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Mrs Tracy Creasey
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Creasey

Short inspection of Manby Lodge Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 22 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 the school was judged to be good in October 2011.

This school continues to be good.

You have set clear aims for the school based on an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. You have built a highly committed team of staff. Together you have made the right changes to raise pupils' achievement. At the same time, you have not neglected key priorities such as improving the building, increasing the number of pupils on roll and securing places for pupils at Cleves Junior School after they leave Manby Lodge. Consequently, the leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

The personal development of pupils is at the heart of the school's work. Staff consistently promote the values that you have identified to help pupils to flourish. In the Reception classes, children quickly learn the values such as cooperation, belonging, friendship, trust and fairness. One group of children demonstrated these as they visited a 'car wash', pedalling together on their tandem bicycles, taking turns at 'traffic lights' and following the instructions that their friends were giving them. They even showed confidence in their skills, stating that their 'car wash' was well worth the princely sum of £100! Indeed, pupils recognise that their school offers them a wide range of experiences. One pupil said, 'I like that I can learn so many different things.'

Pupils' achievement is good. Children in the early years make good progress from their starting points so that the very large majority reach a good level of development and are well prepared for Year 1. The proportion of pupils meeting the

expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has risen over the past three years and is above the national average. At the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment in 2014 and 2015 was well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Last year, standards in mathematics continued to be very high. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in reading and writing was above that of other pupils nationally. However, you rightly recognise that pupils can do even better than this. In particular, you know that disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics. Furthermore, you know that not enough pupils exceeded the expectations for their age in reading last year.

You have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection well. Pupils' achievement in writing has risen. This is because you have ensured that pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop their writing, they receive helpful feedback to improve their writing and lessons are now more challenging for the most able pupils. You have also improved the assessment system so that you have a better understanding of the skills and abilities of children who join the Reception class. This has helped you to raise standards in the early years.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that there is a culture of 'no complacency' so that keeping pupils safe takes priority. As a result, you take the right actions to promote pupils' welfare. You and the governing body keep a close eye on the latest safeguarding requirements and review the systems and procedures in place, making changes where necessary. This includes making sure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and there are detailed, high-quality records of this work. Staff receive regular training so that they know what to do if they are worried about a pupil.

There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, 'Smarty', the school's own safety mascot, reminds pupils to stay safe on the internet by doing the right things such as asking an adult. Bullying, discrimination and incidents of poor behaviour are very rare because you set and maintain high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Consequently, parents feel that their child is safe at school.

Inspection findings

- You and the governors are determined that disadvantaged pupils will achieve very well. You have set out a clear system to plan individualised, appropriate, timely and well-rounded support for these pupils. However, leaders are not yet holding teachers to account with sufficient rigour to ensure that this extra help meets your high expectations.
- Disadvantaged pupils' attendance has improved. This is because you have provided effective challenge and support to the families of those with the highest absence. The family support worker and emotional learning support assistant help ensure that disadvantaged pupils are in school often and ready to learn.

- In the past, you have focused on helping disadvantaged pupils to catch up with their classmates. Recently, you have changed the emphasis to provide pupils at risk of falling behind with extra teaching to keep up with others. As a result, disadvantaged pupils' achievement is improving. Last year, most disadvantaged children reached a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year. This was above the national average and similar to their classmates. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check rose and was close to that of other pupils nationally. Nevertheless, the most able disadvantaged pupils do not often receive additional support with their learning. In 2016, no disadvantaged pupils exceeded the expectations for their age at the end of Year 2 in writing or mathematics.
- You have made some changes to the teaching of reading this year to ensure that lessons are sufficiently challenging for pupils. Teachers are increasingly providing pupils with demanding activities that build their understanding of texts. However, you know that there is still some work to do to ensure that all staff have the necessary subject knowledge to enable pupils to reach the higher standards. The assessment system does not yet prompt teachers to check that pupils are on track to exceed the expectations for their age.
- Reading is well promoted within the school. Pupils read often and are encouraged to read for pleasure. One pupil explained her love of reading, saying, 'The more I read the more I know.' Year 2 pupils show that they can read fluently and use expression. The most able pupils demonstrate some higher levels of skill such as using clues to make predictions about characters in a story.
- The deputy headteacher has improved the quality of teaching and learning in the early years. Consequently, children's attainment, including that of the most able, has risen considerably over the past three years. She uses information about children's achievement well to identify important changes. For example, she has drawn wisely on support from the local authority to ensure that activities are challenging enough for the most able children. Teachers now provide children with 'chilli hot' challenges to extend their learning.
- No opportunity is wasted to develop children's writing in the Reception classes. The very well-developed outside area provides a range of exciting experiences, and staff seamlessly prompt children to write for a range of reasons. Children were seen writing appointments at the 'hairdresser', recording recipes at the 'mud kitchen' and making plans at the 'building site'. As a result, children's attainment in writing at the end of the early years increased last year.
- The very large majority of parents support the work of the school. Many appreciate how their child's confidence has grown as they move through the school. However, a few parents feel that communication is not effective enough. You and the governors acknowledge that there are steps that you can take to ensure that leaders are more accessible, are receptive to parents' feedback and share information more widely.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, receive timely support that accelerates their progress further
- teachers' and teaching assistants' subject knowledge and expectations of pupils' reading increase so that more pupils reach the higher standard
- communication with parents is strengthened and their views are used to help shape the school's development.

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

Yours sincerely

Caroline Dulon
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and the deputy headteacher and a governor. I spoke with the chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I visited some classes with you and the deputy headteacher to see the pupils learning and look at their exercise books. Together, we considered how well children achieve in the early years, how well most-able pupils are challenged in reading, whether disadvantaged pupils receive effective support with their learning, and how well you communicate with parents and keep pupils safe. I took into account responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as speaking to a number of parents at the start of the school day. I evaluated a range of documents, including minutes of the governing body meeting and the school development plan.