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Deborah Metcalf  
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Dear Ms Metcalf

### **Short inspection of Danegrove Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 24 January 2017 with Ofsted Inspector Nicholas Turvey, 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 2011.

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

You have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. In 2016, the proportion of pupils, including the most able, in Year 6 and Year 2 achieving the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was higher than the national averages. Most areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection have been dealt with effectively. The school's assessment system is used effectively by leaders at all levels. They use the information generated about pupils' attainment and progress to measure the impact of whole-school initiatives to raise pupils' standards.

Following the unusually high turnover of staff over the last year, you have managed to make a number of new appointments. You have rightly identified that the recruitment of teachers early in their career has resulted in some minor inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. With the retirement of the longstanding deputy headteacher, you and the governors have successfully increased the school's leadership capacity. The two new deputy headteachers demonstrate the skills required to support you in continuing to improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning across the school.

Leaders' accurate analysis of the 2016 results identified the weaker progress of pupils with lower prior attainment from the early years across key stage 1. Additional support has been put in place in the present Year 1 to address this. As a result, pupils are making secure progress through vocabulary-enriching language

and number-consolidating activities delivered by skilled staff. Recent assessments indicate that this group of pupils is back on track to meet the expected standard by the end of key stage 1 for reading, writing and mathematics.

Through clear self-evaluation, you and other leaders have highlighted the use of pupil premium funding as a focus for school improvement. The school subsidises places in breakfast club and after-school provision for pupils eligible for the funding to ensure regular school attendance. Early morning lessons for English and mathematics are also held daily for disadvantaged pupils who are at risk of not meeting age-related expectations in key stage 2. Leaders regularly measure the impact of this support using the school's assessment system. This tracking clearly shows that these interventions result in the improved progress of disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. The 2016 results show that differences in achievement diminish between the school's disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally by the end of key stage 2. This is across all the core subjects, but particularly in reading and mathematics.

Consistent behaviour management is a strength at Danegrove Primary. The school's values underpin the work of staff and governors. Pupils understand how these values help them develop as young people who contribute to the wider community. Pupils say that they feel safe at school because they are confident that all staff deal effectively with the rare incidents of negative behaviour. Pupils who have been at risk of exclusion in other settings integrate well in their classes because of high expectations set by staff, the secure behaviour systems and strong role models from their peers. This results in well-mannered pupils who are polite and show respect to each other and adults.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team, including governors, has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a high quality. Induction for staff joining the school is thorough. Rigorous scrutiny of the background of each new staff member is part of the safer recruitment process routinely carried out by school leaders, including the safeguarding governor. Safeguarding training is up to date, including that relating to female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation and the duty to protect pupils at risk of radicalisation. Consequently, staff are confident in following school procedures when raising concerns. The school's robust system ensures that child protection has a high profile. Leaders work efficiently with the local authority where cases require further investigation.

Attendance figures for all pupils are reported alongside their academic achievement. This successfully develops parents' understanding of the importance of regular school attendance. The attendance team analyses information thoroughly to identify pupils at risk of high levels of absence. Leaders ensure that these families are given effective support. Where this has been successful, pupils' attendance improves. Currently, attendance levels are above the national average.

## Inspection findings

- Leaders new to their role have a clear overview of the school's performance. They are proficient in using pupils' assessment information to identify those pupils who are at risk of underachieving. Meetings about pupils' progress ensure that teachers are held to account for the rate of improvement. School leaders support teachers where necessary to model high-quality practice that results in more rapid improvement in pupils' progress. Consequently, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning are being addressed successfully.
- Leaders check teachers' planning and look at pupils' books regularly to evaluate the impact of teaching on learning. This system enables leaders to identify the stronger practice across the school. As a result, experienced teachers are supporting those new to the profession to develop their skills effectively.
- Leaders' effective use of pupil premium funding ensures that disadvantaged pupils have access to the many opportunities on offer at school. The strategy for targeted spending means that pupils are able to attend the wide range of clubs on offer at the beginning and the end of the school day. The school is providing early help for disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics through additional teaching time. This has resulted in the improved attendance of this group of pupils at school. Disadvantaged pupils are making good progress from their starting points towards meeting their age-related standards.
- The proactive approach to behaviour management places the onus on staff to quickly ensure the school ethos in all pupils. The consistency with which the rare incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with means that the staff's high expectations are clear to pupils. Their positive behaviour enables most pupils to progress well in their learning. Consequently, lessons are calm and pupils work productively with each other and on their own.
- The new leader of the early years foundation stage has quickly identified reasons for the previous gaps in children's progress. The curriculum has been adapted to engage boys' interest. Current assessment information shows that boys are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Effective use of the early years pupil premium funding successfully develops the early reading skills of the group of disadvantaged children through targeted phonics teaching. As a result, these children are making secure progress towards the expected standards by the end of the early years foundation stage.
- The school teaches reading well. Effective teaching in key stage 1 develops early reading skills. This means that pupils' fluency improves quickly as they move through the school. Teachers cultivate a love of reading in pupils. As a result, they read a wide range of books and talk confidently about their favourite authors. The 2016 results show that, by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading was well above national averages.
- Governors are committed to ongoing improvement in pupils' outcomes. They have a thorough overview of the school and are able to offer a good level of support and appropriate challenge. They are able to hold the school leaders successfully to account.

- Parents are very supportive of the school. They are confident that their children are safe and that the school is well led. The responses to Parent View are positive, particularly for behaviour management and the way leaders deal with any concerns parents may raise.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are removed by improving the knowledge and skills of those teachers who are early in their careers.

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

Yours sincerely

Sara Morgan  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors agreed to prioritise the following areas with the school at the start of the inspection:

- the effectiveness of safeguarding in the school
- the progress of pupils with lower prior attainment from early years across key stage 1
- the use of pupil premium funding to diminish differences between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally with the same starting points
- the actions taken by leaders to ensure that teaching meets the needs of pupils of all abilities
- how the school behaviour strategy impacts on learning across the school.

Inspectors carried out the following activities to explore these areas during the inspection:

- meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator and a group of middle leaders
- teaching was observed jointly across the school alongside the headteacher and deputy headteachers
- meetings were held with members of the governing body

- a discussion was held with a representative from the local authority
- a discussion was held with a group of pupils, including the school council
- pupils from Years 2 and 3 were heard reading
- a range of school documents, including the safeguarding records and policies, governors' minutes, behaviour logs and a number of school policies were scrutinised
- a number of pupils' books were reviewed during lessons and through a work scrutiny
- 73 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, were considered.