

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



26 July 2017

Mr S Hale
Headteacher
Chigwell Row Infant School
Lambourne Road
Chigwell
Essex
IG7 6EZ

Dear Mr Hale

Short inspection of Chigwell Row Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 6 July 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 November 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Chigwell Row Infant School is a charming, happy and lively small school with three classes. Pupils are happy, confident, and keen to talk to adults about what they enjoy about the school.

Your rural location provides unique enrichment opportunities for pupils. You utilise this effectively to support pupils' learning. Pupils, as part of forest school activities, regularly take part in activities within Hainault Forest. The forest is a short walk from the school, so all pupils can access the woodland on a regular basis. Pupils also get opportunities to venture through nature when horse riding, which is also provided as part of the curriculum. All pupils are taught to swim and specialist teaching ensures that pupils benefit from a range of sports. These activities provide rich experiences for all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently, pupils demonstrate high levels of confidence throughout their learning.

You are determined in your efforts to provide the best care for your pupils. For example, you relentlessly pursue and successfully secure additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. You have a clear vision for expanding the school's facilities and have approached relevant local bodies to make arrangements to purchase some extra land for the school to improve the physical space. Since the previous inspection, you have started working in partnership with other local schools. These professional relationships have been

invaluable in assisting you with future school planning and development, and the sharing of current best practice. This has been particularly useful for validating the school's systems for assessing pupils' work.

You are ably supported by a dedicated team of three teachers, experienced administrative staff and additional adults who ensure that the welfare of the pupils is at the centre of their work. Your strong commitment to staff professional development has meant that teachers have been successfully promoted and secured teaching jobs elsewhere. Although this has caused you some significant challenges with recruitment, you have ensured that pupils have continued to receive a good and better level of education across the school.

The previous inspection highlighted the need to develop subject leadership further. You successfully achieved this soon after the 2012 inspection. However, teachers have since moved on and teachers, new to the school this year, have taken on these roles and have made an effective start. Discussions with the leaders of mathematics and English demonstrate that they have identified accurate areas for improvement in both these subjects and have already put actions in place to further secure better outcomes for pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and governors have successfully created a safe and caring environment in which pupils can learn. Parents, who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View, overwhelmingly agree that their children are safe, happy and well looked after. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are keen to learn and share their knowledge in whole-class discussions. Pupils happily speak about how fond they are of adults in the school. Pupils are able to explain how they keep safe online and would know what to do if they have concerns.

Vulnerable pupils are particularly well cared for. You and your staff know all of the pupils well, enabling you to precisely match extra support to the needs of individual pupils. You work well with families to ensure that you have the latest information about the pupils in your care.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are well kept. All statutory checks on employees are undertaken. You have effective systems for staff to communicate concerns about children who may be at risk. Files are detailed and have a chronology so that incidents, actions and next steps can be easily identified.

You celebrate good attendance weekly and pupils enjoy the rewards. You work well with families and follow up poor attendance immediately to help reduce the few persistent absentees. Attendance for these pupils has improved over the year.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment

in phonics. In 2016, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 who met the required standard in the phonics screening check was below national average. However, the high numbers of pupils in this year group who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made good progress from their different starting points and successfully reached the expected standard in Year 2 this year.

- During my observations of the teaching and learning of phonics, teachers and teaching assistants demonstrated good subject knowledge. Teachers organise teaching and learning so that the most able pupils are supported to make as much progress as they are capable of. For example, the most able children in Reception work alongside pupils in Year 1. As a result, these children make accelerated progress.
- Pupils are given opportunities to reinforce their learning through speaking, listening and writing activities. For example, in one lesson the youngest pupils were able to give an example of a full complex sentence using the word 'water'. The teaching assistant carefully modelled pronunciation and pupils then wrote the sentence using their phonics knowledge, successfully constructing the sentence with fully formed letters.
- Listening to pupils read across the school demonstrates that pupils enjoy reading and understand why it is important that they learn to read. Pupils are excited about their reading books and read with confidence. They are able to use their phonics knowledge to read unfamiliar words while others are able to consider punctuation while reading and explain its purpose. Inspection evidence, and the school's own information on pupils' achievement in reading, demonstrates that outcomes in phonics for pupils this year are in line with the national expectation.
- My second line of enquiry looked at the impact of subject leadership on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in all subjects, including English and mathematics. This was an area for improvement in the previous inspection report. Additionally, in Year 2 writing was slightly below national averages at the end of 2016.
- The new subject leaders are enthusiastic and passionate about the school and are successfully improving pupil achievement. The small number of teachers in the school work closely together on a daily basis to support each other in ensuring that pupils are getting the support they need. They have identified the school's priorities, which align with the evidence seen on inspection.
- Topic books show good curriculum coverage; however, leaders recognise that pupils are not being given enough opportunities to write in subjects other than English. Additionally, pupils' mathematics books show that not all pupils are being provided with sufficient challenge to ensure that they make as much progress as they are capable of. Leaders have identified that pupils need to have more opportunities to work at the deeper level in mathematics through applying their skills to problem-solving activities. Leaders have been developing their own practice and have investigated a variety of resources which will enable them to plan more activities which challenge pupils to reach the higher levels of attainment.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are given more opportunities to apply their writing skills in all curriculum subjects
- teachers further develop the application of pupils' numeracy skills in mathematical problem-solving activities.

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

Yours sincerely

Cindy Impey
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

- During the inspection, I met with you, senior leaders and two governors.
- I visited all the classrooms. Current examples of children's work from every year group were looked at. I observed children's behaviour during activities and as they moved around the school.
- I listened to pupils read and spoke to them about their learning, safety and well-being.
- A number of documents were reviewed, including the school's records of monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, the single central record of employment checks, the school's self-evaluation, pupil assessment and progress information, and the school strategic plan.
- I also took account of the 11 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, completed by parents.