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Kay Church
Executive Headteacher
Grove Junior School
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Dear Mrs Church

Short inspection of Grove Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 5 July 2017, 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 April 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 have created a nurturing environment for pupils and, along with your staff, have high aspirations of what pupils can achieve. Staff morale is high and one member of staff commented, 'I am proud to be part of such a hard-working and dedicated team.'

You and other leaders, including governors, use your wide range of skills and clear understanding of priorities to develop focused action plans to drive improvement. For example, you have recently taken steps to improve mathematics teaching so that pupils develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. You agree that further developing governors' skills in carrying out their monitoring role will help them to evaluate the quality of education at the school more effectively. You aspire to become an outstanding school and strongly believe that sharing good practice is the key to improvement. As a result, you have developed a mutually supportive federation with Hannah More Infant School.

At the previous inspection, you were asked to improve teaching to increase the level of challenge for pupils and improve progress for lower-ability pupils in Year 3. These aspects have been successfully addressed. You make good use of meetings with teachers and other leaders to identify how well pupils are achieving. However, you are aware of the need to improve the accuracy of assessment so that teachers

understand precisely what pupils know, understand and can do and can thus check on progress more effectively. Pupils enjoy school and work happily and enthusiastically to improve their learning. They are keen to challenge themselves. For example, one pupil commented, 'I am doing the more difficult work because I want to show my teacher what I can do.'

The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school. They comment on the wide range of opportunities the school provides and say that their children are very happy here. Many parents comment that you are well respected and valued as headteacher. You recognise that the unavoidable closure of the school's breakfast club has understandably upset parents. As a result, you have taken immediate action to secure alternative provision. It is clear that you are dedicated to maintaining close communication with parents to secure their confidence and support.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have created a strong and caring safeguarding culture in the school and staff know pupils well. Staff and governors have received up-to-date safeguarding training and have a good understanding of their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe. You have developed close links with parents, which ensure that pupils, particularly those who are vulnerable, are well supported. As a result of well-planned support, attendance for all groups of pupils is improving. Staff know how to recognise the signs that a child might be at risk and can explain what to do if they have a concern. All concerns are recorded in detail and robustly followed up.

The school site is secure and you undertake routine health and safety checks to ensure that all aspects of safeguarding are maintained. Pupils are taught how to stay safe in different situations. For example, they can explain the possible dangers of using the internet. Pupils feel safe in school and know who to go to if they have any problems. They understand what constitutes bullying and know that it is not tolerated. They believe that bullying is rare but are confident that it would be swiftly dealt with if it occurred. Pupils who have medical needs are well supported by staff who are trained to administer medicines and first aid. Parents are very appreciative of this support.

Inspection findings

- We agreed that my first line of enquiry was to determine how effectively the school is improving outcomes for pupils with low prior attainment, particularly in mathematics. This was an area identified for improvement in the last inspection and, in recent years, fewer low-ability pupils achieved expected standards compared to other groups.
- My second line of enquiry was to find out if teaching is helping disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to catch up. This is because, over time, few disadvantaged pupils reached higher standards and few pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities met expected standards.

- Most low-ability pupils, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs are progressing well in all subjects because well-targeted support is effective. As a result, the majority of disadvantaged pupils are working at the standards expected for their age and several pupils are now working at the higher standards.
- A small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not yet meet the standards expected for their age. This is because they have specific and often complex needs. You have taken decisive action to provide the valuable emotional, social and academic support they need. This dramatically improves their confidence and self-esteem and pupils are now better placed to access learning. You agree that building on these foundations will help them to make better progress.
- You, along with other leaders and governors, are committed to improving pupils' outcomes. You have a good understanding of pupils' starting points and specific needs, which helps you to plan appropriate strategies to help them to make better progress. You work closely with teachers to review and adapt provision to make sure that it is having a positive impact.
- Pupils are suitably challenged in their learning. Teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations and, as a result, pupils demonstrate exemplary attitudes to learning. They engage enthusiastically and are keen to do well. Teachers and teaching assistants explain and demonstrate well. They intervene when appropriate and challenge pupils with well-targeted questions. This helps pupils to think carefully and consolidate their skills. Discussions with pupils reveal that they have a clear understanding of what they are learning. For example, they apply their calculation skills and solve problems in mathematics. Pupils find extra support from adults helpful and one pupil stated, 'I find it helps me to practise over and over so that I get better.'
- We agreed that a third line of enquiry was to establish whether attendance is improving for different groups of pupils. Leaders make concerted efforts to work with parents to reinforce the importance of regular and punctual attendance. You also provide valuable mentoring support for pupils. This has had a positive impact on pupils' confidence and, as a result, attendance for all groups of pupils is rising.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders refine assessment so that they can more accurately check how well teaching is improving progress for all groups of pupils
- teaching further improves progress for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they catch up
- governors improve their knowledge and understanding so that they can more accurately evaluate the impact of leaders' actions.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools

commissioner and the director of children's services for North Somerset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Beeks
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I had meetings with you, the deputy headteacher, the assessment leader, the special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders. I also met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. I had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. I scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation and development plan, assessment information, policies and safeguarding records.

You joined me in observing learning and looking at pupils' work in four classes from Year 3 to Year 6. We also spoke with pupils during our learning walk. I held a separate meeting with a group of pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 to gain their views. You and the deputy headteacher, along with other leaders, joined me in scrutinising pupils' work in mathematics, English and other subjects.

I took account of 57 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and associated comments. I also met with parents at the start of the school day. I considered 17 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.