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Mr Robin Tollyfield
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Tollyfield

Short inspection of Chyngton School

Following my visit to the school on 25 April 2019, 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 October 2015.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

Leaders work well together. Everyone is working towards a long-term strategy to improve outcomes for pupils. With the help of the local authority, you have created a robust plan to develop teaching and learning. However, this is recent and there has not been enough time for new approaches to be used consistently across the school. You have the full support of your knowledgeable and skilled governors. They are realistic about the school's current effectiveness. They visit the school frequently, monitor your work and use their skills to make recommendations for further development.

You are training and developing your middle leaders. They are enthusiastic about leading their subjects. The new approaches to the teaching of reading and mathematics are beginning to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding. You have empowered your leaders to train other staff, advise on planning and help teachers develop their subject knowledge. However, middle leaders' skills need further development. They do not hold teachers to account sufficiently to ensure that there is consistency of teaching and learning in their subjects.

Teachers use selected texts to model good writing. Where the texts are challenging, have rich vocabulary and provide good examples of literary styles, they are helping improve the quality of pupils' writing. However, where the text is not stretching

enough for the age of the pupil, the quality of writing suffers, and pupils are not able to use rich enough vocabulary to enable them to achieve higher levels.

Pupils are lively and fun loving. Playtime is busy and physically active; however, pupils play well together with a regard for the safety of others. Some parents say that they think behaviour is not good. Pupils say that other pupils can be irritating at times, but they use the training the school has given them to try to resolve small problems for themselves. Pupils appreciate the help of the pastoral team staff who they trust to resolve bigger issues for them. You monitor behaviour, report to governors and have a clear behaviour policy. During the inspection pupils behaved very well. They concentrated well in class and were keen to learn. Pupils are proud to be ambassadors for the school and take their responsibilities seriously. Pupil governors appreciate the way they are involved in making decisions about school matters. There is a wide range of after-school clubs and pupils who attend enjoy them. Parents expressed mixed views about the school; however, the majority said their children were happy and would recommend the school to others.

Following the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve progress for disadvantaged pupils, share best practice in teaching and raise expectations. Where interventions have been put in place for disadvantaged pupils, for example through the provision of after-school support with mathematics, pupils are making good progress. You have welcomed the opportunity to work alongside other nearby schools to share ideas and teaching methods. Staff have raised their expectations of pupils since the last inspection but could raise them further.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that systems for safeguarding are thorough. Records are kept meticulously and are of a high quality. All the relevant risk assessments and safeguarding checks are in place. All staff receive a wide range of training. Updates are frequent and creatively delivered through quizzes and additional online training. The designated safeguarding lead is tenacious when ensuring that pupils and their families receive the help they need, making good use of the support available from outside agencies.

Pupils, parents and staff agree that the school is a safe place. Online safety is a strength. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. Teaching about online safety is frequent for all pupils. Some pupils are digital leaders and have recently made a video about safe internet use at home; this will be shared with parents. You ensure that parents have access to advice through your website, at parents' evenings and during the initial induction day when children join the school.

Alongside your deputy, you have raised the awareness of the importance of good attendance with parents, through letters and meetings. Attendance has improved. Vulnerable pupils who had frequent absences attend much more regularly than they did in the past. Pupils are encouraged to attend through a range of incentives and rewards such as the 'soft start' to each day. Coming into the classroom before the official start of the school day helps pupils to get to school early.

Inspection findings

- The inspection focused on: safeguarding and attendance, the progress pupils make in their learning, and how well leaders support disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Pupils say that their mathematics lessons are better than they used to be, and they are learning more. They recognise that they are working harder and being challenged to think more deeply about their learning. However, they do not always use the practical resources provided to help them consolidate their learning.
- Opportunities to reason, apply mathematics and become more fluent in calculation are leading to improved pupil confidence, more enjoyment of mathematics and better outcomes for pupils. Particularly in upper key stage 2.
- You have raised the profile of reading in the school. Pupils read regularly in lessons. The new approach to teaching reading has made them more able to understand what they are reading and answer questions about texts. Pupils in key stage 2 say they are better prepared for tests.
- All pupils have benefited from coming into school early before the official start to the school day. Pupils enjoy the learning activities teachers provide for them at this time. These have boosted pupils' abilities in essential mathematics and reading skills.
- You have spent the pupil premium funding effectively. During the inspection, teaching assistants were providing skilled support for phonics in early years. Pupils who receive additional learning support are making good progress, particularly in reading, where they are making more rapid progress than their peers.
- The inclusion manager has overhauled the school's approach to SEND since the last inspection. Additional needs plans for pupils are well structured, carefully monitored, evaluated and feature contributions from the children and their parents. All staff have had training in autism spectrum disorder and follow social and emotional guidance for pupils. The school has been awarded the East Sussex quality mark for inclusion.
- A few parents say their children have not received the support identified within their additional needs plans. Other parents are glowing in their praise for the help and support their children have received. You provide suitable adaptations for pupils with SEND in class. Effective teaching assistants' support encourages learning, and keeps pupils on task. Pupils are taught appropriately for their needs. Pupils with SEND are making good progress towards their personal targets and many, particularly in key stage 1, are making progress at a similar rate to their peers.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- enrich the quality of pupils' reading resources to impact on the depth and breadth of vocabulary they can draw on when writing
- continue to develop the skills of middle leaders to build teachers' capacity to improve the teaching within their subject areas
- embed the range of initiatives recently put in place for mathematics so that they are used consistently across the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Lesley Corbett
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and your deputy, two governors, a group of pupils and the business manager. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I visited classes with you to observe teaching and learning. I considered 23 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire and 65 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also took account of 51 free-text comments from parents. I analysed a range of the school's documents including: leaders' self-evaluation and improvement planning; minutes of the governing body's meetings; and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures.