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Mrs Jennifer Downing
Headteacher
St Mary's CofE Aided Infant School, Frensham
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Dear Mrs Downing

Short inspection of St Mary's CofE Aided Infant School, Frensham

Following my visit to the school on 26 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 September 2010.

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 made an impressive start to your headship having taken over from the previous and long-standing headteacher. You have added strength to the team by appointing effective teachers to fill recent vacancies. You have set high expectations for the staff and pupils and all respond well to this.

Your evaluation of the current performance of the school is accurate and honest. You have identified clearly the many strengths of the school and what it needs to do to be even better. This is captured in a helpful document. You have also created a robust planning tool to ensure the school's further development. You review this regularly with the governors. We agreed it needs to be strengthened by adding in dates by when actions will have been completed. We also agreed that some further measures of the success of each action would add greater precision to leaders' actions and governors' monitoring.

You are supported extremely well by an effective governing body. Governors have a wide range of skills which they generously and frequently offer the school. The records of their work are thorough and show clearly how they hold you to account. Records also show how they have supported the many changes you have made to the school already. Governors are very pleased with how well things are going now, but

are not complacent. They are highly ambitious for the school and want it to be an outstanding option for parents locally. They know that the school is on track to be the best it can be.

You have your own very high standards which are communicated effectively to staff, pupils and parents. You have a constant presence around the school and this aids your close management of all aspects of its work. Teachers like the clear sense of leadership and are responding well. They plan together and share resources efficiently, working well as a team. Teachers have worked effectively with you to build a reliable system for assessment. They work well with teachers in other schools locally to check that their assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is accurate. You play a strong leading role in this consortium, which involves peer-reviewing each school's work.

The well-being of all pupils matters most to the school. Alongside this, all staff are committed to ensuring that pupils make strong academic progress, at the same time developing knowledge, skills and understanding. There is a strong sense of nurture which leads to the provision of warm pastoral care for the pupils. The school celebrates its Christian foundation and uses it to build a caring and compassionate ethos. The local vicar plays an active role in school life. The school receives light touch support from the diocese of Guildford.

Children achieve well in the early years and most pupils do well by the end of Key Stage 1. This is the result of effective teaching. It gives pupils a great start to their time in school. Current pupils are on track to achieve age-expected standards by the end of Year 2. Some are set to exceed these benchmarks. In 2015, however, there were some dips in the typically high standards in the school. For example, a few pupils did not reach the higher levels expected in writing and reading and some, mainly girls, did not make as much progress as expected in mathematics. You have accurately identified why and have taken prompt steps to ensure this is not repeated. Standards are consistently good but are on track to become outstanding.

Safeguarding is effective.

The checks that the school makes on visitors are robust and effective. Staff are regularly trained in safeguarding matters with updates provided as new issues for consideration become evident. This all helps to keep the pupils safe. Excellent work is in place at an age-appropriate level to ensure they stay safe online. This is particularly important given the admirable efforts to help pupils use technology to aid learning, especially in the early years. The notebooks have been set up to point only to appropriate learning material.

The school has trained all staff to be aware of the signs of pupils at risk. This includes the statutory duty to prevent pupils from being exposed to extreme views or radicalisation. The school complements this work effectively with very positive, inclusive teaching which celebrates the diversity of its own community. Pupils have heard talks from family members from India, Africa, other European countries and

North America. This aids their cultural understanding and contributes well to their preparation for life in modern, diverse Britain. The school also supports the development of other British values by educating pupils about democracy, celebrating key events like Remembrance Day at the war memorial on the green opposite, and participating in some traditional English festivals such as May Day. Pupils dance and sing joyfully. All trips and visits are subject to appropriate safeguards and controls. As a result, pupils remain safe at all times. All parents were happy to note that the school keeps their children safe.

Inspection findings

- Children learn quickly and well in the early years. This year, some join the school part way through the year due to some turbulence locally in the availability of pupil places.
- Staff make every effort to ensure that they know what children already know, understand and can do whenever they join Reception. Adults involve parents skilfully in capturing this information.
- Children arrive in the Reception Year with a wide range of pre-school experiences. Adults organise activities adeptly which enable them to settle to learning through play quickly.
- The early years setting continues to improve, especially the outdoor area, which was a requirement at the last full inspection. As a result, children benefit from a covered outdoor area with a range of play equipment. The playground supports a good range of activities and has been designed flexibly so that it can be adapted for various uses. Sports coaches use this space highly effectively. Children play happily and well. The school has appointed an early years specialist who also has experience of 'forest school work'. Plans are in place to extend work already undertaken in Reception, in such a context, to the rest of the school.
- Teaching is effective across the school. It enables pupils to make secure gains in their learning and progress. Standards of oracy and reading are particularly high. Pupils communicate well with adults and with each other. Many have a vocabulary which is consistent with that of much older pupils.
- You have developed a clear system for checking pupils' progress. You use this information carefully in regular pupil progress meetings with teachers. This ensures each pupil's learning needs are met. However, the system is new and needs time to become established before its full impact can be seen consistently and any unforeseen shortcomings addressed. We agreed that it is essential parents receive regular and clear updates on what the system is showing about the progress of their children.
- Current pupils benefit from consistent mathematics teaching which is helping them to develop good use of number and calculation skills. Teachers arrange activities so that all pupils can access the learning at a level appropriate to their ability. In Year 2, a few more-able pupils still found the work easy. They made good use of the time, however, by challenging each other with bigger numbers and inventing more complex sums.
- The wider curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn science, aspects of

history and geography, French and information and communications technology, including computer coding. Pupils also benefit from carefully planned and well-delivered religious education in keeping with the school's Christian foundation and complementary approach to inclusion. This makes a very positive contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies and worship add to this well.

- Pupils behave extremely well. Their conduct is outstanding and there are virtually no occasions when they misbehave. Towards the end of the day, the concentration of a few begins to wane but good classroom routines ensure that they quickly return to their normal high standards.
- Pupils take pride in their work. Handwriting develops well over time at the school and pupils learn to set out their work neatly, so that for the vast majority, by the end of Year 2, their working out in mathematics is clear.
- Published information about absence does not reflect fully the good levels of attendance of the vast majority of pupils. You provided me with good information to show the lengths you have gone to, to help a tiny minority of families achieve the regular attendance of their children at school.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. Parents are delighted with the quality of education provided and this includes those who have chosen to move their children into the school recently. Staff are very pleased to work in the school because they are sure it is heading towards becoming an outstanding school under your leadership.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all members of the community, governors, staff, pupils and parents understand fully the new system for assessment. All must use it to check pupils are consistently making rapid and sustained progress, especially in writing and mathematics
- pupils who achieved more than age-expected levels at the end of the foundation stage go on to make more than expected progress by the end of Key Stage 1.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Guildford, and the Director of Children's Services for Surrey County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Hughes
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the science coordinator and the bursar. I also met a range of parents informally at the school gate and considered the high numbers of responses parents had posted to Ofsted's confidential online survey, Parent View. I met with two different groups of governors and conducted a phone conversation with the school's overview partner from Surrey County Council. You led me on a tour of the school and we jointly observed learning in each class. This included a short visit outside to see the Reception Year children learning with one of the Chelsea FC sports coaches. I considered a range of the school's documentation, including its safeguarding checks, information about pupils' achievement and checks on the quality of teaching. I also analysed staff responses to Ofsted's online, confidential staff survey and a survey of pupils' attitudes undertaken by the school itself.