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8 July 2019

Mrs Lynda Newton
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Newton

Short inspection of The Anthony Roper Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 June 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 July 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have a delightful school that provides a rich education for the pupils. Since the previous inspection, the school has continued to improve because you have worked diligently on the recommendations in the report.

The Anthony Roper Primary School is a happy school. Pupils have strong relationships with one another. They enjoy the company of their friends and adults across the school. All the parents I spoke with were very complimentary about the school, stating that staff are very approachable and leaders always make time to listen to their concerns. The national accreditation for social and emotional health and well-being is a clear reflection of the school's commitment to making sure that pupils are well cared for. Your ambition for the school is based on an accurate evaluation of its needs, allowing you to build a clear plan for improvement. Governors carefully monitor the impact of this plan to make sure that improvements are having a positive impact on pupils.

You have developed the role of subject leaders since the previous inspection. Subject leaders have led training for teachers and monitored the quality of pupils' work to help improve the quality of teaching, particularly in writing and mathematics. As a result, the dip seen in pupils' progress in writing and mathematics in key stage 2, in 2018, has been addressed. In the early years, children use their knowledge of letters and sounds to help them write, both in the learning activities and as they play. In key stage 1, pupils' books show that they use

vocabulary well to write engaging pieces of work that captivate the reader. In mathematics, in the early years, children gain confidence in using number and apply these skills in their play, developing their understanding of counting. As pupils move through the school, their mathematical skills strengthen as a result of the exciting and purposeful investigations that challenge them to think deeply. These develop their mathematical understanding.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. Phonics is taught well, allowing pupils to develop into confident readers, reading text in a wide range of subjects. Pupils have a genuine interest in the topics studied. Topics are enhanced through the creative use of the school's grounds and meaningful trips out of school. Pupils' books show that a wide range of subjects are taught well and support pupils to build their understanding. However, not all subjects receive an equally strong focus. This leads to some gaps in the building blocks of learning in specific subjects. As a result, pupils' progress in these subjects is not as strong.

Disadvantaged pupils are supported well. In the early years, disadvantaged children are given rich opportunities to develop their communication skills. As disadvantaged pupils move through the school, support, including breakfast and after-school clubs, helps their development. While the school provides well for disadvantaged pupils, the school's plans for how the pupil premium is used to support their outcomes are not specific enough. As a result, not all disadvantaged pupils make the strong progress they are capable of.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that the school is a safe and happy environment for pupils. Staff and governors receive appropriate and up-to-date training on safeguarding procedures. Pupils feel safe in school, have confidence in the staff and know that if they have a worry, there is a trusted adult who will help them. Pupils are taught how to stay safe online and can explain the dangers they could encounter. Parents say that their children are safe in school. Pupils rarely miss school and you carefully follow up when a pupil is absent. There is a clear system for staff and parents to raise concerns about pupils' welfare. You are diligent in following up concerns, tracking responses from any external agencies involved to ensure that pupils are safeguarded.

Although essential employment checks are in place for staff and volunteers who work in school, the recording of these is not always clear. The school's single central record is hard to navigate. In addition, it has not been carefully monitored by senior staff and governors. While risk assessments are in place for the school's activities, including trips and visits, these assessments do not always demonstrate that the school has thought about all potential risks.

Inspection findings

- Subject leaders have worked hard to improve outcomes for pupils in writing and mathematics. They support teachers across the school to ensure that lessons are

exciting and learning is strong. Subject leaders regularly check the quality of the pupils' work and give helpful feedback to teachers. This supports teachers to improve their practice. However, the impact of subject leaders is not consistent across all subjects. In some subjects, it is not yet fully developed. You are rightly focusing on this as an area for school improvement, to make sure that pupils make strong progress in all subjects.

- Pupils progress well in mathematics across key stage 1. Mathematics activities become increasingly complex and help pupils to think more deeply about what they are learning. Work in pupils' books shows that there is a balance between practising mathematical skills and using these skills to solve more challenging problems. This helps pupils to develop a deeper understanding.
- Pupils develop their writing skills well. In the early years, children are given rich opportunities to develop their writing through play. They use the skills they have learned in phonic lessons to help them write. As they move through key stage 2, pupils have increasingly varied opportunities to write for different purposes and audiences. They produce well-structured pieces of writing that show their growing understanding of language features and grammar. As a result, pupils' outcomes in writing are strengthening.
- Pupils read well. In the early years, children build a clear understanding of letters and the sounds they represent. They use this understanding, developing their early reading skills through activities and play. Pupils in Year 1 use their skills in phonics well to read unfamiliar words. As a result, outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check are improving. By the end of key stage 2, pupils enjoy reading a wide range of genres and have favourite authors.
- Pupils are taught a broad range of subjects. Pupils' books show that topics capture their enthusiasm and imagination. This was evident in the topic about the Tudors. Pupils had dressed up in Tudor costumes to visit a Tudor stately home, learning about life as a child in Tudor times. However, not all subjects receive the same level of focus, nor is the focus consistent across all year groups. This is resulting in gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in some foundation subjects over time.
- Disadvantaged pupils are supported well. In the early years, disadvantaged children are given rich opportunities to develop their understanding of language and number. As they move through the school, disadvantaged pupils are encouraged to attend a rich variety of after-school clubs and participate in extra-curricular visits. They receive helpful support in class. However, the plans to support disadvantaged pupils do not fully address their individual barriers to learning. Consequently, the progress of some disadvantaged pupils is not as strong as it could be.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- across the curriculum, the subject leader's role is consistently strong and makes sure that there is a clear progression to learning

- they regularly check safeguarding procedures to make sure that systems and records are efficient and accurate
- a more precise understanding of the needs of individual disadvantaged pupils results in stronger progress, particularly for the most able.

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

Yours sincerely

Graham Chisnell
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke with you and several members of the leadership team. I spoke with representatives of the governing body and local authority. I met with pupils, both informally and formally. I made short visits to all classes in school on the day of the inspection. These visits were carried out jointly with you or the deputy headteacher. We also looked at a range of pupils' books. I spoke to parents at the end of the day and considered 134 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 74 free-text comments. I took account of the 43 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 169 responses to the pupil survey.

I scrutinised various documents, including: the single central record; the school's self-evaluation; the school improvement plan; and various safeguarding policies and records. I considered the documents published on the school's website. We discussed the national test results and the school's records of attendance and behaviour. I also reviewed the monitoring reports from visits to the school by members of the governing body.