressed.

Leaders value the work of the well-established junior leadership team that encourages pupils to take an active role in the school. Members of the team take their responsibilities very seriously, particularly when they meet governors to convey pupils' views about what will improve their school.

When inspectors previously inspected the school, they acknowledged its many strengths. They asked leaders to increase the challenge for most-able pupils and to improve pupils' writing, especially boys' writing. You have addressed these areas successfully. The most able pupils make good progress, and in 2018, all of them

attained the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Pupils' writing has become a particular strength across the school and, in recent years, almost all pupils have attained the expected standard at the end of both key stages. Boys have recently made strong progress to catch up with the girls. Leaders are continuing to develop the school's approach to teaching and learning in English through lessons that closely link reading and writing. Current pupils are motivated by their class reading books to write similarly to the author, and for a real purpose. They are rapidly developing good skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling.

You maintain close ties with the on-site Nursery provider by giving Nursery and Reception children some opportunities to learn and play together. As a result, children settle quickly into the Reception class. Almost all Reception children have skills that are at, or just below, those that are typical for their age when they start school. They make good progress by the end of Reception, and a high proportion achieve a good level of development to ensure that they are ready for Year 1. Some children need a little more practice during Year 1 to develop their literacy skills. During the inspection, we saw Reception children responding articulately to their teacher's questions during storytime. When they learned through play in the 'doctor's surgery', we saw that some children chose to write. They had already developed accurate letter formation to help them to be fluent.

Since the last inspection, you have continued to build a strong federation with Yarmouth Church of England Primary School. Federated arrangements are supporting increasingly effective provision by sharing posts that offer specific expertise, such as for inclusion and sports. You value having a well-trained staff. Joint work across both schools supports all staff to extend their teaching skills and subject knowledge. Staff enjoy working at the school and say that leaders encourage and support them effectively. The federated governing body has further strengthened its teamwork by linking governors to specific priority areas. They use school performance information to ask searching questions that hold you and your other leaders to account.

Leaders and governors have high expectations for all pupils to achieve as well as they can. The majority of pupils typically make strong progress as they move through the school. You were disappointed by some of the 2018 outcomes for Year 6, particularly for the group of pupils with average ability. A few of them did not achieve the expected standard in mathematics and in some aspects of English. You have quickly taken steps to ensure that teaching approaches are adapted to help current pupils fully meet the expected standards by the end of key stage 2. Leaders' actions to improve English are already well under way, while developments in mathematics are at an early stage. Leaders have identified targets to help them at key points in time to evaluate the impact of their changes on pupils' learning and progress.

Parents and carers are positive about the school and support their children's learning, including through homework tasks that aim either to encourage pupils to practise their basic skills or generate interest in the class topic. Parents value the

high standards of care that the school offers, and the way in which learning meets their children's needs. Typical of the views that parents expressed was one that described their child as, 'challenged and encouraged, and learning to be resilient when something isn't right the first time'. Parents praised the varied opportunities and responsibilities that their children are given and said that the school prepares them well for their secondary education.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders and governors place the highest priority on keeping children safe from harm. Staff are comprehensively trained in all aspects of safeguarding and they receive regular updates. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Procedures are followed precisely, and records are carefully maintained. A well-informed link governor carefully checks the single central register of recruitment.

A team of designated safeguarding leaders follows through any concern about a pupil in a timely way. Leaders work supportively with parents and involve the expertise of the school's inclusion team. Leaders make appropriate decisions about onward referrals to children's services and liaise effectively with other professionals.

Parents say that their children feel safe at school, and the pupils agree. Pupils told me that they learn how to keep safe on the internet and readily explained the rules to protect them from harmful online contacts. You and your leaders wisely recognise, however, that the use of the internet presents a particular threat outside school. You provide helpful information for parents, and your staff team has even supported parents to apply appropriate filters to their home computers.

### **Inspection findings**

- During this inspection, we agreed three lines of enquiry at our initial meeting. I focused upon: how leaders have responded to the recent decline in key stage 2 standards; the effectiveness of the school's use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils; and whether pupils make good progress across some of the wider curriculum subjects. Each of my inspection enquiries coincided with your current school improvement priorities.
- Children make good progress to develop strong phonics skills, which helps them to read well. Visits to lessons and examination of pupils' workbooks showed that teaching supports pupils to understand and use new vocabulary by responding to challenging questions. You have identified, however, that the positive early start that pupils make in reading has not resulted in pupils' enjoyment of reading as they grow older. Leaders have taken action to redress this balance by extending pupils' exposure to interesting reading books.
- Teachers are deepening pupils' understanding about how authors shape language cleverly to involve their reader. Teachers encourage pupils to write interesting content with good accuracy, building upon what they can already do.

- Current pupils are deepening their mathematical understanding through the use of materials and images that help them to talk about their learning. Teachers encourage pupils to explain methods for solving problems. The school has access to expert teaching to strengthen the quality of provision for mathematics. Pupils' workbooks confirm that, where focused support has taken place, there is already an impact on pupils' better understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Across the school, pupils' spelling is improving, and they make good use of interesting vocabulary. They select grammar and punctuation carefully, so that these are appropriate to the purpose of their writing, and they edit their work diligently to correct errors. On occasion, pupils' editing does not improve the content of their work in order to help them reach the higher standard.
- There is a small number of disadvantaged pupils across the school with a range of abilities and needs. Leaders work with teachers to check on their individual progress. You use additional funding successfully to implement plans that specifically meet pupils' academic and/or social, emotional and mental health needs. The inclusion leader has a firm handle on tracking each pupil and supporting teachers to find ways to tackle any gaps in learning. Classroom observations and pupils' workbooks show that disadvantaged pupils make progress in line with others who have the same starting points.
- Leaders are developing the curriculum to ensure that the different subjects and topics engage pupils' interests. Leaders aim to maximise all that the Isle of Wight has to offer, to give pupils experiences beyond their own locality, and to become aware of the wider world. We saw how well your planning has worked in Years 5 and 6, where pupils have learned about the role that local people played during the First World War. Pupils have thought about how people's lives, including those of their own family members, helped to shape British history. Impressively, Year 5 pupils described the contrast between what people thought life might be like as a soldier and what it was actually like on the battlefield.
- During our learning walk, we saw pupils enjoy learning in their different subjects. In some subjects, such as history, there are strong links with literacy. Well-chosen literature, such as Year 5 pupils' study of 'My Brother's Keeper', has inspired pupils to apply their reading and writing skills in the context of their history topic. They have written moving poetry and diaries from their imagined positions in the trenches of the First World War.
- Curriculum planning covers relevant subject content for each year group. Current cohorts, especially in key stage 2, have increasingly high levels of attainment. The provision for some subjects does not consistently help pupils to build upon their prior learning by deepening their subject-specific skills and knowledge. Leaders' current actions to improve pupils' engagement, learning and progress are not taking enough account of the contribution that the different curriculum subjects make to pupils' overall achievement.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they improve pupils' rates of progress, particularly in key stage 2, by:
  - fully implementing planned improvements to teaching and learning in English and mathematics
  - strengthening pupils' development of skills, knowledge and understanding across the different curriculum subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Linda Jacobs  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

At the start of the inspection, I met with you and the federation's two deputy headteachers. We discussed the school's work since it was previously inspected. I held other meetings, such as to find out about the school's safeguarding arrangements. I met your leaders for English and mathematics and all of the members of the governing body. I spoke to the local authority's learning partner who is attached to your school.

I analysed a range of documentation, including: the school's website; curriculum information; policies and strategies; information about pupils' achievement; the school improvement plan; the school's self-evaluation; the single central record of recruitment checks; and the safeguarding policy and procedures.

Your deputy headteachers and I briefly visited all classes to observe teaching and learning. I talked to pupils in classrooms and spoke to key stage 2 pupils when they were outside at breaktime. I worked with your leaders to look at a range of pupils' work in both key stages and considered 29 responses to the staff survey. I spoke to a number of parents at the end of the school day and considered 27 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 17 free-text comments. You had very recently conducted your own parent survey and I took those 65 results into account.