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Mrs Fiona Craig
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Craig

Short inspection of Kempshott Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 15 February 2017, 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 September 2012.

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 led the school with a high degree of determination and resilience, and created a strong staff team who have pupils' welfare and achievement at heart. You know the strengths and areas for future development well and have led improvements in pupils' attainment since the last inspection. Governors are well trained and highly supportive of your leadership. They provide effective challenge so that the school continues to improve. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has added to your capacity to lead further school improvements, particularly in strengthening teaching and learning.

You have created a culture where pupils challenge themselves in their learning, particularly in mathematics where several told me they liked getting to the next level in their work. They appreciate learning about the world they live in through the broad curriculum that you offer. Of particular note was the recent trip to Stubbington to augment their studies on rivers and coasts. Parents value highly the ethos you have created for their children. As one parent said, 'my daughter wakes up each morning happy and eager for school'.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, as reflected in their regular attendance, which has improved since the last inspection and is now consistently above the national

average. A small minority of parents expressed concern about pupils' behaviour, however during this visit the behaviour of pupils was typically good, and pupils said poor behaviour was rare. You and your staff provide a stimulating range of extra-curricular activities which reflects the community ethos and caring nature of your school. For example, the popular breakfast club sets pupils up with a healthy start to the day, and pupils spoke especially enthusiastically about the many sporting clubs you have provided, and the improved sporting equipment now available to them. Parents are appreciative of the care and support their children receive. As one commented, 'this school provides a wonderful and nurturing environment for my child to learn in'.

Following the previous inspection, leaders were asked to improve teaching so that work is suited to the needs of pupils of different abilities, and to raise attainment, particularly in spelling. You have done this through a sharp focus on monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, quickly and effectively intervening to support teachers who need help to improve their practice. In mathematics, especially, teachers plan learning which is increasingly well-matched to pupils' starting points. Pupils attain highly across the curriculum, including in spelling. Attainment in reading and mathematics, in particular, is significantly above national averages.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have established a strong and effective culture of safeguarding in the school. You have made sure that staff are well trained in child protection procedures and understand their responsibilities to help keep children safe. Staff are vigilant, and leaders ensure that concerns are taken seriously and documented carefully. All parents I spoke to said their children felt safe and well looked after. As one parent who responded to the Ofsted online, Parent View, survey commented, 'all the staff work tirelessly to provide a happy, secure school that I would recommend to any parent'. Parents praise, in particular, the advice they receive on how to make sure their children are safe online at home.

You remind pupils regularly how to stay safe both online and in their community. Pupils I spoke to were particularly clear that they could talk about any worries they may have. For example, one said, 'if an adult tells you to keep something a secret, then don't'. Pupils confirmed that they knew who to talk to if they had a concern. They said that bullying is very rare, but that if it did happen it would be sorted out quickly.

Leaders and governors have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and of high calibre. You and your team carry out careful and extremely thorough checks when vetting adults working in school. You use advice and support from outside agencies effectively so that pupils are safe and get the care they need. After supporting you well to develop the school's safeguarding procedures, the local authority uses some of your practices in this area to inform developments in other schools.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, my focus areas were: how well the culture in the school promotes safeguarding; how effectively teaching supports the progress of pupils in mathematics, particularly the most able; how effectively leaders ensure that pupils make good progress in writing, particularly those of middle ability; how well the school supports vulnerable groups of pupils; how effectively leaders are driving school improvement.
- Previously published results show that pupils do not make as much progress as they could in mathematics, particularly the most able pupils. You have begun to address this by making sure reasoning and arithmetic skills are practised by pupils throughout the school. You have also adapted the way the curriculum is taught, clearly signposting the increasing levels of challenge pupils can access each lesson. Work shows that consequently pupils are applying their skills to increasingly more difficult problems, progressing well to the higher levels. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning mathematics. One said he likes to work the problems out for himself, but can get extra support if he needs it. The school's information shows that an improved proportion of pupils are now achieving the expected standard. Your information shows that more of the most able pupils are in line to achieve the high standard in mathematics. However, you admit that there are slight tweaks needed to make sure work is consistently hard enough to secure this achievement.
- Last year, middle-ability pupils did not make as much progress in writing as others nationally. Your evaluation of what pupils need to do to improve their skills in writing has led to a sharper focus on vocabulary from when pupils start school, and increased opportunities for pupils to write for different audiences and purposes. Careful monitoring of pupils' achievements is helping you to provide additional teaching for pupils who need to accelerate their progress, especially middle-ability disadvantaged pupils. School information shows that current pupils are making more progress in writing. However, you acknowledge that work to improve pupils' independence in their writing style is at an early stage.
- Your support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. Skilful teaching, from classroom teachers and assistants, helps these pupils make good progress from their starting points, particularly those in the early stages of developing reading and writing skills. Parents praised your deputy headteacher for ensuring the smooth transition of this group of pupils, both when they join the school in Year 3 and as they move on to secondary school.
- Leaders and governors use pupil premium funding effectively to provide additional help for disadvantaged pupils. The popular breakfast club has helped improve attendance for this group of pupils. Disadvantaged pupils are a specific focus in your regular monitoring of teachers' work and of pupil progress. As a result of your actions school information shows that progress for current disadvantaged pupils is strong, including in writing where it has previously been weaker.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate. Governors rightly challenged you to improve pupil performance after it dipped in

2014. With support from the local authority, you put in place actions that have led to improvements to pupils' achievements, so that they now consistently attain more highly than others nationally. You have achieved this through rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching and of pupils' progress, providing training where needed to help improve teachers' skills. Your work to raise the profile of the role of middle leaders in driving school improvement is in its early stages.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- middle leaders become more autonomous in their roles of improving teaching and learning and pupils' progress
- the proportion of middle-ability pupils who make good progress in writing and the most able pupils who make good progress in mathematics is increased, so that even more pupils achieve the high standard by the end of key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

Catherine Old
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, your deputy headteacher, middle leaders and governors. I talked on the telephone to two representatives from the local authority. I visited a number of classrooms with you to observe pupils' learning. I listened to pupils reading and spoke to them about their learning and experiences in school. With a group of middle leaders, I reviewed work in a range of pupils' books. I talked with parents at the start of the day and considered 98 responses to the 'Parent View' online questionnaire. I checked safeguarding arrangements. I reviewed the school's website and scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, and performance information for current pupils.