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Miss Claire Beazley
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Dear Miss Beazley

Short inspection of Clarendon Infants' School

Following my visit to the school on 1 March 2017, 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 April 2013.

This school continues to be good.

You have maintained the good quality of education identified at the previous inspection. You and your senior leadership team have successfully built on the strengths confirmed when the school was previously inspected. You have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection, and have also improved other aspects of the school's work.

Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 are keen to learn. They enjoy their lessons and the other activities which the school provides, such as the various clubs and visits. Pupils feel very safe and well cared for. A large number of parents responded to the school's own recent survey of their views and were very appreciative of all that the school provides for their children. Typical comments were: 'I couldn't be happier with the school and the progress my child is making', and 'Both my children have excelled and grown while attending Clarendon. I cannot thank the staff enough.' I had the same response from parents with whom I spoke during the inspection.

Pupils throughout the school behave well. Teachers have benefited from good opportunities for professional training. They also get good support from other staff and ensure that pupils make good progress. You have succeeded in improving achievement in spite of some challenging circumstances. A much larger proportion of pupils either join or leave Clarendon Infants' other than at the usual times. Many of the pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, need additional support to catch up with the rate of progress of other pupils. Several pupils who join the school after Reception have needs which make them

particularly vulnerable. You work tirelessly and effectively to help them settle comfortably into the school and then make progress. Although some of these pupils do not achieve at the same rate as those who stay at Clarendon Infants' throughout their school career, the great majority of pupils increasingly make good progress. They enjoy the school curriculum, especially the range of topics. The quality of care and support for pupils remains high.

The governing body contains both experienced and relatively new members. They support you well in your drive for continued improvement. They also ask searching questions, for example about how you use the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils to ensure they make good progress. Governors are keen to ensure that staff are accountable for progress and that pupils get the best start possible to their school career. Governors play an increasingly active role in checking the strategic direction of the school and holding school leaders to account.

Safeguarding is effective.

- With the support of your governors, you have made sure that pupils' safety has a high priority in the school. Staff and governors have had recent training in all aspects of keeping children safe. I saw this myself during the inspection when local police visited the school to emphasise to children how they can help themselves to keep safe.
- Parents are very confident that staff will look after their children. They welcome the fact that the school looks after their children well. You return this trust by making sure that all adults in school undergo the appropriate checks and training and that there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school.
- The school liaises well with outside agencies when it needs additional support to help vulnerable pupils. There are appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure safety. You have ensured that all arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and are of an appropriately high quality.

Inspection findings

- One of the key lines of enquiry we agreed at the start of the inspection was to check the progress of children in the Nursery and Reception who join the school with levels of skill, knowledge and personal development that are well below what would usually be expected for their age. Your early years leader has driven improvements and ensured good progress for all children in the Nursery and Reception classes. She assesses children's needs and achievement accurately and has worked successfully to involve parents closely in their children's learning.
- Girls, in particular, benefit from good teaching. Some boys make slower progress than the girls both in their personal development and in their language and number skills. You recognise this in your own analysis of early years achievement, and give it an appropriate focus in the school's improvement plan. As a result, children in the early years are now making good progress. Building on recent successes, more and more children are on track to achieve a good level of development, which will serve them well when they join Year 1.

- The second key line of enquiry looked at how well pupils in Years 1 and 2 are progressing, particularly in light of results last year that were not as strong as expected. During the inspection, we looked at the books of pupils in these year groups and found that most of these pupils are making good progress, because you have made this a priority for the school. Achievement in mathematics has improved as staff have become more knowledgeable and confident in their teaching of key numeracy skills.
- I spoke with key stage 1 pupils about their reading and listened to some of them read. I found that there is some variability in progress in reading, but it has improved overall and progress is good for most pupils. The number of pupils on track to reach the higher standard by the end of the academic year has increased.
- You have helped to ensure that more pupils in Years 1 and 2 make stronger progress in writing. Staff give effective support to those pupils who need more help in writing. Evidence of pupils' achievements is apparent around the school, for example in displays of their work.
- As part of my exploration into the achievement of pupils in key stage 1, I focused on disadvantaged pupils. The difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally has diminished. This is mainly due to the careful checks you make of the progress of these pupils and the speed with which you arrange interventions when any slip behind. You rightly recognise that in order to further improve progress, teaching needs to become even more consistent in its effectiveness. You also recognise that staff expectations of the progress of all pupils, whatever their level of ability or background, need to remain high. This is especially true for disadvantaged pupils. You are aware that occasionally teachers do not maintain consistently high expectations.
- The final line of enquiry looked at how well attendance has improved. In 2016, attendance was low for some pupils and, as a result of the gaps in their knowledge, this adversely affected their progress. You have worked effectively to improve pupils' attendance by liaising with parents and outside agencies to impress on all parents the importance of their children attending school regularly. You use a range of strategies to keep this improvement going, and consequently attendance is now in line with the national average.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the expectations staff have for pupils by the end of Year 2 are higher
- the levels of attainment of boys in their language and number skills in the early years are raised.

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

Yours sincerely

John Laver
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and your deputy and with other staff. I met two members of the governing body, including the chair. I talked to several parents at the start of the school day. I analysed responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the school's own survey of parents' views. I visited all the classrooms with you and your deputy to observe pupils' learning. I also spent time with you looking at pupils' work, to see what progress they were making. We considered the attainment and progress of pupils in the school. I reviewed records relating to attendance and safeguarding.