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9 May 2019

Mrs Clare Beswick
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Dear Mrs Beswick

Short inspection of Chalk Ridge Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 24 April 2019, 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 June 2015.

This school continues to be good.

Together with your leadership team, you have worked hard to maintain the good quality of education in the school and have introduced several improvements since the last inspection. Chalk Ridge Primary School offers a warm and inclusive community atmosphere. Together with governors and staff, you and your leadership team are very ambitious for the pupils in your care and passionate about improving the quality of provision for all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. You provide energy, vision and clear leadership, which is recognised and highly valued by pupils, staff, parents and the local authority. Parents and pupils were keen to praise this commitment, and expressed how much they value the school's range of sporting provision, trips and after-school clubs.

There had been a decline in both behaviour and standards after the previous inspection. However, since taking up post in 2017 you have swiftly motivated and enthused your senior leaders, addressed areas of underperformance, and improved pupils' behaviour. Now, pupils typically have very positive attitudes, engage well with teachers and teaching assistants, and work hard. These strong relationships underpin the better progress that pupils are making now. All pupils are encouraged to take pride in their learning and to make their work the best it can be. Pupils respect each other's ideas and they work and play very well together.

Over time, pupils have typically made rates of progress in reading and writing by the end of key stage 2 that were broadly in line with the national averages. However, outcomes in mathematics and writing dipped in 2018. This is changing

rapidly. Recognising the need for improvements, you have restructured leadership, sourced additional training for teachers, and reinvigorated the teaching and learning of writing and mathematics across the school. Senior leaders are very aware that these improvements are ongoing, but current pupils' work in both key stages demonstrates that pupils are now making much stronger progress, particularly in mathematics, than in the past. At the same time, you have continued to improve teaching and assessment in reading and writing. As a result, all groups of pupils make strong progress from their starting points. Leaders are rightly focused on raising the level of challenge in teaching so that a greater proportion of pupils than previously achieve the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.

Senior leaders ensure that appropriate academic and pastoral support is offered to disadvantaged pupils, those who speak English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There is a strong sense of teamwork between leaders, support staff and teachers. Parents are quick to recognise the quality of support on offer, and praise the accessibility of staff and the open and approachable style that you practise as headteacher. Staff ensure that all pupils with SEND are integrated well into lessons.

Your school development plans are very carefully considered and based on accurate self-assessment. Staff and governors share a pride in the school's strengths and are sharply focused on the areas that the school can improve further. Your detailed planning, together with regular monitoring, networking with other schools, and the use of local authority consultants to support moderation, ensures that leaders are taking the right actions to make these improvements. Governors pay regular visits to the school and are kept up to date via leaders' regular reports of progress. Governors are self-reflective and keen to improve their level of challenge and support still further.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, your staff and governors rightly place a very high emphasis on pupils' safety and welfare. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a caring culture of vigilance, supported by suitable record-keeping. The full range of checks are made against all adults who work with pupils, and meticulous records are maintained. All staff have up-to-date training to an appropriate level and know what to do should they be worried about a pupil. Governors are well informed, and make sure that the work to keep pupils safe is given top priority and meets current requirements. When necessary, you ensure that effective communication between the school and other external organisations has ensured timely and effective support for pupils of concern.

Staff, pupils and their parents report that pupils feel safe and well looked after at Chalk Ridge. Pupils feel well cared for and told me they know who to go to should they have any concerns. They trust adults to resolve any issues that may arise. Pupils confidently recall learning about how to keep themselves safe, including when on the internet.

Pupils' overall attendance is in line with the national average. Although the attendance of some groups of pupils has been lower than that of their peers in the past, you have taken decisive action to address this and gaps are closing. Leaders promote the value of good attendance well. Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and all of those who I met at the beginning of the day confirmed that their children are happy and feel safe here.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, as well as evaluating safeguarding arrangements, I focused on specific aspects of the school's provision, including:
 - how well leaders have responded to address previously weak outcomes in mathematics
 - the quality of learning in the wider curriculum
 - the attendance and progress of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND
 - the progress that pupils make in Reception and key stage 1.
- In 2018 progress in mathematics and writing by the end of key stage 2 dipped and was well below national figures. Pupils' progress in reading was better, and in line with national averages. Consequently, the proportions of pupils who achieved standards expected for their age in mathematics and writing were below national figures. Leaders wasted no time in addressing this, and current cohorts are making considerably stronger progress.
- Sourcing suitable training for teachers and better planning have helped teachers to improve their subject knowledge and have led to higher teacher expectations. Consequently, standards in mathematics have risen. Visits to lessons and reviews of pupils' work showed that teachers are promoting better fluency and more opportunities for reasoning than they had in the past. In most classes, pupils respond well to teachers' feedback to refine, edit and improve their work in English and mathematics. Although standards have improved, more needs to be done to promote deeper thinking and problem-solving in mathematics.
- Senior leaders worked with other schools and the local authority to source training, share ideas and moderate pupils' work. Leaders of English and mathematics have developed and shared these resources with teachers, and have ensured a consistency of approach across all year groups. Leaders make good use of regular assessment and monitoring to track the progress of individual pupils and to challenge staff. Leaders and governors are rightly focused on ensuring that an increasing proportion of pupils achieve the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.
- The school offers a suitably rich curriculum and is keen to enrich extended writing through engaging and relevant contexts. The range of sporting clubs, trips and visits is highly valued by pupils and parents. In most classes, pupils' books show that they are provided with suitable challenge to apply their extended writing skills. However, mathematical skills are not yet routinely promoted well across the curriculum. Planning in subjects other than English and mathematics is currently being reviewed. Leaders are aware that teachers do not

routinely offer challenging enough tasks in science and humanities to promote deeper thinking and the cumulative development of subject-specific vocabulary and skills. Consequently, while progress is good, it is not yet as consistently strong across the wider curriculum as it is in English and mathematics.

- Overall attendance is regularly in line with or slightly above national figures, and leaders take all appropriate actions to challenge improvements for specific groups of pupils. Newsletters and rewards are used to good effect to promote the value of good attendance. Historically, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND has been below that of their peers. However, school records show that this has been due to complex and multiple issues faced by these pupils. Staff ensure that appropriate and timely action is taken to support vulnerable pupils and their families when the need arises. As a result, current overall attendance figures, including that of these groups, have improved.
- Staff in Reception Year work hard to ensure that the learning environments offer a range of engaging and stimulating learning opportunities. Children gain confidence from their good relationships with staff and collaborative play with each other. Appropriate tracking systems are used to inform teaching approaches and to monitor the progress that children make from their starting points. Parents report that communication between school and home is strong and that they have been well informed of how to support their children to develop their reading and number skills. All of this combines to ensure that children develop a suitable range of skills that helps to prepare them well for key stage 1. Leaders agree that more effective use of the outdoor learning environment would support even better literacy and number-skills development.
- A strong focus on the teaching of phonics and the promotion of the school library underpins the good progress that pupils make in their reading skills by the end of key stage 1, and the latter helps to foster a love of reading. Strong teaching ensures that outcomes in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 have been broadly in line with national averages. Teachers are aware that more needs to be done to boost the level of challenge for the most able to improve the proportion of pupils working at a greater depth of understanding.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- progress in mathematics continues to improve across the school
- the most able pupils are provided with still-higher levels of challenge so that more achieve the higher standards in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6 than in the past
- pupils are given more consistently challenging and age-appropriate tasks in science and the wider curriculum, so that their subject-specific knowledge and depth of thinking improves.

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

Yours sincerely

Matthew Newberry
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, other school leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Jointly with yourself and other leaders, I visited all year groups to look at teaching and learning. Together, we reviewed a range of pupils' work in their exercise books.

I observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and around the school, and had a meeting with a small group of pupils. I took into account 35 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 26 free-text comments. In addition, I spoke to a number of parents at the beginning of the day. I took into account the views expressed in the staff survey and the small number of responses to the pupil survey.

I reviewed a range of documents, including reports from the local authority, minutes of meetings, pupils' progress information and safeguarding policies, procedures and checks.