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Mrs Elen Peal
Headteacher
Chalfont St Giles Infant School and Nursery
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Dear Mrs Peal

Short inspection of Chalfont St Giles Infant School and Nursery

Following my visit to the school on 17 October 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 June 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have created a school where every pupil is valued, nurtured and encouraged to do their best. There is a strong sense of teamwork and the school is a very happy, purposeful environment. Together with governors and other senior leaders, you keep the school under review. No stone is left unturned in your drive to keep improving all aspects of the school. You keep careful oversight of how well pupils are learning, and act swiftly to address any dips in performance. For example, following a dip in the phonics and key stage 1 reading outcomes in 2016, you acted promptly, adjusting teaching strategies and developing staff expertise through training. As a result, outcomes and pupils' progress across the school have continued to rise in reading, as well as in other subjects.

The school is a stimulating and attractive environment for learning. Pupils are very well behaved and show kindness and consideration to each other. Classrooms are happy, busy places of learning and pupils talk with enthusiasm about the interesting things they learn, and how well their teachers look after them. All staff show warmth and great care for pupils and there is a tangible sense of community. Staff know pupils and their families well and parents appreciate the way staff are always there to welcome them at the start of the school day. Displays around the school celebrate the school values, such as respect and kindness. These displays also reflect the school's work on helping pupils to become independent, resilient learners by using their 'learning gems'. The school's partnership with parents is very strong and parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They said their children

enjoy coming to school and they are pleased with how well they learn. Parents also value the school's emphasis on nurture and care, as one parent commented, 'Teachers are kind, supportive and engaging.'

You have maintained the strengths identified at the last inspection. Pupils at Chalfont St Giles continue to achieve standards that are above those seen nationally. The most able pupils attain well and in 2017 the proportion of pupils in key stage 1 who achieved a greater depth of learning was above the national average. You and other senior leaders are not complacent and continue to strive to help pupils to achieve even better. You have identified that even more middle-attaining pupils could be challenged further to help them to make accelerated progress. You have rightly focused on this area in your improvement plans for this year. In previous years, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have not attended as well as other pupils, and some of these pupils have had high levels of absence. You have addressed this very successfully and these pupils' rates of attendance have improved. Nevertheless, you recognise that a small number of families continue to need support and guidance to keep improving pupils' attendance rates.

You have also addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. Good-quality professional development has improved teachers' skills further and the quality of teaching has continued to strengthen throughout the school. Pupils apply their spelling and punctuation skills well in their independent writing and teachers give appropriate focus to this when talking to pupils about how to improve their writing. You have reinvigorated the curriculum to make sure that it continues to meet pupils' needs and interests and helps them to learn well. For example, you have refined your plans so that tasks and topics are equally appealing to boys and girls, to enable them to achieve as well as each other. You now include many more opportunities for pupils to learn outdoors and be 'active' in their learning. As a result, pupils' enthusiasm and interest have increased. You have also recognised the need to strengthen pupils' learning about different cultures and religions, and have sensibly included this in your plans for this year.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. You have a very good knowledge of safeguarding and keep meticulous records of any concerns or referrals. You follow up concerns diligently and are tenacious in ensuring that pupils and their families receive the right support. Timely, appropriate training ensures that all staff are entirely confident in knowing what to do if they have any concerns. Any volunteers joining the school receive safeguarding training and know the school's procedures. Governors fulfil their duties very well. The safeguarding governor meets with you each half term and systematically reviews all aspects of safeguarding practice. The health and safety governor also carries out termly checks on site security and safety. You also make sure that pupils learn how to keep safe, such as how to cross the road safely and not to share information about themselves online. Staff, pupils and their parents agree that pupils are completely safe at school. As one parent commented, 'Children are 100% safe at school.'

Inspection findings

- During this inspection we agreed to focus on particular aspects of the school's work: the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements; how well leaders are using the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities; how well teaching enables middle-attaining pupils to make rapid progress so that even more achieve greater depth of learning; and how well the curriculum meets pupils' needs and prepares them for life in modern Britain.
- You make effective use of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school's good-quality overviews clearly set out the tailored approach that leaders take to supporting these pupils. The school works effectively with many different outside agencies to support pupils. Within school, nurture groups and targeted support are helping these pupils develop their skills and make strong progress.
- You have worked hard with families to help improve attendance rates for the small number of pupils who are persistently absent. You follow up any absences very promptly and work with families to help remove barriers that may be contributing to low school attendance. While low attendance rates for a few individual pupils persist, school leaders are doing everything they can to address this.
- In 2017, pupils in key stage 1 generally made good progress and achieved well. Your close tracking has identified that although current middle-attaining pupils are making good progress, even more of them could make accelerated progress to enable them to achieve a greater depth of learning.
- During our discussions and visits to classrooms we could see that pupils were being set appropriate tasks to develop their learning. However, we agreed that while middle-attaining pupils are making good progress, your focus for more of these pupils to make even better progress is appropriate. Your school improvement plan and performance management targets for staff are keeping this focused firmly in the minds of everyone at the school.
- Across the school, the curriculum is underpinned by the school's values and aims of creating, '... happy, resilient, well-balanced and life-long learners, who strive to achieve their potential'. The well-planned curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to learn across different subjects. Memorable events, visits and activities engage and interest pupils. Pupils talk excitedly about their outdoor learning, explaining how they enjoyed toasting marshmallows around the camp fire and making dens. They talk knowledgeably about their learning in history, such as how and why the Great Fire of London spread so rapidly.
- You have reviewed the way pupils learn important mathematical concepts and plan many ways for pupils to learn from practical tasks. During the inspection, pupils enjoyed working outdoors to solve multiplication calculations using hoops and bean bags to create groups of numbers.
- The early years curriculum is also well planned. Teachers design appealing activities which motivate children, sustain their attention and help them to learn

well. Activities help promote children's self-confidence and independence.

- Subject leaders oversee individual subjects and make sure that pupils steadily develop their knowledge and skills as they move through key stage 1. While the curriculum is interesting and engaging, learning about other cultures and faiths is currently less well developed. As a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding of this aspect of the curriculum is not secure.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils have more opportunities to learn about other cultures and beliefs to enable them to be well prepared for life in modern Britain
- the school's work to accelerate the progress of middle-attaining pupils is extended, so that even more of these pupils achieve greater depth of learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Cox
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Together, we visited all classes to look at learning and talk to pupils about their work. I met with you and the deputy headteacher to discuss the school's self-evaluation, pupils' outcomes, attendance, and the support provided for pupils. We also met to review safeguarding arrangements. I held a meeting with five members off the governing body and had a short conversation with a representative from the local authority. I spoke to pupils informally during the day and I met with a group of pupils from Year 2. I reviewed a range of school documents including the pre-employment checks on the suitability of staff to work with children, other safeguarding information, policies and documents. I considered the views of parents through the 92 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the responses of staff from the 15 members of staff who completed the Ofsted staff questionnaire. I also met parents on the playground at the start of the school day.