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Miss L Wallage
Headteacher
Christ Church CofE Aided Infant School, Virginia Water
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Dear Miss Wallage

Short inspection of Christ Church CofE Aided Infant School, Virginia Water

Following my visit to the school on 10 February 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 January 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 act with determination and conviction to ensure you have effective teachers in post, rightly believing that anything less than good is not good enough. You ensure that is the case by taking difficult decisions when required and, if necessary, providing effective teaching yourself while you recruit permanent teachers.

Parents, pupils and staff appreciate and comment on the warm and friendly, close-knit community and the way in which everyone knows and supports each other. Parents correctly recognise that their children do well and are very happy in school; they feel lucky to have their children at Christ Church Infants.

The recent changes of teachers have been managed very well. You ensure that new teachers understand your high expectations. Rigorous induction processes and detailed pupil progress information ensure that new teachers have the necessary knowledge to pick up seamlessly from where previous staff have left off. Teaching assistants are invaluable in supporting these changeovers as they know the children very well and meet with teachers to review planning, so no learning time is lost.

Governors know the school and their roles very well. They are appropriately involved in all aspects that affect pupils, including working with the local authority to tackle the issues created by being on a busy and dangerous main road, and taking steps to manage your significant workload.

Pupils love the school; they enjoy their lessons and other activities. They say they feel safe and that there is no bullying; indeed they looked affronted at the idea. To them, 'naughty behaviour' is children calling out. The school's detailed records confirm that behaviour is good.

Effective action has been taken to tackle the areas identified at the previous inspection as needing improvement. Governors secured the leadership of the school shortly after the inspection by appointing you as the permanent headteacher. Leaders have improved handwriting by implementing a scheme across the school and have ensured that pupils have more opportunities to write across the curriculum. Many pupils write very well, but you recognise that there is work to do to maintain this as there are new teachers in post.

Taking into account how positively parents speak about the school, and how much pupils enjoy school, it is surprising that attendance and punctuality are not as good as they should be. You have taken sensible action to monitor and improve this, but accept that a firmer hand is required to ensure pupils arrive at school on time and to improve attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding processes are effective. Governors are appropriately involved in checking safeguarding and the annual audit, which identifies any ways in which safeguarding can be further improved. Policies are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are up to date. Staff receive regular training which ensures that they know, and are confident about, their responsibilities in keeping the children safe. Leaders and governors have made sure the site is secure. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

All parents who expressed their views, either verbally or through the Ofsted survey, Parent View, are rightly confident in the school's work to care for pupils and ensure they are safe. Pupils feel safe and say they are well cared for. They learn about internet safety and stranger danger, explaining eloquently that not everyone is as nice as they pretend to be.

Inspection findings

- You, other leaders and staff are committed to ensuring that all pupils not only receive a good education but that they are happy and enjoy school. All adults know pupils well and take very good care of them.
- Leaders and governors seek ways to be even more effective. They respond positively to external feedback and undertake relevant training to ensure they are up to date and are aware of best practice. Governors are passionate for the school to be the best it can be, and hold you effectively to account to achieve this.
- You check teaching regularly and provide useful feedback to help teachers become even more effective. You work closely with the governing body to ensure governors are well informed. Together, you make sensible decisions. The current application to reduce the pupil admission number to 30, in response to a local drop in pupil numbers, reflects this.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics; many achieve very well. The new assessment system is being used well by leaders and teachers to check pupils' progress and identify whether further help is needed. However, currently, the system does not enable leaders to predict what pupils could achieve by the end of the year and key stage. This means leaders cannot easily make sure that everyone is achieving as much as possible.
- The school correctly identified that some disadvantaged pupils do not do quite as well as other pupils because of limitations in their vocabulary. This means that they do not always understand less common words and only use simple words in their written work. Effective language support for this group has resulted in these pupils using a wider vocabulary when talking to adults and playing with their friends.
- In the early years class, children enjoy a wide range of appropriate and effective activities, including many that help them to develop their physical and coordination skills. They enjoy playing together and share toys and games well. Children help one another and are tolerant of each other's needs. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to assess children's learning; this means that adults do not always ask the right questions to develop children's understanding.
- In the Year 1 and Year 2 classes, pupils are keen to learn and set to work quickly, whether it be mathematics, art or poetry. They take pride in their work and it is of a high standard. Leaders' work to improve handwriting is noticeable; the subject leader checks work in books and provides training and help when they are needed. Pupils' books about the Great Fire of London reflected the high-quality teaching and learning taking place.
- Teachers know their pupils well. They plan activities at the right level and make sure they are interesting and fun. During lessons, teachers set tasks that pupils can get on with independently and teachers use their time well to work with groups and individuals so they make more progress. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to check pupils' understanding. This means that teachers do not adapt activities during lessons to meet pupils' specific needs.

- Boys' writing has been an area for improvement. The school has introduced a range of strategies to enthuse boys and motivate them to write more. Writing lessons have also been restructured to help pupils who are slow to get started, so there is time to discuss ideas and plan each section. As a result of these changes, boys' writing is at the same high level as girls'.
- Teaching assistants are effective in their roles. They ask useful questions to help pupils to deepen their thinking. In all three classes, there is a strong sense of teamwork between teachers and other adults, ensuring that pupils are supported well.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils know what the expectations are and staff manage behaviour consistently. Lunchtime staff support pupils' play very well. I observed a good range of independent games, such as football, skipping and hula hoops, as well as an adult-led hockey game.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well through lessons and assemblies. Pupils write thoughtful prayers for themselves and other people.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils arrive at school on time and attendance improves so that it is at least in line with the national average
- the new assessment system is adapted to enable leaders to predict what pupils will achieve by the end of the year and key stage so that they can check that no one is falling behind
- teachers assess learning effectively during lessons so that they can quickly adapt teaching to meet pupils' needs.

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

Yours sincerely

Louise Adams
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, a group of governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and teachers. I spoke to pupils in lessons and in the playground. With you, I visited classes and I scrutinised work in pupils' books. I observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and around the school. I gathered parents' views through conversations in the playground, a letter and 30 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also took account of views of 12 members of the school team who responded to the online survey for staff. I analysed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, and information about pupils' progress and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures.