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Mr Dominic Cook
Acting Executive Headteacher
Grazeley Parochial Church of England Aided Primary School
Mereoak Lane
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RG7 1JY

Dear Mr Cook

Short inspection of Grazeley Parochial Church of England Aided Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 1 March 2016, 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 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The headteacher has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since the headteacher went on maternity leave in November 2015, you have made sure the school continues to function well.

The school has a friendly and lively atmosphere. Pupils enjoy the caring and supportive environment, engage enthusiastically in learning and make good progress. Pupils respect their teachers and behave well. They know to treat all people equally, regardless of any differences, and recognise the importance of not being prejudiced.

When the school was last inspected, the inspector found that pupils enjoyed their time at school, behaved well and made good progress. The inspector identified some areas for specific attention. One was to improve provision in Reception and a second was to strengthen the teaching of English in Reception and Year 1. A further point identified was that teachers needed to make better use of assessment information to provide suitably challenging work for least-able pupils. The headteacher, who joined the school in 2013, has made sure that these points have been addressed.

Provision in Reception has been strengthened; children benefit from an improved range of learning activities and make good progress. A high proportion reach a good level of development.

Overall, teaching meets the needs of pupils with different starting points, including the least and most able. As a result, pupils' achievement in reading and writing has improved over time. Current pupils make good progress in English and mathematics at both key stages.

Leaders are working effectively to close the gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others. Typically these pupils make good progress and increasingly they are catching up where needed. Leaders have also made sure that teaching in English and mathematics has been adapted to meet the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum, and a suitable approach to assessing pupils' achievement in these subjects is in place.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Checks on the identity and suitability of staff and contractors are robust. All staff and governors receive suitable training. They know what to do if they have any safeguarding concerns. Parents also know whom to approach to raise any concerns. Pupils are clear that discrimination is not acceptable. Name-calling and bullying are rare and there have been no reported issues of prejudice bullying in the last year and a half.

Inspection findings

- Governors value the strong sense of direction the headteacher has brought to the school.
- Governors receive better information about the school's performance and hold leaders to account more effectively than was previously the case.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school enables them to identify suitable priorities for improvement, and actions to bring these about are typically well considered. However, leaders do not analyse performance information sharply enough to gain a precise measure of the starting points for development or the impact of their work over time. Addressing this point will strengthen the drive to move the school to outstanding.
- Leaders have made sure that topic work covers the knowledge and skills required by the National Curriculum for science and foundation subjects. However, they have not considered whether the subject coverage in each topic builds well on what was covered in the preceding topic.
- Leaders have developed an appropriate approach to assessing and tracking pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. Leaders can see at a glance the standard each pupil has reached at key points in time, and the progress they are making from starting points. Leaders are developing a similar assessment and tracking approach for computing, religious education and science with the eventual aim of using it for all subjects.
- Leaders keep a close eye on the progress of disadvantaged pupils and make sure that the teaching and support these pupils receive enable them to make good progress and catch up where needed.

- Teaching is increasingly effective. Better support for teachers, improved approaches to identifying and supporting pupils falling behind, and tighter arrangements for holding teachers to account have all contributed to this.
- Provision in Reception has improved notably. In 2013 only half the children reached a good level of development. In 2015 three quarters of children reached that level, higher than the national figure.
- Teachers plan lessons that help pupils learn well in English and mathematics. Pupils engage well and are enthusiastic about learning.
- Teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has improved considerably. One in two Year 1 pupils reached the expected standard in 2013. In 2015 four out of five pupils reached the expected standard.
- In 2015 pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 was high and in writing it was in line with that seen nationally.
- Over time, pupils' achievement in mathematics and English by the end of Key Stage 2 has been in line with the national figure. Current pupils also make good progress in English and mathematics.
- The introduction of new behaviour guidelines has helped ensure more consistent behaviour management. The 'time out' approach used by lunchtime supervisors is working well. There have been no recent incidents of inappropriate behaviour at lunchtime.
- Incidents of name-calling and bullying are uncommon. On the rare occasion bullying is reported, leaders tackle it well.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the new assessment system is refined and developed so that teachers' and leaders' assessment of pupils' progress across the curriculum is increasingly effective
- plans for how subjects are taught enable pupils to make strong progress, each planned activity building on the skills and knowledge pupils have acquired in previous activities
- analysis of school performance information is consistently sharp so leaders and governors understand the exact starting points for improvement work and can evaluate precisely the impact of their actions over time.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Wokingham Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Diana Choulerton
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The headteacher Celia Thatcher is currently on maternity leave. She came into the school for the inspection at her own request. I met with both of you to discuss leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness and actions being taken to bring further improvement. I also held meetings with other leaders, teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body and five other governors. We visited parts of four lessons and I scrutinised a selection of pupils' topic work with the headteacher. I took account of 14 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 14 parent responses by free text. I also spoke with teaching and support staff, and groups of pupils. I analysed school documentation, including leaders' checks on pupils' progress, the school improvement plan, curriculum planning, and safeguarding policies and procedures.