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26 February 2016

Kathryn Tamlyn
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Tamlyn

Short inspection of Cheddington School

Following my visit to the school on 2 February 2016, with Liz McIntosh, Ofsted Inspector, 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 2010.

This school continues to be good.

You have maintained the good standard of education reported at the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school; they have positive relationships with their teachers and are enthusiastic learners. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is exemplary. Pupils understand the importance of treating everyone with equal respect. They learn how to care for themselves, one another and the environment. Pupils typically make good progress and many enjoy attending clubs in such things as sports, drama, music and art. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

When the school was last inspected, the inspector found the school to be a welcoming environment where pupils felt safe and secure. The inspector praised your high expectations for staff and pupils, pupils' good behaviour and leaders' actions to strengthen pupils' achievement in English. The inspector identified some areas for specific attention. One was to make sure that pupils have opportunities to learn more about other people's cultures, beliefs and lives. The second was for the governing body to ensure that it regularly reviews, monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the school's policies. The inspector also recommended that you involve pupils and parents in evaluating the school's provision to inform school development planning. Leaders and governors have addressed these points effectively. Pupils learn about a wide range of cultures through global studies lessons. Religious education lessons and structured philosophy discussions help pupils learn more about other people's lives, views and beliefs. Governors have established a regular routine for monitoring and reviewing policies. This includes

regular visits to the school and the use of annual parent and pupil surveys to check the impact of the school's work and identify next steps for further improvement.

You have taken effective action to address other areas that needed attention. You have improved the way that phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught. The introduction of daily phonics sessions in Year 1 and increased opportunities for children to develop phonics skills in Reception have contributed well to this. Almost all pupils reached the expected standard in phonics last year by the end of Year 1; over three times as many as in 2013. You have improved your provision for pupils with special educational needs or disability. The leader of this area of work, referred to by this school as 'the SENDCo', has made sure that staff are suitably trained and provide increasingly effective support. As a result, pupils with special educational needs or disability are typically making better progress than before. You have rightly recognised that pupils are not learning as consistently well in mathematics as they do in English. You have changed the way mathematics is timetabled to ensure it is given highest priority and more time is dedicated to it than previously.

Some areas of work need more attention. You are adapting your assessment systems to make them fit for the new National Curriculum. As an interim measure, you asked foundation subject leaders to adjust existing pupil progress tracking sheets to meet the new requirements. However, senior leaders have not looked to see whether this has been done well. Furthermore, they have not checked that subject leaders' plans for how each subject is taught and assessed are sufficient to ensure pupils learn well. During the inspection, we saw scant evidence that the tracking sheets had all been adjusted as required and some examples of subject planning that was not firmly linked to the requirements of the subject. You had not anticipated this. More needs to be done to ensure that all subjects are planned and assessed really effectively. Since the last inspection, you have made good use of the information you collect about pupils' progress to make sure that support is provided for pupils who underachieve. However, leaders have not routinely analysed this information to gain a precise understanding of pupils' achievement across the school over time. Governors are presented with very detailed numerical information rather than a precise analysis of what the information shows. As a result, self-evaluation and action planning are not always sharp and governors are not always able to hold leaders tightly to account for bringing about improvements.

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 are robust, well managed and recorded. You have made sure that all staff are fully aware of their safeguarding duties and have been trained to understand the risks pupils may face from radicalisation or extremism. The safeguarding governor carries out regular reviews to ensure that everything is in order.

Pupils say that they feel safe in the school and parents agree. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe in 'Good to be Us' lessons. They know whom to go to if they have any concerns. Incidents of bullying are very rare and there have been no reported incidents in the last two years.

Inspection findings

- Governors show dedication and commitment to the school. They seek information about all aspects of the school's performance and challenge leaders to attend to areas of relative weakness. Regular visits to the school and information from pupil and parent surveys help them gain an insight into school life and review the impact of leaders' work. However, governors do not always have a deep understanding of the impact of leadership because at times they are presented with detailed information rather than an incisive analysis of what the information shows.
- Leaders have tackled poor achievement in phonics effectively. In 2013, less than a third of Year 1 pupils reached the expected standard. In 2015, almost all pupils reached the expected standard.
- Last year, leaders addressed some inconsistencies in teaching in the Reception class. As a result, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development increased significantly to above that seen nationally. The proportion of boys reaching a good level of development was much higher than in the previous year.
- The leader of the provision for pupils with special educational needs or disability (the SENDCo) is taking effective action to improve the achievement of these pupils. Carefully planned and evaluated support programmes, coupled with better support in class, are making a difference. Typically, children with special educational needs or disability are making stronger progress than was previously the case.
- Leaders do not analyse information sharply enough to gain a precise view of the overall impact of teaching on pupils' achievement over time. As a result, although improvement priorities are mainly focused on the right things, self-evaluation and action planning are not always incisive.
- Senior leaders have not made sure that all subjects are planned, taught and assessed well enough to enable pupils to make really strong progress.
- Over the last three years, pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 has been in line with that seen nationally. School information shows that typically, pupils currently in the school are on track to achieve equally well. However, a few pupils are not making as much progress in mathematics as they are in English.
- The school has only a few disadvantaged pupils. Therefore, published performance data about this group are not meaningful. However, school information shows that these pupils make the same good progress as others in the school.
- Leaders and governors have made sure that pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their understanding of, and prepare for, life in modern Britain. This includes learning about other faiths and beliefs and involvement in school council elections. However, leaders have not yet evaluated the impact these opportunities have on pupils' understanding.
- Pupils' behaviour is a real strength of the school. Pupils engage well with their learning. They are thoughtful and respectful to one another and staff.

- Parents are, in the main, very positive about the school. However, some feel that communication between home and school is not always effective. A few parents feel that when they raise concerns, these are not dealt with well.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- systems to track pupil progress are fully adapted to the 2014 National Curriculum in each subject so that teachers can judge accurately how well pupils are learning and plan suitable next steps
- leaders produce sharp analyses of information collected about the quality of teaching and pupil achievement and use these to inform incisive self-evaluation and action planning
- plans for how subjects are taught and assessed are suitably effective in all subjects so that pupils can make consistently strong progress
- teaching in mathematics enables pupils to make consistently strong progress
- communication between school and home is consistently effective, and that parents have no well-founded concerns.

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

Yours sincerely

Diana Choulerton
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, other leaders, teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors. We visited parts of seven lessons. We also scrutinised a selection of pupils' mathematics work and looked at some Reception learning journals. I took account of 178 pupil survey responses, 18 staff survey responses and 84 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, I considered 50 parent responses by free text or letter. I also spoke with some parents at the start of the school day and with groups of pupils, before school and at break. I analysed a range of the school's documentation, including leaders' checks on pupils' progress, the school's improvement plan, curriculum planning, and safeguarding policies and procedures. We discussed your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness.