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Mrs Christine Heare
Chandler's Ford Infant School
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Dear Mrs Heare

Short inspection of Chandler's Ford Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 19 January 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 the school was judged to be good in June 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and the deputy headteacher are an excellent team. Together you have successfully created a culture of high expectations where the needs of every individual pupil are catered for.

You know your school really well. This is because you and other leaders carry out an array of useful checks on the quality of teaching and learning. You use the information you gather to make accurate evaluations of the effectiveness of the school. Consequently, your plans for improvement are appropriately targeted to improve pupils' learning.

Leaders have effectively addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous report. For example, the curriculum now allows pupils to gain a deeper understanding of cultural diversity. This is because pupils get regular and pertinent first-hand experiences that enhance their learning. Pupils report that they value the opportunities they are given to explore their local history and geography. They rightly believe their teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and learning fun. Teachers' delivery is enthusiastic and engaging. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher read a traditional tale, role playing the different characters with gusto. She made very good links to pupils' prior learning and signposted for pupils how to use the resources available to them to strengthen and deepen their understanding of character.

The quality of teaching remains consistently good. This is despite recent changes to teaching staff. Teachers engender positive relationships in lessons and around the school. They plan lessons that build on what pupils can already do and ensure that work matches their different abilities. Staff share your high expectations. Very good use is made of the extensive resources available at the school. This includes the outside environment, for example, which is successfully utilised to gain the interest of boys. Teaching assistants play an important role in the inclusive approach of the school. They are skilfully deployed to help all children access lessons, and give precise support to individuals when it is needed.

Pupils continue to make good progress from their starting points. The improvements made to the curriculum and the engagement of boys had narrowed the gap in their attainment, up until 2015. In 2015, pupils did not attain levels that were as high as the school had usually achieved. This was because of the specific circumstance of the cohort. Current assessment information and the work in pupils' books shows that all groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, more-able pupils could do even better if the challenge for them was more consistent, particularly in mathematics.

The pupil premium grant is used effectively for the individual needs of the pupils. Leaders ensure that they tailor how the money is used to cater for the wider needs of eligible pupils. This does mean that at times they are not always able to analyse the effectiveness of how the use of the funding is narrowing the gap for disadvantaged pupils in a measurable and timely manner.

Governors provide effective support and challenge to leaders. They have used the recent changeover of governors to skilfully consider ways in which they can be more effective. For example, they have thought strategically about what skills are needed from new governors when vacancies have arisen. Governors have a clear picture of where there are strengths and areas for improvement at the school. This is partly because of the useful information they are provided with by leaders, but also because they regularly visit the school to see for themselves. Governors have sensibly been making these visits more strategic by focusing on the key areas for improvement identified with school leaders.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding arrangements are well led and effective. All staff work diligently to look after the children in their care. For example, there are clear risk assessments in place in relation to how the school functions on a daily basis. Checks on staff are carried out and carefully reviewed by leaders. References are appropriately sought from previous employers to ensure that the school appoints the right people. Appropriate safeguarding training is undertaken by relevant staff to ensure that statutory requirements are met. Relevant staff are also first-aid trained. Leaders work extremely effectively with other agencies to ensure that concerns are appropriately catered for. The school is rightly regarded highly by other agencies for the work that it does to look after pupils.

Pupils report that they enjoy coming to school and always feel safe. They and their parents rightly believe staff work hard to look after them. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe in a number of ways. For example, they know what to do to keep personal information safe when using the internet, have been taught how to cross the road and are aware of what to do if they discover a fire in their house. Pupils also report that staff would take effective action if there are ever issues at playtimes.

Inspection findings

- Leadership and management is very effective. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have successfully created a culture which is highly ambitious for pupils and invests in their individual needs. They have provided stability following a brief transitional period at the school. Consequently, staff work well together for the benefit of the children. They share the high expectations set by leaders and contribute to the strong relationships at the school.
- Provision for pupils who have disabilities or special educational needs is very well managed. Teaching assistants are deployed strategically and make a real difference to the learning experience of pupils. Teachers plan lessons that take into account the needs of those who need extra support. This all contributes to the very good progress pupils with disabilities or special educational needs make at the school.
- New assessment procedures have been effectively established. Leaders rightly have this under review. They have used the guidance and support provided by the local authority in developing this very well. Leaders also ensure that they make good use of training opportunities and the partnerships they have fostered with other schools to ensure what they do is moderated and accurate.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes better. Teachers are skilled and use questioning effectively to help deepen pupils' understanding. They engender positive relationships with parents and pupils and so pupils are keen to do well. Teachers plan work that takes into account the differing needs of the pupils in their class. The resources that are available are used very well to enhance learning and cater for the different learning styles of pupils. Recent changes in the teaching team have resulted in the need to revisit some of the school's teaching and learning policies to ensure consistency. Some aspects of these policies focus too much on process and not enough on helping pupils to learn more quickly.
- On some occasions, more-able pupils are not challenged as much as they could be. For example, in one lesson more-able pupils were completing subtractions that only used numbers up to 20, when previous work they had completed showed they were familiar with using much larger numbers. Leaders have rightly identified this as an area of focus within their development plan.
- The early years provision is excellent. Much of what is characterised across the school is also true here. For example, the environment is very well designed to secure the enthusiasm of pupils for learning. Children are highly motivated by the opportunities they are given to explore the world

around them using the inside and outside environments available to them. Children are encouraged to take a lead and improve how their classes are organised. This was very well demonstrated when an issue was identified in the outdoor resource shed. The teacher gathered the children who were outside and discussed with them their ideas for fixing the problem very effectively. Children confidently shared their ideas and were happy to disagree with each other and come to a collective agreement. This reflected the very positive relationships enjoyed across the school.

- Pupils achieve well. They make at least good progress in key literacy and numeracy skills. This is reflected in the high attainment achieved in the Year 1 phonics screening test. (Phonics refers to the link between letters and their sounds.) Pupils regularly get the opportunity to apply what they are learning in English and mathematics across the curriculum. They write for a variety of purposes. Initiatives implemented by leaders have helped boys enjoy and succeed more readily in their writing. Pupils enjoy rich learning opportunities in mathematics, where, for example, they are given opportunities to investigate concepts and use their reasoning skills to good effect. Consequently, pupils leave the school very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well. They show very good attitudes to their learning and work and play well together. Attendance at the school is very high and above national averages and has been for some time. This is because pupils really enjoy their time at the school and want to succeed.
- The local authority has provided useful support and challenge to this effective school. Their impact can be seen in the accuracy of leaders' evaluations, the work done on establishing effective assessment systems and in the work done with the mathematics consultant on investigative mathematics.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching and learning policies are consistently applied and are more sharply focused on pupils' learning
- more-able pupils are consistently challenged in lessons and over time, particularly in mathematics
- they sharpen the analysis of how the pupil premium grant is spent so that governors can provide robust challenge and leaders can make timely decisions about the best use of the money in bringing about accelerated progress for disadvantaged pupils.

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 County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Barnes
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the deputy headteacher, a group of governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and a group of pupils. I visited each class, accompanied by you or the deputy headteacher, to observe teaching and to talk to pupils about what they were learning. I scrutinised the work of some more-able pupils, some pupils eligible for the pupil premium grant and some middle-attaining pupils, as well as looking through pupils' books in their lessons. I considered the responses of 54 parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors analysed a range of documentation, including reports provided by the local authority, the school's self-evaluation, the improvement plan and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures.