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6 September 2018

Mr Mark Gale
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mr Gale

Short inspection of Earlswood Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 17 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 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. Since joining the school, in September 2017, you have built on the strengths of previous leadership by strengthening the partnership between the infant and junior schools. There are increased opportunities for staff to work together and for pupils to access a wider and more enriching curriculum. You have worked closely with your senior leaders and governors to create an ethos and vision in which every child matters. You value the unique qualities that each individual pupil brings to the school, while celebrating their differences. This was reflected in one of the many positive comments made by parents and carers: 'I love Earlswood Infant School. We feel so lucky to be part of this community, everyone working together with the interests of the child at the heart of what they do.'

You and your leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve well. You have quickly gained a clear insight into the school's strengths and weaknesses. You have developed both long-term and short-term plans to meet the school's agreed goals, to bring about sustainable improvements. Staff feel highly valued and understand the role they play within the team. Consequently, staff morale is high. One member of staff wrote, 'The leadership team are always looking to encourage effective improvements and listen to staff if they feel something can work better, more efficiently and they implement the changes when this proves to be the case.'

Pupils are very happy and they enjoy school. They have excellent attitudes towards learning because teachers provide interesting activities and experiences. These

encourage curiosity, develop their imagination and inspire within them a love of learning. The school environment, both inside and outdoors, is bright and attractive and makes pupils feel safe and valued. Pupils behave exceptionally well in class and in the playground. They get on very well together and willingly help each other by sharing their thoughts and ideas. Through the school's values, they develop personal qualities such as kindness and thoughtfulness, and they know the importance of treating each other fairly and without discrimination.

At the time of the last inspection, school leaders were asked to improve the quality of teaching. Since then, there have been some changes to the teaching team, but despite that, teaching remains good across the school. There is a culture within school of self-improvement. Teachers welcome the support and guidance you and other leaders provide that help them to become even better teachers. For example, you have supported the English leader, who has introduced actions to improve writing. While this is leading to early success, you know that some teachers do not always ensure that pupils consistently use their basic spelling, punctuation and grammar skills when they write independently. There are also inconsistencies in how teachers use the school's assessment policy.

Leaders at the last inspection were also asked to increase the progress made by boys in the Reception classes, particularly in language and literacy. The most recent performance information shows that boys do equally as well as girls in language and literacy in the early years and at key stage 1. This is partly owing to a new scheme to support pupils' language development that encourages them to talk about their learning. The other successful action has been to review the topics taught in the early years, as well as across the school, to make them more interesting to boys. As a result, boys progress well with their literacy skills and enjoy reading and writing across a range of subjects.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding pupils is given high priority by school leaders and governors and so all records are of good quality and fit for purpose. Leaders have established a safe and caring environment in which pupils thrive and grow in confidence. All staff receive regular training and so they are well prepared to act quickly should they have a concern that a child may be at risk from harm. Even minor concerns are diligently recorded and shared with the wider safeguarding team. This allows them to notice emerging patterns and take action as required. The necessary checks are made on all adults who work and visit school to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. The designated safeguarding lead provides regular updates for staff so that they are all aware of potential safeguarding issues, including those relating to modern technology and online safety.

All parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, strongly agreed or agreed that their children were happy, safe and well looked after in school. One of the strengths of the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils is the quality of information provided to parents on the school's website. Parents are kept up to date with guidance, including that relating to online safety, about what they can do to

help keep children safe. Pupils themselves feel very safe in school. They say that adults are caring and help to sort out the very few minor problems that very occasionally arise.

Inspection findings

- In addition to evaluating the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements, we agreed to look at the following aspects of the school's work:
 - the impact of actions taken by school leaders to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils
 - how well the quality of teaching helps pupils to achieve well
 - the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning and progress.
- Since joining the school in September 2017, you have raised the profile of disadvantaged pupils with all staff. You have been relentless in introducing actions to help disadvantaged pupils to achieve as well as other pupils. You instigated an external review of how the pupil premium funding was spent, and you acted on the advice provided. As a result, all teachers understand the barriers that disadvantaged pupils may face and they put into place interventions and support to help them to keep up with their classmates. The most recent performance information shows that disadvantaged pupils remain behind other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. However, some of these pupils have other complex needs, including language or social and emotional difficulties that have a negative impact on their capacity to attain as well as other pupils. To address this, staff make sure that disadvantaged pupils have opportunities to take part in a wide variety of enrichment activities, including music, woodland experiences and cookery. These experiences help to improve their language skills as well as giving them access to similar experiences to other pupils. As a result of these actions, disadvantaged pupils make progress that is at least in line with that of other pupils.
- Pupils learn well because teachers provide activities that capture their interest. During the inspection, pupils were engaged in activities related to 'Enterprise Week'. In Year 2, pupils made sand art in small bottles to sell to raise funds for animal charities. They were busily creating posters, using persuasive language to encourage their parents to buy their products. Some created puns, including 'sandsational' to capture the buyers' attention. They worked collaboratively, sharing ideas and learning from each other. They described the various skills, including teamwork, art and literacy, that they were learning. Teachers are skilled at questioning pupils to move their learning forward by deepening their understanding. Many of the activities they provide are rooted in real-life experiences that help the pupils gain a good understanding of what they are learning. Work in pupils' books shows that teachers strive to meet pupils' different learning needs. Tasks are broken down into different levels of difficulty so that all pupils progress well. Teachers provide work that is challenging and makes pupils work hard, particularly in mathematics, where they are asked to explain and give reasons for their answers. Although pupils learn spelling, handwriting and punctuation, they do not always use these skills consistently

when writing independently, and so their progress is slower in writing. Not all teachers apply the school's assessment policy consistently, so pupils do not receive consistent advice on how to improve their work.

- The curriculum is imaginatively planned to provide pupils with exciting experiences that inspire their curiosity and develop highly positive attitudes towards learning. Leaders take advantage of links with the junior school to provide pupils with experiences such as outdoor learning in the woodland area in the junior school grounds. Subjects are linked so that pupils gain a wider view of the world. Specialist teachers for music and physical education (PE) work alongside class teachers to further increase their skills. As a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy these subjects and progress well. During the inspection, pupils from Year 2 were practising for their leaving assembly. They spoke exceptionally clearly and sang beautifully. The curriculum is enhanced through well-chosen visits to local places of interest. As far as possible, teachers provide first-hand experiences for pupils so that learning is meaningful and purposeful. Wherever possible, opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and mathematical skills are built into the curriculum, and so pupils practise these skills throughout the day.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils use their spelling, handwriting, punctuation and grammar skills when writing independently and that they present their work to a high standard
- all staff follow the school's assessment policy consistently so that pupils are helped to improve their work.

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

Yours sincerely

Joy Considine
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the deputy headteacher and the head of school to discuss your own evaluation of the school, and to discuss the aspects of the school that were to be inspected. I also met with other school leaders during the day. I met with five governors, including the two co-chairs, and I held a telephone conversation with the school's adviser from the local authority.

Together with two senior leaders, I observed pupils working in key stage 1 and the early years. I took into account the school's long-term and short-term plans for

development and looked at curriculum information on the school's website. I also scrutinised information relating to the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils. I considered the views of staff by analysing the 42 responses to the staff survey. I took into account the views of parents by scrutinising the 176 responses to the online survey, Parent View, as well as many written responses recorded on free-text.