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Mrs Angela Morrow
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Morrow

Short inspection of Fryern Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 27 September 2018, 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 December 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Fryern Infant School is part of the Federation of Fryern Infant and Junior Schools, which you lead as executive headteacher. Last academic year, you appointed a head of school for the infants; she further strengthened the leadership team with her relentless determination to improve outcomes for pupils. You are very ambitious for the school, and this permeates through all school leaders and staff, who share your high expectations and determination to do their very best for the pupils. You recognise that there are still some areas in which the school needs to improve. A larger proportion of disadvantaged pupils need to make greater progress. Writing remains an area for improvement, as pupils need to develop their use of rich language and accurate use of spellings.

Parents are very supportive of the school. One parent wrote that Fryern is 'a caring and nurturing school for children of all abilities'. Another parent observed that, 'The school is committed to providing a great learning environment for their pupils; children are happy and have great friends.'

School leaders are very confident, with a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development. They speak with great clarity about their next steps. Self-evaluation is accurate, identifying the correct areas for improvement, based on a clear rationale. Leaders across the school ensure that the learning environment is vibrant and inspiring. There is a wide range of pupils' work displayed around the school to celebrate their achievements in a variety of subjects.

The governing body demonstrates strong leadership and is very ambitious. One governor said, 'We are a team from many different backgrounds; we care, and we are a strong governing body and are consistently here.' In addition to evaluating school procedures, governors meet school leaders on a regular basis to evaluate teaching, learning and assessment. During these visits, governors are thorough in asking staff to discuss the impact of their work with pupils. The governors attend a range of training to support their roles and responsibilities, including safer recruitment, the 'Prevent' duty and safeguarding.

Pupils learn in a vibrant, calm and highly supportive environment. They behave very well and are polite and courteous. Pupils have a strong desire to achieve and most can confidently talk about their learning. The school is well maintained and the displays in the classrooms enhance the learning environment. The early years outdoor space is an enriching environment with a wide range of resources and play equipment to support pupils well in their learning. In lessons, pupils are engaged and motivated, and learning activities are appropriately matched to their needs. Pupils are happy in school. One pupil said, 'Teachers help you learn very well.' Pupils also told me that they can always find an adult to talk to if they are worried about something.

You have effectively addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Pupils now have more opportunities to write at length, linked to a range of subjects. There are now more opportunities for pupils to apply correct punctuation and spelling rules to their work.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at Fryern Infant School. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed. You provide ongoing training for staff and governors so that everyone knows what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Governors check regularly that all agreed safeguarding policies are properly implemented. Leaders ensure that recruitment checks are firmly in place for all those who work or volunteer at the school. The school site is secure and safe.

Pupils are aware of the potential dangers when using the internet at school. They said that if they ever viewed anything on the internet that made them feel unsafe, they would tell a member of staff. One pupil said to me, 'Staff look after you and keep an eye on you.' Consequently, pupils feel safe and parents agree that their children are safe at school.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we agreed to focus on: how effectively leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well; how leaders ensure that pupils from the middle-prior-attainment group make good progress in mathematics and writing; and how effectively leaders ensure that the teaching of phonics in key stage 1 enables all pupils to make good progress.

- Leaders ensure that a range of well-planned interventions and personalised support are provided to disadvantaged pupils. Parents are also offered additional guidance to help their children at home, including borrowing school resources. Pupils are also taught many strategies to support them if they find some activities challenging. Bespoke additional teaching for these pupils ensures that their learning needs are met well. This is because support is carefully planned and monitored effectively by leaders.
- Progress of disadvantaged pupils is carefully tracked and regularly reviewed. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, leaders are rightly aware that there are still differences in attainment for some groups of disadvantaged pupils in school compared to all pupils nationally. School leaders correctly recognise that the progress of disadvantaged pupils should be stronger still if they sustain and develop the good support that is provided.
- You have rightly identified the need to raise achievement in mathematics and writing for some middle-attaining pupils. The head of school wisely evaluated the curriculum and made some amendments to the teaching of mathematics. Pupils now have more opportunities to discuss their reasoning and staff ask well-chosen, open-ended questions to allow pupils to explain their understanding. During my visits to classrooms I saw how additional support is provided to ensure that any misunderstanding in pupils' learning is addressed straight away. The pupils' good use of a range of mathematical apparatus supports their learning well. Because of the effective teaching, learning and assessment, middle-ability pupils are now making strong progress.
- The newly appointed English leader and the head of school have made changes to the teaching of writing so that pupils' next steps in learning are better matched to their needs. Pupils now have more opportunities to talk about their ideas and how to best construct a sentence, before beginning to write. Pupils use word lists and dictionaries confidently to extend their vocabulary. Teachers effectively show pupils how to edit and correct their writing. Leaders check the quality of pupils' writing on a regular basis to ensure that staff know exactly what the next steps are for all pupils.
- Middle-attaining pupils in writing are supported well and are catching up with other pupils. Leaders accurately recognise that there is more to do to ensure that these pupils make better progress in key stage 1 so that they reach their full potential. Leaders correctly know that more pupils need to develop rich vocabulary and accurate spellings to support writing.
- Provisional performance information for 2018 indicates that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in key stage 1 phonics remains below the national average. However, school figures have improved compared with 2017. Leaders have accurately evaluated outcomes and made improvements to the teaching of phonics. These include refining the way that phonics is taught in class and ensuring greater individual support for those pupils who need to catch up. I heard some pupils read and they confidently used their phonics knowledge to understand difficult words. In the classrooms that we visited, pupils were supported well in their writing by additional spelling resources. Leaders provide additional training opportunities for staff to share best practice in the teaching of

phonics. Consequently, a higher proportion of pupils compared to last year, currently in Year 1, are on track to reach the expected standard this year.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- improvements for disadvantaged pupils are sustained, so that they achieve as well as all other pupils nationally
- pupils consistently achieve as well as they should in writing by developing their rich language and accurate use of spelling.

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

Darren Aisthorpe
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the head of school, the subject leaders for English, the early years foundation stage leader, and six governors. I spoke with a representative of the local authority. I also had meetings with the school business manager and a group of pupils. I spoke with parents on the playground and considered 33 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 21 free-text comments. I also considered responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Together with you and the head of school, I observed teaching and learning across the school. I looked at pupils' learning in their mathematics books, their English books and topic books. I also heard some pupils read. I observed pupils at breaktime and spoke with them informally. I also considered a range of documentation, including documents related to safeguarding, governance, the school action plan and teaching, learning and assessment.