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Mrs Elizabeth Edwards
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Edwards

Short inspection of The Grange Community Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 15 November 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 November 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 and your staff have created a warm, caring and welcoming environment. You lead with a determination that every child will enjoy learning at The Grange. As one parent wrote, 'My child loves every day he is there.' You place children at the centre of decision-making and ensure that their well-being is of paramount importance to all.

Pupils say they 'like everything' about their school. This is confirmed by their high attendance rates. They are especially keen on the wide range of school clubs, such as football and sewing. They say their teachers are kind, with one pupil saying to me, 'My teacher never raises her voice.' Pupils work hard in lessons. They were keen to tell me about their dinosaur characters, such as 'share-a-dactyl' and 'explore-a-saurus'. These characters encourage the pupils to display behaviours such as sharing and exploring in their learning. During my visits to lessons, I saw how well pupils worked together and how curious they were to discover new things.

The previous inspection highlighted several strengths, including strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and positive partnerships with parents and carers. These remain strengths of the school. Parents remain overwhelmingly happy with the school. Every parent who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, to which there were 119 responses, would recommend the school. As one parent commented, 'We have been hugely impressed by the nurturing environment fostered, whilst challenging the children to be the best they possibly

can be.' Another parent added, 'All of the teachers are so enthusiastic and love what they do.' Staff praise the leadership of the school, and morale is high. All staff who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire said they are proud to work at The Grange.

At the time of the last inspection, leaders were asked to strengthen the role of middle leaders in bringing about school improvement. You have been very successful here. Middle leaders are driving forward both pupils' standards and levels of staff expertise in the school.

You understand the many strong attributes of The Grange but know there are still areas to improve on. You have rightly identified that some pupils do not make strong progress in reading. We agreed that success criteria in the development plan do not always enable precise evaluation of the impact of the school's improvement strategies. We also agreed that the curriculum does not yet fully challenge the most able pupils consistently across all subjects.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team ensures that all safeguarding requirements are fit for purpose. Day-to-day routines are secure and records are detailed. Staff are quick to report their concerns if they are worried about a pupil. Leaders engage well with external agencies to safeguard potentially vulnerable pupils. Any necessary actions are completed without delay. Pre-employment checks to ensure the suitability of all adults who work or volunteer in the school are fully in place. Safeguarding training is regular.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school and know who to speak to if they are worried about something. They say that pupils are well behaved at The Grange and if there were any arguments, teachers would 'sort them out'. I visited the school during 'blue' ('be lovely and understanding to everyone') week. Pupils were learning about how to show respect and kindness to each other. They were able to articulate clearly how their behaviour could affect others' feelings. They also had a good understanding of what bullying is and how to stop it should it happen. Pupils showed a good knowledge of e-safety, which is an integral part of the school's curriculum.

All staff and parents who responded to the Ofsted online surveys agreed that pupils are kept safe and are well looked after. As one parent commented, 'We are delighted with the personal and emotional development of our children.'

Inspection findings

- At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed that we would focus on: how well pupils learn across the wider curriculum; how well leaders ensure strong progress in English and mathematics; and how leaders and governors ensure that the school continues to improve.
- Leaders plan the curriculum to provide pupils with a broad range of experiences

that support their learning and personal development. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in a wide range of sporting and creative activities. The school's values, including teamwork, creativity and honesty, are deeply embedded in the school's curriculum and ethos. As a result, pupils behave well and respect each other. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

- Environmental issues are important to pupils at The Grange. For example, in a lesson in the early years, children were watching a clip from 'Blue Planet'. Their comments following the clip, about how they could help respect the planet, showed great maturity and understanding.
- We looked at a range of pupils' learning from subjects other than English and mathematics. This showed that, despite a wide range of exciting learning tasks, the work does not sufficiently challenge the most able pupils to think deeply and develop subject-specific skills at a higher level.
- Provisional performance information for attainment at the end of key stage 1, in reading, writing and mathematics, compares well to that of other schools nationally. However, some pupils did not make strong progress in reading from their early years starting points. Leaders have responded swiftly to improve the progress pupils make in reading. Effective professional development has ensured that staff develop pupils' vocabulary and increase their stamina for reading longer texts. Teachers make sure that their questioning probes pupils' understanding of texts and develops specific reading skills, such as inference and prediction. As a result, current pupils are making strong progress in reading.
- My visits to lessons, including the scrutiny of pupils' work, showed that pupils make strong progress in writing and mathematics. Leaders carefully analyse the assessments of any pupil who is falling behind and ensure that gaps in learning are swiftly addressed.
- Development of staff is a priority. Leaders have been highly effective at supporting staff to take on leadership roles. Middle leaders are fully involved in evaluating the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in their areas of responsibility. They use the findings from their monitoring well to support and develop teaching in the school.
- You work well in collaboration with other local schools to share ideas and expertise. Leaders' improvement planning is focused on the right things. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's priorities for future improvement. However, criteria within the school improvement plan are not always precise as to how leaders intend to measure the success of actions. This makes it harder for governors to monitor the progress that the school is making towards its goals and to ask the right challenging questions, for example about the progress pupils are making.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the curriculum is developed further so that the most able pupils are challenged to think deeply and improve their skills across all subjects
- progress through key stage 1 continues to improve so that an increased proportion of pupils reach and exceed age-related expectations in reading by the end of key stage 1
- there is greater precision in leaders' improvement planning.

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

Lea Hannam
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher to discuss the school's effectiveness. Together, we visited classrooms to observe pupils' learning, talk to pupils and look at their work. With your special educational needs coordinator, we looked at the quality of work in a range of pupils' books. I considered the 119 responses from parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text comments. I also spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day. Responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaires were considered and I had a meeting with a group of pupils to discuss their views about the school.

I met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body, and also met with a representative from the local authority. In addition, I met with a group of middle leaders. I evaluated the school's safeguarding arrangements. A wide range of documents was examined, including: the school's self-evaluation; school improvement planning; information about pupils' progress; and various policies. I also examined the school's website.