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Mrs Melanie Beardsley
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Beardsley

Short inspection of Andover Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 May 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. Since joining the school in January 2016, you have successfully created a very inclusive school. One parent stated, 'They really take the time to understand each pupil to get the best out of them.' Your team enjoy working together and are supportive of each other. You have developed a culture of high expectations, and of sharing expertise to raise standards.

Pupils told me they enjoy coming to Andover Church of England Primary School. They spoke about how much they like their school because their teachers are 'kind yet strict when they need to be'. Overall, pupils' behaviour is good. They understand and follow the behaviour policy well. During my visit, classrooms were calm and focused on learning. Pupils who need help to make positive behaviour choices, and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are supported well. Pupils try their best in their learning, with one pupil saying, 'If you think you can't do something, teachers believe in you and you can.'

The previous inspection report recognised the school's many strengths, including the progress and high standards achieved by pupils in English and mathematics. Most pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, respond well to teachers' high expectations. They make good progress from their different starting points. However, you were right to recognise, and act, after the disappointing outcomes for Year 6 pupils, last year. At the time of the previous inspection, the inspector identified that pupils'

understanding of diversity in the United Kingdom was limited. Leaders' work to address this through the development of the curriculum has been effective.

School leaders and governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and have identified clear priorities for the next stage of the school's improvement. Governors ask pertinent and challenging questions of leaders. You recognise the need to improve teaching and learning in mathematics through a consistent school-wide approach to calculation. Leaders also appreciate that they do not always track the progress of pupils closely enough to ensure that pupils, including the most able, make the best possible progress from their different starting points.

Safeguarding is effective

School leaders and governors ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Staff are vigilant in following up each welfare concern they may have. You liaise well with external agencies for guidance and support. Pre-employment checks demonstrate leaders' thorough action in ensuring the suitability of all staff and volunteers to work in school. These are recorded appropriately on the single central record. Safeguarding training is regular and the induction of new staff and volunteers is well planned. As a result, staff and governors understand their roles and responsibilities for keeping pupils safe very well.

Most pupils attend the school regularly. However, attendance figures have been below the national average in recent years, and the proportion of pupils frequently absent has been high. Leaders closely track individuals whose attendance is a concern, and work effectively with their families to reduce absence, resulting in a slightly improving picture. Leaders acknowledge, however, that there is still work to do to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They report that bullying is 'not allowed', but when it does happen, 'teachers do sort it out'. Pupils have a thorough knowledge of how to keep themselves safe online. They are able to explain in detail the importance of not sharing passwords and images. The parent support worker and the pastoral support worker ensure that the emotional, social and academic needs of vulnerable pupils are identified and well catered for. The vast majority of parents feel that their concerns are listened to and acted upon. They are happy with the care and guidance given by the school. As one parent wrote: 'The children are treated as individuals and their personal learning and emotional needs are met by all the staff.'

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, I considered how effectively leaders have tackled an apparent dip in progress rates in mathematics and how effectively writing is taught in key stage 2 to ensure that the most able pupils reach the higher standards. The inspection also focused on: how leaders ensure that pupils achieve well in reading; how effective the curriculum is in ensuring that pupils

are fully prepared for life in modern Britain; and how effectively the school keeps pupils safe.

- By the end of Year 6 in 2016, too few pupils had made strong progress from their end of key stage 1 starting points, especially in mathematics. You have responded swiftly and effectively to these disappointing outcomes for pupils.
- New teaching strategies in mathematics have been introduced to ensure that teachers make the best use of their assessments of pupils' capabilities. Teachers use their checks of pupils' developing skills to ensure that gaps in understanding are quickly plugged. The grouping of pupils for teaching is flexible to allow this. The teaching of mathematics supports pupils' learning well. It provides a strong balance across the different aspects of mathematics, and weaves problem-solving and reasoning through all. The impact of your initiatives is evident in the progress seen in current pupils' books. However, the consistency in the teaching of calculation skills needs further work, to ensure that all teachers understand the progression of skills and pupils gradually build their understanding of number.
- My classroom visits, including a scrutiny of pupils' work, showed me that the most able pupils are making sound progress in writing. Pupils write at length, in a range of styles and sustain a good quality of writing. Checklists are used effectively by pupils and teachers, to identify next steps in learning. For example, one Year 6 pupil explained to me the features he needs to include in his writing to attain the higher standard. Books and classroom displays show interesting topics and prompts to encourage pupils to write for different purposes. Teachers have developed their understanding of assessment through joint moderation with local schools. We did, however, identify and agree that the way leaders currently track pupils' progress, especially for the most able, needs to be improved. Staff need a sharper awareness of pupils' different starting points to promote the best possible outcomes.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. You place great importance on developing pupils' reading skills and their enjoyment of reading. The proportion of Year 1 pupils who reached the expected standard in phonics in 2016 was much lower than the national average. You have worked diligently to ensure high-quality teaching throughout key stage 1 and the early years. Classroom visits confirmed that the teaching of phonics is secure, and that teachers' subject knowledge is strong. The teaching of phonics is well structured and carefully matched to pupils' needs. Pupils' books show that their application of phonics knowledge to their writing is improving rapidly. Pupils enjoy reading. Reading at home is regular and well supported by parents. You have ensured that pupils have access to high-quality texts through the introduction of your lending library. Any pupil whose progress in reading is a cause for concern is carefully monitored and receives extra help tailored to their needs.
- The broad and balanced curriculum is enhanced by learning opportunities that encourage pupils to explore the world beyond Andover. For example, pupils in Year 5 are researching the cultural heritage and religions of players from Chelsea Football Club. This supports their understanding of how diverse our country is. Pupils talk confidently about their knowledge of different religions, and can make comparisons with Christianity. The school actively promotes British values across

the curriculum. Pupils told me how democracy can be seen in action at Andover, through the elections of eco council representatives and house captains. Pupils demonstrated their good understanding of respect and tolerance. One pupil stated, 'Our teachers teach us to treat others as you want to be treated.'

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- continue to improve the attendance of all pupils, focusing particularly on those pupils who are persistently absent, and regularly review the impact of their actions
- strengthen the system for tracking pupils' progress and use the information to ensure that more pupils reach the higher standards of which they are capable
- review the written calculation policy, and ensure that there is greater consistency in teaching and learning in mathematics across the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Lea Hannam
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you at several points during the day to discuss the school's effectiveness. Together, we visited lessons to observe pupils' learning, speak to pupils and look at their work. I met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body, and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I also had discussions with your mathematics lead and a group of pupils. I considered 41 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the accompanying free-text comments. I looked at the school's safeguarding arrangements. I analysed a range of documentation including: your evaluation of the school's effectiveness; school improvement planning; records of pupils' attendance; assessment information; and local authority reports. We scrutinised a range of pupils' work. I also considered the responses of staff and pupils to Ofsted's online questionnaires.