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Miss Claire Murphy
Chidham Parochial Primary School
Chidham Lane
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Chichester
West Sussex
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Dear Miss Murphy

Short inspection of Chidham Parochial Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 June 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 December 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, your leaders and governors have successfully managed a significant number of changes. These include the school increasing in size, the building of new classrooms and considerable changes in staffing. Your hard work and that of the staff have ensured that the school continues to improve. Your values underpin the school's vision of a community where 'every learner will have the support and encouragement they need to enjoy their learning'. Staff morale is high. There is a strong sense of teamwork, and all the staff who completed the Ofsted questionnaire said that they were proud to be part of the school community.

Staff know the pupils well, and parents appreciate the individual care and support that their children receive. One parent said: 'I enjoy the environment at the school and see very happy children being well cared for and treated equally. The quality of care is superb.'

Pupils are very proud of their school and show good levels of respect for one another. They describe their school as 'happy', 'amazing' and 'welcoming'. Their enjoyment means that most pupils attend regularly. However, you recognise that the attendance of vulnerable pupils is an area that requires further improvement, and you and your team are working closely with families to address this.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors highlighted good teaching, positive relationships and effective leadership. These aspects remain strong. You and your

leadership team have addressed the key priorities for improvement identified by the previous inspection. For example, you were asked to maximise the opportunities to challenge pupils to think more deeply. You have introduced and embedded the use of information communication technology, and have provided a range of effective resources that help pupils enhance their questioning skills. This has led to pupils being more independent, and has resulted in them making better progress.

In 2017, pupils' attainment in key stage 2 exceeded that seen nationally. Pupils in key stage 2 made above-average progress in reading. Their progress in writing was slower, although in line with the national average. You have correctly identified that more needs to be done to accelerate boys' progress in writing. You are aware that actions to improve boys' progress are not fully embedded. Pupils do not always use their grammar and punctuation knowledge when writing, and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length in English. There are times when boys do not settle quickly to write because they do not have the confidence to apply their grammatical skills when writing for longer periods.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong and effective culture of safeguarding in the school shared by your staff, the governors and the wider school community. The school has well-developed procedures to protect pupils. For example, governors hold leaders to account effectively through regular review and effective monitoring. Record-keeping is detailed, and all actions are followed up meticulously. Precise and detailed procedures ensure that school staff are properly vetted before they work at the school. There are effective relationships with other agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and well looked after.

Parents and staff who completed the online questionnaires stated, without exception, that children are safe at this school. Parents describe the school as 'incredibly supportive', with a 'caring community ethos'. Pupils who I spoke to agreed that they feel safe in school. One child told me, 'We can tell our teachers anything and they will help and support us.'

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection we agreed to look at the effectiveness of safeguarding and attendance, the teaching of reading, boys' progress in writing at key stage 2, and the effectiveness of teaching and learning in phonics.
- My first line of enquiry focused on how effectively leaders had improved the teaching of reading at key stage 2. In 2016, the progress pupils made in reading was in line with the national average at the end of key stage 2. Leaders introduced changes to the teaching of reading which focused on increasing pupils' comprehension and inference skills. You have provided high-quality training for all staff to ensure that all pupils benefit from good-quality questioning when reading. As a result of your concerted efforts to raise standards, in 2017 pupils at key stage 2 made progress that was significantly above average and in

the highest 10% when compared with other schools nationally.

- You have identified that boys have not progressed as well as girls in writing and have implemented actions to address this. You have reviewed the topics on offer to pupils and introduced 'boy-friendly' topics such as 'trainers, tracks and tyres'. This has enthused more boys to write when learning in other subjects. However, there are still too few occasions when pupils have time to complete extended pieces of writing. While the boys attain well in English at the end of key stage 2, they do not consistently apply their skills when writing, and this prevents them from making the progress that they are capable of.
- You are working tirelessly to improve the attendance of pupils. You have employed specific staff to meet with parents when their child's attendance has been poor. Records show that because of your actions the proportion of pupils that are persistently absent has fallen. Nevertheless, you are far from satisfied, and have correctly identified that the number of vulnerable pupils that are persistently absent is still above the national average. You and your team, which includes a child and family worker, continue to work sensitively with families so that pupils can attend more regularly and maximise their time at school.
- My final line of enquiry focused on evaluating leaders' actions in improving phonics. This was because standards in 2017 were below the national average. Staff have engaged in training and have improved the teaching of phonics over the past year. This is having a positive effect, but has not been sustained long enough to bring pupils' skills to the desired level. Even so, records of pupils' achievements over time show that they reach the expected levels of phonics understanding by the end of Year 2.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they strengthen the teaching of phonics at key stage 1
- teaching provides greater challenge for boys at key stage 2 to improve the progress they make in writing.
- absence continues to be robustly tackled so that attendance improves for vulnerable pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

David Harris

Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, your deputy headteacher, and several members of staff. We talked about the improvements which have been made since the last inspection. Together, we observed learning in several lessons. I examined pupils' work, focusing on writing. I held a meeting with four governors, including the chair. Before the inspection, I examined a variety of documents, including the school's website, published performance information, and a summary of your school's self-evaluation document. I took account of 61 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 45 written comments. I also considered 17 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 70 responses to the pupil questionnaire. I considered a range of documentary evidence, including documents relating to safeguarding and governance.