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Mrs Nicola Hirst
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Hirst

Short inspection of Colliers Green Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 March 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 March 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. Since arriving at the school, you have provided determined and confident leadership. You have proficiently dealt with the challenge of mixed-aged classes. There have been some significant staff changes since the last inspection. However, you have united governors and staff to ensure that all work as a team to do the very best for all of the pupils. Parents and staff say that you lead by example and the school community is responding well to the demands you make and standards that you expect.

Leaders have embedded the Christian ethos across the school. The values of aspiration, resilience and community, underpinned by the message of love, are evident in the behaviour of the pupils and in the respect they demonstrate towards the staff and each other. You enjoy the confidence of the vast majority of parents. A typical parent's comment is: 'The community atmosphere and the strong parental involvement is a testament to the love we all have as parents for the school.'

You have an accurate and realistic understanding of the school's current performance. Your plans clearly set out what needs to improve further, with specific targets. You have established regular training opportunities for staff, including sessions to develop a better understanding of the new spelling and mathematics schemes of work.

Since the previous inspection, school leaders have worked hard to improve important aspects of provision. You and your team are committed to ensuring that

pupils have a very positive learning experience. You have introduced a new 'learning challenge curriculum'. Pupils benefit from interesting and well-planned lessons across a range of subjects. The curriculum is enriched by class visits, visitors to the school and a wide variety of after-school activities. The day of the inspection was World Book Day and it was gratifying to see pupils of all ages celebrating their love of books. Pupils spoke with great appreciation about the forest school provision. One pupil, representing many, said: 'We like learning in the forest school as it helps us to know more about the world around us and we also learn life skills that will help us when we are adults.'

Pupils are helpful, polite and well-mannered. They listen carefully to adults in class and their attitudes to learning are extremely positive. Pupils enjoy their learning and talk about their desire to do well. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities and this is exemplified by the effectiveness of the school librarians. Pupils have continued to attain at or above national averages in almost all national assessments. In 2018, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard in mathematics dropped below the national average. Consequently, you are changing the way that mathematics is taught to ensure that pupils have more opportunities to use their reasoning skills and to acquire deeper learning that sticks.

Governors work well with the school leadership team to support and challenge on aspects of improvement. They are well organised through an embedded system of meetings. Each governor shadows the lead of a subject or school aspect. Governors keep their knowledge and skills up to date through regular training. They have taken a determined approach to the successful building of the new school. Governors work closely with parents and initiate an annual questionnaire to determine their satisfaction. There is a high rate of parental satisfaction with the school. However, a number of parents would like communication between the school and home to be more efficient. Governors partner with two local churches and have established mental health support and counselling for children and parents at the school.

Safeguarding is effective

School leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. The safety of the pupils is given a high priority, with policies and procedures being followed effectively. You have made sure that the arrangements for the care and protection of pupils are thorough and effective. Records about concerns, referrals and support for pupils are well organised and carefully monitored. The governor with responsibility for child protection is committed to maintaining the focus on keeping children safe. Leaders ensure that staff and governors engage in safeguarding training. This means that staff are up to date in their knowledge of child protection.

Pupils reported that they feel safe in school because, 'there is always an adult available to help you'. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe on the internet because they learn about it in class and assemblies. Pupils said that they have also received guidance on road safety, anti-bullying and how to be a good friend.

Leaders have introduced zones of regulation initiative to support pupils in self-reflection and the management of their own behaviour. Parents appreciate the high quality of safeguarding in the school. One parent said: 'The constructive, nurturing ethos of the school means children have a safe environment to develop. Prejudice and other negative behaviours are left behind at the gate.'

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, I met with school leaders to discuss the school's progress since the last inspection as well as current standards and progress. We agreed to investigate the following priorities: Why was the progress of pupils between key stages 1 and 2 in 2018 not as good in reading and mathematics as it was in writing? Does the current progress reflect an improving picture? Why was pupils' attendance in 2017/18 just below the national average and has it improved? Are the most able pupils challenged in mathematics, and are there opportunities for all pupils to apply their skills in different ways? Is a range of subjects taught to help pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills?
- School leaders have undertaken an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of pupils' reading. Shortcomings have been identified and particularly the difficulty some pupils have in retrieving information from a text and making inferences in their reading. A new programme to improve comprehension skills in key stage 1 has now been established as well as changes to how reading is taught in key stage 2. The middle leader for English has led staff training and introduced new arrangements for assessing reading. Current pupils' progress and attainment in reading are improving.
- Attendance rates in 2017/18 were adversely affected by a small number of vulnerable pupils. Currently, the attendance rate exceeds the national average. The school is diligent in identifying and supporting pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- The deputy headteacher leads mathematics across the school. She has recently embedded a new mathematics curriculum. Staff have received training to introduce and develop more opportunities for reasoning and problem-solving in mathematics. This is helping pupils to make better progress. In some classes, the most able pupils are not yet applying their learning quickly enough. This means that sometimes work lacks challenge. The school is taking part in a raising mathematics attainment project with other local schools, and one of the priorities is to ensure challenge for the most able. A new assessment system for mathematics has been introduced to ensure that progress is carefully monitored and underachievement identified quickly. The overall impact of these developments is still to be fully realised.
- You have introduced a new curriculum to deliver a more motivating experience for pupils in science and the humanities. The new curriculum is in its early stages of development. Leaders and teachers should continue working together to ensure that it will provide better coverage of the requirements of the national curriculum, particularly in science. In Years 5 and 6, you have introduced new strategies in history to put more emphasis on pupils' acquisition of knowledge,

understanding and skills. There was evidence in pupils' books that this is proving successful, particularly in the recent topic on the Second World War.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school continues to ensure that there are more opportunities for all pupils to apply their mathematical skills and that most-able pupils are consistently challenged in their learning
- the new curriculum is further developed so that it fully meets the requirements of the national curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Sir Robin Boshier
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, in your absence, I met with the deputy headteacher and advisory headteacher to discuss the school's self-evaluation information, with a focus on pupils' progress and the improvements since the last inspection. We carried out several 'learning walks' through early years, and key stages 1 and 2. We observed teaching and learning and looked at a range of pupils' work in books. I also scrutinised a number of pupils' topic and science books. I observed behaviour during lessons and at lunchtime. I met with pupils to find out about their experience of school and how safe they feel.

I had meetings with a middle leader, the local authority senior adviser and governors. I looked at a range of written evidence, including: the school's self-evaluation; the school improvement plan; the single central record and other documents related to safeguarding; and the school's curriculum. I took account of the views of 41 parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text comments, and considered the views of the parents I talked to at the start of the day. I also took account of the views of three members of staff who completed Ofsted's online staff survey.