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Mrs Marie Lea
Chieveley Primary School
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Dear Mrs Lea

Short inspection of Chieveley Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 July 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 November 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 your arrival in 2016, you have led the school with uncompromising vision and determination. You have high expectations of staff and are aspirational for pupils' success. You have wasted no time before recognising the improvements that are needed to raise standards further. The quality of leadership and management, in all areas of the school, is developing strongly, because you have made good appointments. You and your leaders provide good support to develop effective practice further and achieve a consistency of approach across the school.

You and your leaders have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and regularly check the quality of teaching and learning. During the inspection, we agreed on the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching we jointly observed. Most teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and use the results well to provide additional support for those pupils at risk of falling behind.

You make sure that the relatively small numbers of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Teachers and teaching assistants provide effective support and care for these pupils.

High-quality provision in early years ensures that most children are ready for the Year 1 curriculum. The outcomes of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils in the phonics screening checks are consistently strong. Attainment for pupils at the end of key

stage 1 has been consistently in line with age-related expectations. However, too few pupils across the school are working at a greater depth of understanding and too many make only average rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. Pupils currently in Year 6 have made stronger progress from their end-of-key-stage-1 starting points, because of the good teaching they have received, and more of them have achieved the higher standards of which they are capable. You know that more pupils across the school should be working at greater depth and, although there have been improvements since the last inspection, standards are not yet as high as they could be.

Almost all the parents and carers who spoke to me or responded to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey, highly value the school, the way it keeps their children safe and its support for pupils. This was summed up by one parent who wrote: 'I have two children who go to the school happy every day with a real desire to learn.'

You and your leadership team have responded well to the areas for improvement identified by the previous inspection. You have managed significant staff changes and thoughtfully restructured the team to ensure that the knowledge and passion of your staff is well utilised to develop good teaching and learning further. In addition, you have continued to provide high-quality professional development for staff to secure both good teaching and improved pupils' learning, particularly in mathematics. You have rightly identified a need to sustain this focus on enabling the most able pupils to achieve the high standards of which they are capable.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have established a strong culture of safeguarding, and arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff receive regular training and understand their responsibilities. You know that it would strengthen already good practice if leaders made more regular checks of staff's knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding agenda. The school records information carefully, so that a picture can be built up over time for each pupil. As a result, pupils' needs and circumstances are known well.

The pupils I spoke to told me that they feel safe and happy at the school. Pupils consider bullying and poor behaviour to be rare and they are confident that any member of staff would listen to them if they have concerns. They were very clear about how to stay safe when using the internet.

Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and respectful. Pupils are focused on their learning in class, move around the school calmly and are keen to tell visitors about their school. They enjoy taking on special roles and responsibilities. For example, when the pupil with responsibility for health and safety noted that a planter was damaged in the playground, she quickly reported it and ensured it was secured so that nobody would hurt themselves.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we focused on how leaders' actions are ensuring that more pupils are challenged to make even stronger progress, with a focus on

mathematics. We also explored your curriculum and discussed how well it was supporting pupils' progress. In addition, we focused on pupils' understanding of fundamental British values, and the effectiveness of the governing body.

- Some pupils expressed the view that they are doing more challenging work now than in the past. A strengthened confidence and interest was evident. They commented: 'We like being challenged, especially in mathematics.' In Year 2, they aim high as they get to work with the 'maths ninja' as he strikes again!
- This level of challenge is not consistent across all classes, because not all teachers plan and adapt their lessons to extend pupils' learning. As your curriculum develops, all leaders will need to be rigorous in checking that teachers' assessments are accurate and that their teaching supports more pupils to work at greater depth.
- The current focus on reviewing the teaching of mathematics has had a positive impact on pupils' progress in Year 6. You are sustaining this drive for improvement by introducing a number of changes in staffing in readiness for the next academic year. The very professional and intelligent approach of your mathematics leader is instrumental in driving these improvements forward.
- Your associate senior leader's passion for the curriculum is infectious. He has established a curriculum which stimulates pupils' interest. Themes such as 'sailing the seven seas' and tasks such as 'writing a diary as Howard Carter on the discovery of Tutankhamun' provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect and advance their knowledge and skills across a breadth of subjects. Pupils who spoke to me were able to explain their thinking very well.
- Staff have been challenged by leaders to move away from 'doing topic'. Instead pupils think of themselves as, for example, historian and artists, developing skills and knowledge sequentially across the curriculum. For example, pupils say, 'as an artist, I will learn about famous water artwork'. They do this well.
- Pupils have a very thorough understanding of fundamental British values and put what they have learned into practice. For example, pupils in Year 4 had focused on the importance of equality and inclusion when studying the Paralympics. They explained that this helped them to understand that everyone, regardless of their differences, has a right to be included in an activity. They also added that it helped them to be resilient and determined when things were difficult.
- Governors know the school well. Since the last inspection, they have become involved in the development of the school's improvement plan and evaluations. The newly appointed chair of governors is working very precisely to ensure that the work of governors is having a direct impact on pupils' education. Governors have invested time in improving their skills and knowledge to ensure that governance is as effective as possible. Governors challenge senior leaders effectively and ask searching questions about the progress pupils make.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to increase the proportion of pupils who are working at greater depth
- they strengthen the consistency of teaching, learning and assessment by making sure that:
 - teachers match learning tasks more precisely to pupils' needs, so that all pupils make strong progress
 - assessments are consistently accurate and are checked and challenged regularly.

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

Yours sincerely

Sarah Varnom
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I visited every classroom with the headteacher. We talked to pupils, heard some read and reviewed the work in their books.

I held a formal meeting with pupils and talked to others as I moved around the school. I also considered 14 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

A scrutiny of pupils' learning in mathematics was carried out, in partnership with the mathematics coordinator and the headteacher.

Discussions were held with the headteacher and the associate leader. In addition to this, I met with members of the governing body and those responsible for safeguarding and welfare.

A range of documentation was scrutinised, including leaders' evaluation of the school's performance and the school development plan. I also looked at minutes of the governing body's meetings, the headteacher's reports to governors, the school's policies, and documentation relating to safeguarding and pupils' attendance.

I consulted the school's website prior to the inspection.

I considered the views of parents gathered during the inspection, in addition to 57 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View and the accompanying free-text comments. I also considered 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.