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26 January 2018

Mr Michael Watson
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Watson

Short inspection of Kilkhampton Junior and Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 11 January 2018, 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 May 2014.

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 led the school successfully, proactively seeking opportunities to improve outcomes for pupils and creating a culture across the school where all are valued. Staff feel appreciated for the contribution they make towards achieving the school vision. Outcomes for pupils have been particularly strong in writing over the last two years. You have ensured that assessments of pupils' writing at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 have been validated through moderation by local authority representatives. You have an astute understanding of the strengths and weaknesses across the school, acting decisively and with success when changes or improvements are required. The pupils are central to every decision you make.

You lead the school with a moral purpose. Parents and carers recognise and appreciate the school's role as the heart of the community because you have made decisions which improve opportunities for the whole local community. Because the nearest library is six miles away, you opened the school library during the after-school period to encourage access to the high-quality book stock in which you have so heavily invested. You recognise and speak passionately about how reading can unlock opportunities for pupils. Leaders are avid to improve life chances for all pupils and they invest care, time and energy as effectively as they do funding. This is a caring school community which is aspirational for all pupils and the community it serves.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have created a culture where safeguarding is interwoven throughout all activities. Recruitment checks are thorough and ensure that only those who are suitable to work with children are employed. Once staff are employed, their details are logged effectively on the single central record which is up to date, well maintained and checked regularly. Staff have access to high-quality training to help them fulfil their statutory responsibilities. You have promoted a culture where staff are vigilant and have a heightened awareness of concerns and managing risks.

Where concerns about pupils arise, chronologies are incredibly detailed and capture, in detail, the key concerns, as well as important information. Leaders swiftly follow up concerns and make referrals. Record-keeping is extremely well organised. Each event is cross-referenced effectively and is easy to navigate. As a result, leaders share concerns with external agencies in an effective and timely manner and do so with a compelling wealth of information to support their referrals. Leaders can demonstrate where their actions have resulted in positive outcomes, such as improved attendance for pupils where previously it has been consistently poor.

The school environment is rich in safeguarding materials, reminding staff of their responsibilities to keep children safe and communicate concerns that they may have to the relevant leaders. Leaders have also promoted safeguarding on the school website, another example of how safeguarding children is of utmost importance to you and your team. As a result, parents and staff are unanimous that children are safe. Pupils agree.

Inspection findings

- At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the key lines of enquiry to consider during the day. First, we considered how the quality of teaching, learning and assessment supports lower-attaining pupils and disadvantaged pupils to make progress in writing across key stage 2. Second, we explored how leaders have acted to improve outcomes in reading across key stage 2, particularly for those who are middle- or higher-attaining pupils. Third, we considered how leaders support pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, particularly in year groups where the proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is considerably higher than national averages.
- Over the last two years, lower-attaining pupils and disadvantaged pupils have made strong progress in writing across key stage 2. Current key stage 2 pupils are also making strong progress. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and provide well-informed challenge to help pupils further improve. Where pupils require additional support, interventions are of a high quality and provide pupils with opportunities to apply what they have learned in a positive learning environment. Pupils are keen to talk about their improvements and take immense pride in what they have achieved. Pupils who are working below expectations for their age demonstrate that they are catching up with their peers. Mistakes become less frequent and pupils' writing style and structure improve rapidly.
- Pupils have plenty of opportunities to write across the curriculum. The rich

curriculum provides an engaging stimulus for pupils to write and apply what they have learned in their literacy lessons. Thanks to the high-quality literacy sessions, pupils speak knowledgeably about what they have learned and most pupils confidently apply this skill to their own writing. Pupils are encouraged to edit their writing, in line with the school approach, as a way of refining it. Workbooks demonstrate that pupils edit their work regularly and this improves the quality of their writing. Where weaknesses are present, these are specifically linked to the quality of presentation and handwriting. Across the wide range of books we sampled, it became clear that teachers' expectations of pupils could be higher. Furthermore, not all pupils are attending to presentation and quality, which results in weaker writing outcomes. Teachers do not yet consistently expect all pupils to apply what they have learned.

- Pupils' reading progress by the end of key stage 2 in 2017 was lower than in writing and mathematics, particularly for girls. Leaders have rightly identified that improvements are needed and have acted extremely effectively to improve outcomes for pupils in this area. Leaders have been innovative in the way they share information with parents about the reading curriculum across the school. Leaders use the school website to inform parents of the school's approach to how reading is taught and to share expectations. There has also been a substantial investment in the range of good-quality books available for pupils to read. As a result, the whole school community is aware of the importance of improving reading across the school. Leaders acknowledge that further investment in books is needed to engage girls further, particularly those in upper key stage 2.
- Pupils have access to a rich and varied book stock, value the books available and enjoy the choices they have. As a result, pupils love to read. They speak passionately about their favourite books and authors and can discuss their reasons for selecting books. During reading sessions, pupils have daily opportunities to read and complete activities about their book. Pupils share what they have read with their peers and engage in high-quality conversations. Pupils have extremely positive attitudes towards reading. During one session that we watched, one pupil found a part of the story she was reading particularly funny and was desperate to share this moment with her classmates. Such is the love of reading that all were interested in her retelling of this funny moment in the book.
- Pupils read frequently. Reading records show a large number of entries and pupils enjoy these opportunities, claiming that reading regularly helps to inspire them to write their own books and that books take them away to another world. Teachers closely monitor the books that pupils read once they have left the traditional book-banding scheme. Staff ensure that the pitch of the book is appropriate and that progress continues. Due to the quality of books and the frequency of reading opportunities, most pupils start and finish books. They develop a stamina for reading and build up a knowledge of authors and authorial style, which they easily express.
- The school has previously had higher numbers of pupils identified as having SEN and/or disabilities. Leaders have worked hard to reduce these numbers, particularly as they recognise that some of these pupils, being lower attaining rather than having specific needs, did not require such support. The school has a robust system for supporting pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Leaders

use early identification effectively to ensure that pupils receive support, if needed, as soon as possible. In order to improve access to external support, leaders have enhanced the frequency of support for pupils, specifically with speech therapy. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has a strong understanding of the pupils and is knowledgeable about how to best meet their needs. Staff receive relevant and appropriate training. Training is linked to the specific needs within the school, with the intention of providing high-quality support to each pupil identified as having SEN and/or disabilities. Consequently, these pupils make good progress from their different starting points or against their particular needs.

- Plans to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are detailed and well matched to pupils' needs. Targets are well designed and intended to have an impact over a short period of time, with the aim of making sure that targets are continually revised so that plans remain relevant. Academic targets feature in these plans and pupils have frequent opportunities to apply these targets in their lessons. All staff have a strong understanding of the targets that pupils are working on and can support or challenge further as necessary. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders continue to promote a love of reading across the school, particularly for girls, through further investment in reading materials so that progress across the school improves and the proportion of pupils working at the highest standards increases
- teachers further raise expectations of pupils' writing, particularly in handwriting and presentation, so that it closely matches the quality of sentence structure and grammar seen in books.

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

Yours sincerely

Nathan Kemp
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I spoke to you and the SENCo. I also spoke to representatives of the governing body and your school improvement partner, whom you have sought independently. You and I made visits to lessons to observe pupils. We also scrutinised the work in pupils' books.

I looked at a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's self-evaluation and the current school development plan, as well as progress and attendance information. Additionally, I scrutinised various safeguarding records, including those relating to the suitability of staff to work with children. I took account of 38 responses to the Parent View online survey, 15 responses to the pupil survey and five responses to the staff survey.