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Mrs Jayne Ingman
Headteacher
Crockham Hill Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
Crockham Hill
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Dear Mrs Ingman

Short inspection of Crockham Hill Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 February 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 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. When you started at the school in April 2016, you swiftly identified priorities for improvement and worked closely with governors to implement a detailed action plan. You have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and your self-evaluation is accurate. Your staff share your commitment and drive for school improvement. They are motivated by your high expectations, and are proud to be part of the school. Governors are supportive of you and your plans to bring about school improvement. They are knowledgeable and know the school well. Their expertise enables them to provide strategic support and challenge for school leaders.

Pupils are happy at school and apply themselves diligently to their learning. They are well behaved, polite and respectful. Pupils describe their school as a 'fun' place to be, where 'everyone knows each other'. They talk with enthusiasm about their curriculum. One of the younger pupils in the school described their topic about dinosaurs and was excited about watching the 'baby dinosaurs' hatch out of their shells. An older pupil recalled their work about Chartwell House, the home of Sir Winston Churchill. Another explained how this experience, linked to their topic about the Second World War, helped them to develop their skills in persuasive letter-writing. Pupils feel fortunate to have a wide range of after-school clubs to attend and are delighted to have a zip-wire in their playground.

Parents are positive about the school and confident in your leadership. The majority of those parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said that their children are taught well and make good progress. Most said that they would recommend

the school to others. One parent described the school as having a 'caring ethos that encourages pupils to develop confidence and responsibility'. Parents that I spoke to on the playground said that their children were happy at school. One parent expressed how they were grateful that teachers celebrated the achievements of pupils outside as well as within school. Another parent explained the strong sense of community, and how their children benefit from interacting and socialising with pupils of all ages throughout the school day.

At the time of the previous inspection, leaders were asked to provide opportunities for pupils to improve the quality of their writing. During the inspection, I observed writing in English, as well as in a wide range of other subjects in the curriculum. Leaders' recent focus on the development of writing has brought about strong improvement in key stage 2. However, leaders are not complacent and are continuing to focus on securing further improvements to current pupils' writing.

Leaders were also asked to ensure that work was well matched to the needs of all pupils, including the most able. Much action is being taken to address this and you are currently focusing on increasing the rate of progress of the most able pupils in all year groups. You are also working on improving the quality of teaching and learning in key stage 1, in reading, writing and mathematics, so that all pupils make rapid progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and thorough. All members of the school community take their responsibilities to safeguard pupils seriously. You lead annual safeguarding training to ensure that all of your staff have a secure understanding of the most recent statutory requirements. Policies are detailed and comprehensive, and procedures to report concerns about pupils are clear. You also allocate time in weekly staff meetings to discuss the general welfare of the pupils in your care. Governors undertake regular safeguarding training to ensure that they are well informed, including safer-recruitment training. The chair of the governing body frequently checks systems for vetting all new members of staff and volunteers. School records indicate that procedures are extremely thorough.

Pupils talked confidently about the many ways that the school teaches them to stay safe. During the inspection, pupils were learning about online safety, including what they would do if they saw something inappropriate while on the internet. They also recalled a visit from a representative of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and explained what they had been taught about 'stranger danger' and road safety. Pupils report that behaviour is good in their school and that bullying is rare. All pupils with whom I spoke agreed that they would feel confident to report a concern to any adult in the school.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, I evaluated in particular: what actions leaders were taking to enable more pupils to meet and exceed the expected standards in key stage 1; the

achievement of the most able pupils; and whether the progress and attainment of current pupils in key stage 2 are comparable to the exceptionally high achievement of the Year 6 pupils in 2017.

- You have rightly identified that pupils in key stage 1 have not always made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2017, fewer pupils in Year 2 achieved or exceeded the expected standards compared to their peers nationally. You now monitor the progress of individual pupils closely, and carefully identify those who require more focused teaching or individual intervention. A recent change in staffing has also started to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. Current assessment information indicates that pupils in key stage 1 are now making better progress from their starting points.
- Leaders' tracking of the most able pupils indicates that some do not yet make fast enough progress in reading, writing or mathematics. My scrutiny of pupils' English and mathematics books in key stage 1 and key stage 2 identified that teachers do not routinely challenge the most able pupils sufficiently. When talking to pupils, some said that they were not routinely given hard enough work to do. Leaders have already started to make effective changes to the way in which the most able pupils are challenged. This remains a key priority for improvement.
- In 2017, every pupil in Year 6 achieved the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This is significantly above the national average. In addition, the proportion of pupils who exceeded the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was also above the national average. Leaders and governors are, understandably, very proud of this considerable achievement. Current assessment information indicates that fewer pupils in key stage 2 are working at this high standard. The detailed and targeted actions in your school development plan are already having a positive impact on improving rates of progress for all pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils in key stage 1 make faster progress from their starting points, so that more achieve the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics
- teachers provide greater challenge for the most able pupils in key stages 1 and 2, so that more pupils attain the higher standards.

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

Yours sincerely

Luisa Gould
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and a group of governors. I had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. We met together to discuss and agree the key lines of enquiry for the inspection. Jointly, we undertook a 'learning walk' in key stages 1 and 2. I reviewed pupils' work in English, mathematics and other subjects. We discussed the school's assessment information for current pupils, your plans for improvement and your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I considered the 54 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and took account of parents' free-text responses. I also met parents on the playground at the start of the school day. I analysed a range of school documentation, including policies, procedures and minutes from governing body meetings. I met with the secretary to review the pre-employment checks made on the suitability of staff to work with children and checked other safeguarding documentation and procedures.