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Mr Tom Hutchings
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Hutchings

Short inspection of Cherry Garden Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 4 July 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 February 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since you began in post in September 2017, you have taken decisive action to further improve teaching and have quickly gained the respect of parents, staff and pupils. Parents typically comment, 'the headteacher is an asset to the school' and 'the new headteacher goes above and beyond to make everyone feel welcome'. For reasons beyond your control, there has been a high turnover of staff in the last year. This has naturally upset some parents and pupils. You are mindful of the impact of this and you are doing everything you can to minimise the effects on pupils' learning. For instance, you have taken on some teaching commitments and have ensured that trips and drama productions go ahead as usual. Some pupils affected by the changes comment positively: 'It has been a difficult year, but we've still had fun.' You have recently appointed an existing member of staff to the role of deputy headteacher. You have also recruited new teachers and subject leaders to provide a more stable staffing structure for next year. However, it will take time for new staff to develop the skills to fulfil their roles effectively.

Good teaching ensures that children consistently achieve well at the end of the early years. You have taken highly effective action to improve the teaching of phonics. As a result, 90% of current pupils achieved the expected standards in the Year 1 phonics check. The proportion of pupils achieving expected standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2 has increased over the last three years. Consequently, pupils' achievement in most subjects is close to, and often considerably better than, that of pupils nationally. Further improvements to teaching for current pupils have resulted

in a large majority of pupils achieving the standards expected for their age. However, some pupils, including pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, do not make strong enough progress to achieve the expected standards.

Changes to governance mean that governors are still developing their roles. They understand some of the priorities for the school and know that they have a duty to safeguard pupils. As a result, they have helped you to undertake a safeguarding audit and carry out learning walks to review pupils' learning. However, governors have a limited understanding of how to evaluate pupils' progress or monitor attendance. This hinders them from holding you and other leaders to account. They have recently undertaken a governance review to identify the steps they need to take to improve.

Safeguarding is effective.

You know your pupils well and pastoral support is strong. You take appropriate action when pupils experience problems and make good use of external agencies when this is necessary. This helps you to make sure that pupils get the specific help they need. You keep detailed records of all referrals and you routinely monitor your actions to check that they are having a positive impact.

You make thorough checks to ensure that all adults working in the school are safe to work with children and you record this on the school's single central record. You provide relevant training for all staff so that they understand the procedures to follow in a range of situations. This ensures that everyone takes responsibility for keeping pupils safe.

Teachers across the school develop caring and supportive relationships with pupils. The overwhelming majority of pupils feel safe at school and say that adults look after them well. Most pupils believe that behaviour is generally good and say that when it is not, adults sort out any problems. A few parents are concerned about behaviour management and the impact of some pupils' poor behaviour on their children. However, inspection activities confirm that you provide high levels of support for the minority of pupils who, for complex reasons, display challenging behaviour. The majority of parents, pupils and staff who shared their views recognise that you do all you can to support pupils who find it hard to manage their behaviour. For instance, a parent stated that 'challenging behaviour is handled well'. You celebrate and reward pupils for good attendance and do not authorise holidays in term time. Consequently, most pupils attend school regularly. However, despite your efforts, some parents choose to take their children on holiday when they should be at school. This means that some pupils have lower attendance.

Most pupils enjoy school and chat excitedly about their learning. The majority of pupils know the school's expectations of them. As a result, they move sensibly around the school and work purposefully in lessons. During learning activities, pupils are well supported by adults who generally model learning well. This helps pupils to stay focused and interested in their work.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was to establish how leaders are reversing the decline in outcomes in phonics. You have utilised the expertise of the early years leader to improve phonics teaching. She has provided staff with appropriate training to ensure that teaching is more accurately pitched at meeting pupils' needs. She regularly monitors pupils' progress, which helps her to intervene when teaching needs to improve. As a result of consistently good teaching, 90% of pupils in Year 1 achieved the expected standards this year. This is a marked improvement on previous years. Inspection activities confirm that pupils are developing secure phonics skills, which help them to read and spell accurately.
- Next, I wanted to find out how effectively leaders are improving teaching in writing and mathematics at key stages 1 and 2. You work hard to support leaders and teachers to develop their skills. You undertake observations of pupils' learning with governors, which helps them to understand their role in evaluating the effectiveness of teaching. Inspection activities revealed that improved teaching is helping pupils to write for sustained periods and they present their work neatly. Pupils are developing their use of adventurous vocabulary and descriptive language and enjoy writing about their experiences. For example, we observed Year 1 pupils concentrating hard to write a recount of their trip to the SS Great Britain. In mathematics, pupils are able to apply the skills they have learned to solve problems. They use their reasoning skills to justify how they know whether a fact is true or false. Our joint review of pupils' work confirms that good teaching helps most pupils to make strong progress to achieve the standards expected for their age. We reviewed your current assessment system. This indicates that pupils are achieving less well than they actually are and does not accurately reflect the higher outcomes seen in pupils' work.
- We looked at how well teaching supports disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to make effective progress. Good teaching ensures that disadvantaged pupils' progress is strong. Your newly appointed special educational needs co-ordinator is undertaking training to gain a good understanding of how to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. This is having a positive impact. For example, a parent commented, 'The school has gone out of its way to make adjustments to my child's education to help improve their progress.' Good deployment of staff and focused teaching support generally help pupils to make strong progress. However, a few pupils have not made sufficiently strong progress to catch up with their peers.
- Finally, I wanted to check how well leaders communicate with parents. You provide regular newsletters and update the school website to keep parents informed of your work. You maintain a visible presence at the school gate, which gives parents the chance to talk to you if they have any concerns. The overwhelming majority of parents comment that you are approachable. They appreciate the opportunity of attending the parents' forum so that they can share ideas and contribute to school improvement.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the rigour of assessment improves so that it more accurately reflects the standards that pupils are working at
- governors improve their monitoring of progress and attendance so that outcomes continue to improve, particularly for pupils who need to catch up
- new leaders are provided with support to successfully fulfil their roles, so that they can intervene when teaching needs to improve.

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

Yours sincerely

Catherine Beeks
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the course of the inspection I met with you, the deputy headteacher and the English leader, who is also the early years leader. I met with the local authority adviser and had a telephone conversation with the chair of governors. I checked the school's single central record and we discussed your safeguarding procedures. We reviewed the school's latest assessment information and I read an overview of your priorities for development. Together, we observed phonics in the early years and key stage 1. We also observed English in Years 1 and 5 and mathematics in Years 2 and 4. I spoke with pupils in lessons and at break and lunchtime. I also heard some Year 1 pupils read. Together with the deputy headteacher, we jointly reviewed pupils' work in English and mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5. I talked to several parents at the beginning of the school day and considered 67 responses to Ofsted's online survey Parent View, along with 43 additional freetext comments. I reviewed 14 responses to the online staff questionnaire and 34 responses to the online pupil survey.