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Mrs Angela Malanczuk  
Principal  
Stanley Green Infant Academy  
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Dear Mrs Malanczuk

### **Short inspection of Stanley Green Infant Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 15 November 2016, 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in July 2012.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Stanley Green Infant Academy's core values of creativity, independence, emotional intelligence, collaboration and community are at the very heart of its work. You and your leaders share an uncompromising drive for excellence. You continue to build upon the many strengths of the school and have been successful in tackling those areas that were identified as needing further improvement at the previous inspection. You have increased the independence of pupils in directing their own learning. Consequently, they appreciate the opportunities to respond to the guidance provided by their teachers in how to improve their work. You have carefully evaluated your behaviour policy and made amendments to ensure that pupils' behaviour is good during lessons and at playtimes.

Leaders monitor the quality of teaching rigorously to ensure that teaching effectively meets the needs of your pupils, especially boys and disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils. As a result, pupils are making good progress, given their starting points.

You and your leaders, including governors, are united in your high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Together, you accurately pinpoint where improvements need to be made and quickly take the necessary actions to tackle them. For example, you are fully aware that further improvements need to be made to improve the achievement of boys, especially in their reading and writing. You also demonstrate a determination to further diminish any difference between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, especially the most able disadvantaged, and that of other pupils in the school and nationally.

A significant strength of your school is the quality of care, guidance and support you provide, not only to your pupils but also to parents and carers. A strong culture of staff working closely with experts and other agencies exists. This provides an environment which enables pupils, including the most vulnerable, to thrive. For example, you are committed to providing time each day for pupils to engage in mindfulness, which impacts positively on their well-being and the progress they are making in their school work.

You consider the development and training of your staff as crucial to the continued success of the school. You are skilful in how you develop teachers into competent, talented middle and senior leaders. Alongside your work at Stanley Green Infant Academy, you share your work with other local schools, providing them with the support they need to improve.

Governors are knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Clear systems and structures are in place to enable them to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. They provide a good balance of challenge and support. However, while records of meetings offer evidence of the challenge governors provide to leaders, for example how well disadvantaged pupils are progressing, they do not always sufficiently demonstrate whether the actions taken have been successful.

Parents are extremely positive about the education and care their children receive. They welcome the guidance you give, not only for their children, but also for them as parents. For example, they were effusive about how you support them in helping their children with their phonics and reading at home.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

A strong culture of safeguarding permeates the school. There is a shared understanding of the need to protect pupils against all potential risks. Staff remain vigilant, keeping a careful eye on every pupil, especially those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable.

All who work at the school receive high-quality training to keep them well informed on all types of risk to children, including child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism. For example, staff have recently been briefed on the most recent guidance provided by the government. This training provides staff with the

knowledge and confidence to quickly spot concerns and take rapid action, keeping pupils safe.

You and your governors fully understand the importance of recruiting staff safely. Together, you ensure that all staff are carefully vetted prior to commencing employment.

Risk assessments for a wide range of activities are firmly in place and monitored carefully by leaders. For example, risk assessments for outside play facilities such as the climbing frame and adventure playground are comprehensive and rigorously applied. Consequently, pupils have the opportunity to enjoy their playtimes.

Pupils are confident that they can share with an adult any concerns they may have. They feel safe and describe how the school is a fun and happy place to be. Pupils have a secure understanding of the importance of keeping safe, appropriate to their age and stage of development. For example, they know not to approach or speak to people they do not know.

You ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of high quality. You and your leaders show a gritty determination in following up any concerns, working effectively with outside agencies to reduce risk to pupils and to keep them safe.

### **Inspection findings**

- Fundamental to the school's continuing improvement is the relentless focus you and your leaders have on making sure that all staff have the highest expectations for their pupils.
- Children in the early years achieve well. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development continues to rise year on year. In 2016, the percentage of children achieving a good level of development rose again and for the first time is now well above the national average. This is as a result of strong leadership in the early years provision and consistently good teaching. This ensures that children are well prepared as they start in Year 1.
- You are aware that boys do not perform as well as girls and are taking swift action to tackle this. For example, you have adapted the curriculum to inspire and motivate boys, especially with their reading and writing. Topics such as outer space and the jungle have really excited them and are making them eager to develop their early reading and writing skills. Consequently, differences are diminishing quickly, as demonstrated in the outcomes for boys in 2016. However, you are not complacent and know that this improvement needs to continue.
- Teachers have a good understanding of what pupils know, can do and understand. They plan activities that effectively consider the differing needs of pupils. As a result, learning activities typically provide a good level of support and challenge, which excites and motivates pupils.

- The changes made to the curriculum to engage boys are clearly having a good impact, especially on their writing. Books viewed show how pupils, including boys, write with confidence. For example, pupils in Year 1 were engrossed in their writing about animals. There was evidence of good vocabulary choices and accurate spelling, demonstrating their ability to use their phonics knowledge effectively. Year 2 books show pupils developing writing stamina, with examples of story-writing linked to their class topic.
- Pupils are making good progress in their reading, writing and mathematics. This was particularly evident in the wide range of books viewed during the inspection. The quality of pupils' work is typically good as a result of teachers' high expectations. However, you have rightly identified that there needs to be greater consistency in the quality of pupils' writing across a wider range of subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, make broadly good progress across the curriculum. The school's own tracking of the progress of these pupils matches well with evidence gathered on the inspection. There is some fluctuation over time in published outcomes, but the results are based on small numbers. Nevertheless, leaders are keen to further diminish any remaining differences in reading and writing for disadvantaged pupils and have robust actions in place to tackle these quickly.
- In 2016, there was a dip in the Year 1 phonics outcomes. You and your leaders were extremely disappointed and have taken swift action to ensure that this is not repeated. Current progress information shows that those pupils who did not achieve the national standard in Year 1 are on track to achieve it in Year 2.
- The teaching of phonics in school is good. Teachers and teaching assistants demonstrate good subject knowledge. They use this knowledge to carefully plan activities that precisely meet the needs of pupils.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They describe how teachers encourage them to read frequently at school and at home. Consequently, pupils were eager to read to me and read with confidence. The most able readers, including the most able disadvantaged, welcome the opportunity to select books from favoured authors. They can clearly articulate their likes and dislikes when choosing books to read. Those pupils who find reading more challenging demonstrated a range of approaches when faced with unknown words and were generally successful in using these. Inspection evidence concurs that reading is taught effectively.
- Effective systems to monitor pupils' attendance ensure that pupils attend school regularly. Where you identify that attendance is not regular, decisive action is taken. As a result, attendance for all groups of pupils is improving and is in line with the national average.
- Pupils explain that they are happy at the school. They feel safe because of 'the kind staff who look after us'. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. During the inspection, they spoke positively about behaviour in school and how any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are quickly dealt with. They are understanding and considerate of the needs of others. Pupils, even the very youngest, demonstrate tolerance for those few pupils who find it more challenging to conform to school rules.

- Behaviour viewed during the inspection was good, including pupils' positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils told me that the behaviour seen during the day was, 'what it is normally like at our school'. They describe how playtimes and lunchtimes are good fun. They welcome the wide range of activities they can participate in. For example, pupils played games together using a large parachute, carefully supervised by an adult. Other playtime activities, including the adventure playground, exercising to music, and playing football, ensure that playtimes are a happy and sociable time for pupils.
- Most parents are supportive of the school. They are appreciative of the hard work and dedication you and your team provide. They describe how staff are approachable and respond quickly to any concerns they may have about their children. There were many positive comments received, one such typical comment being, 'a fantastic school that we are so proud to be a part of'.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- any remaining differences are quickly diminished in the achievement and progress of boys and disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, in reading and writing
- teachers' high expectations of pupils' writing in English lessons are consistent across a wider range of subjects
- governors' records show more precisely the impact of their challenge on improving pupils' outcomes.

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

Yours sincerely

Jen Southall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I observed learning in lessons, all of which were with you and the deputy principal. During these observations and at other times, I took the opportunity to scrutinise the work in pupils' books. I talked to pupils and also listened to pupils with a range of abilities reading. Meetings were held with the senior leadership team and with a member of the governing body. I held telephone conversations with an officer from the local authority and an independent education consultant. A wide range of documentation was looked at, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and information relating to pupils' current achievement and progress. I also checked the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements and attendance information. I spoke to parents at the start of the day and also took into account the 22 responses to the online survey 'Parent View', and considered additional comments received via text message from parents.

The key lines of enquiry tested on the short inspection day were:

- the effectiveness of early years provision, especially for boys and disadvantaged children
- the effectiveness of the teaching of phonics and reading, and its impact on pupils' writing
- the differences in attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils in reading and writing
- how effectively the school keeps its pupils safe, including actions the school takes to ensure their regular attendance, and how well pupils behave.