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Ms Nichola Costello
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Costello

Short inspection of Frittenden Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 13 June 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 March 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Following a period of leadership instability, you have set high expectations for pupils and staff and have established a whole-school commitment from them to do their best. Your vision, in which everyone works as a team to create a caring environment so that all within the school community feel valued, secure and respected, is realised. This school's culture is based upon the values of compassion, wisdom, hope, trust and thankfulness. These values are well known by the pupils and they have a positive influence on behaviour across the school. You have re-established a stronger partnership with parents who appreciate your responsive approach and recognise your hard work and commitment.

You have new systems and processes in place to review pupils' progress. These enable you and the staff to identify underachievement more quickly and take immediate action to rectify pupils' misconceptions. The vast majority of pupils at the school make good progress because teachers diligently check that pupils understand their learning. The majority of disadvantaged pupils are also making good progress. Pupils say that they appreciate the feedback they receive from teachers because it helps them to improve their work.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite and sensible in class. Pupils told me that there is always an adult available if they need help or are worried about something. They also say that friends help each other if someone is in need. Parents overwhelmingly appreciate the good behaviour in the school. Pupils unanimously say

that they enjoy coming to school and are well supported in lessons.

At the time of the last inspection, the report noted many strengths including the good quality of teaching and the positive way older pupils looked after the youngest in the school. It also praised the adults' ability to respond proactively to new initiatives. It identified a need to improve some teaching even further so that pupils could make rapid and sustained progress in all subjects. It also recommended that checks on pupils' progress across the curriculum must be more effective at identifying underachievement. The quality of teaching and learning is much improved across the school and this has led to pupils' progress accelerating across all subjects.

You have identified clear priorities for the next stage of the school's development and are taking the right steps to achieve them through your school improvement plan. You are fully aware that progress in mathematics for the most able will only improve if pupils are challenged more in their learning. You know that the quality of teaching can improve still further and that high expectations are the key to improving standards. You are working with staff across the school to address these issues.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils feel safe at school and parents are satisfied with how you care for their children. Policies and procedures are fully in place and pupils can identify the designated safeguarding lead. The school actively promotes how to keep safe online through assemblies, focus days and posters. Pupils are trained as 'ambassadors' to deliver e-safety lessons across the school.

Staff receive regular and relevant safeguarding training and they have a full understanding of how to raise a concern. Any necessary actions are taken without delay and are followed up in a methodical way. You work well with external agencies. Staff and governors have received training about keeping pupils safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. School leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are up to date.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection I looked at: the rate of pupils' attendance and their levels of persistent absence; the teaching of reading in Reception; and the progress pupils make in mathematics across key stage 2.
- The rate of attendance has significantly improved from 2016 and persistent absence has reduced from over 15% to 5.4% (April 2017), which is well below the national average. The school is more diligent at following up absence with parents and has refined its systems to ensure they are effective.
- The quality of the teaching of reading in Reception has improved significantly this year. Pupils are reading in line with, and beyond, national expectations. They are using the sounds of letters well to decode unknown words and they have an enthusiasm for reading aloud.
- Progress in mathematics between key stages 1 and 2 was a weakness last

year and this was particularly evident in the progress of the most able pupils. Progress this year is beginning to improve, as evidenced in progress over time in pupils' books and in leaders' current information about pupils' progress in mathematics. However, the mathematics curriculum is not clear enough about the national expectations in each year group in key stage 2. Consequently, pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop and use higher-level reasoning skills. The challenge for the most able pupils in mathematics is improving but is not consistent.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the mathematics curriculum is reviewed to ensure that it allows pupils to work within and beyond national expectations
- teachers improve pupils' mathematical reasoning skills, particularly for the most able.

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

Yours sincerely

Robin Bosher
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you. I spoke with teachers, pupils and governors. I visited five lessons with you and scrutinised a wide range of pupils' work. I heard pupils read and met a representative group of pupils. I took account of eight responses to the staff survey, 41 responses to the pupil survey, and 28 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I met with parents on the playground at the start of the day and reviewed letters written to me. I observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime and around the school. I analysed a range of the school's documentation, including: your school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement; information about pupils' achievement; and details of safeguarding checks, policies and procedures.