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Mrs Annie Gaudencio
Headteacher
Freezywater St George's CofE Primary School
Hertford Road
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Dear Mrs Gaudencio

Short inspection of Freezywater St George's CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 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 July 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school has faced significant challenges in recruiting and retaining high-quality staff. However, your determination and focus on enabling all pupils to realise their potential has meant that the school has improved since the last inspection. All the identified areas for improvement have been dealt with successfully.

Under your commendable leadership, care and guidance, you have developed an effective senior leadership team who work collaboratively with you to promote clear strategic direction across the school. This has ensured that a culture of accountability has been established. Leaders support teachers well and as a result, pupils make accelerated progress across the school, regardless of their starting points.

Your highly effective leadership team support you well. They have enthusiastically worked alongside you to ensure that the school continues to improve. All the staff who spoke with me shared their admiration for the recent changes that you have made and confirmed that they are very proud to work at the school. Governors know the school well and share your ambition for the pupils; they have fully supported your actions for improvement. You work well with the school improvement partner and the local authority to continue to drive standards higher for all pupils. You have the full support of the representatives of the diocese in the work you are doing with your senior leadership team to continue to increase the proportion of pupils achieving their very best.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. You, your senior leaders and governors rightly give significant emphasis to safeguarding. Your commitment to enabling all pupils to do their very best means that their well-being and care is of a high quality. Safeguarding training is effective and thorough. Staff have a clear understanding of the different types of abuse and what to look out for in pupils' behaviour. They know how to refer their concerns and how to deal with any issues that arise. Governors are mindful of their responsibilities. The risk of pupils falling behind is minimised by the rigour of the procedures. Pupils were clear that they are taught about keeping themselves safe outside of school through assemblies, lessons and events such as anti-bullying week. For example, pupils noted that they had learned about how to keep themselves safe while using the internet or social media and how to report any concerns. They also said that internet safety was a regular topic in lessons. Pupils know who to turn to for advice if they have a problem.

Inspection findings

- My first key line of enquiry focused on how effectively the teaching of phonics supports reading in the early years, key stage 1 and across the school. I found that school leaders have worked with governors to identify staff training needs in the teaching of phonics. Since the training update, there has been renewed confidence in the teaching of phonics. Staff now have the right level of skills to support pupils and as a result, pupils' progress has improved.
- The improved phonics teaching has resulted in more pupils being able to apply their skills to help them tackle new and difficult words. Teachers and other adults are ambitious for reading; they have forged good partnerships with parents and carers, encouraging daily home reading. They regularly check pupils' progress. As a result, pupils now make rapid progress in their phonics skills. For example, in key stage 1 there is a greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs who are on track to meet expected standards this year. Nonetheless, pupils do not always have the opportunities to deepen their reading skills, including phonics, in other subjects across the curriculum.
- Leaders responsible for reading and writing across the school have rightly focused on improving pupils' speaking, vocabulary, and spelling and grammar skills. They have ensured that pupils develop and apply reading skills such as inference and deduction daily. This has accelerated the impact of reading across the curriculum and is enabling more pupils to write freely and widely across different subjects.
- My next key line of enquiry was the impact of leaders' actions to improve key stage 1 pupils' outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. I found that leaders and governors have successfully identified the priorities for improving pupils' outcomes in key stage 1 in the school's self-evaluation. Senior leaders have developed interventions and mapped out the needs of disadvantaged pupils. This means that attainment and progress gaps between groups are diminishing. Small groups of emerging disadvantaged pupils are targeted for phonics, reading and

mathematics intervention, resulting in more disadvantaged pupils working towards meeting the expected standards for their age. For example, pupils' writing in books shows rapid improvement from various starting points.

- Teachers use feedback effectively to ensure that pupils know what to do to improve their work. This focus has been a key driving force in accelerating progress for disadvantaged pupils; they feel more confident as a result. More pupils are routinely better able to explain their answers in mathematics. Progress from starting points is increasingly evident in workbooks across the curriculum.
- Finally, I looked at the impact of leaders' actions in improving the rates of progress for disadvantaged pupils in writing in key stage 2. I found that there are robust tracking systems in place that identify pupils' needs quickly, map the level of intervention needed and provide a robust monitoring schedule.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the key skills of phonics and reading are applied more widely across the curriculum so that a higher proportion of early years children and key stage 1 pupils achieve a greater depth in their reading
- pupils' skills acquired in phonics sessions are applied more widely across the curriculum at key stage 1 so that they continue to support spelling and grammar.

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

Yours sincerely

Maureen Okoye
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with the headteacher and senior and middle leaders. I held a discussion with the chair of the governing body and two other governors. I spoke with a small group of parents. I listened to a group of pupils reading. I reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and information about pupils' progress and attendance. The school's single central record of employment checks and safeguarding procedures were also reviewed. The school's website was scrutinised and it was confirmed that it meets requirements on the publication of specified information. I considered 14 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the school's survey of parents' views. I visited lessons in all classes along with the headteacher and senior leaders.