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Ms Annie Spencer
Headteacher
Chew Magna Primary School
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Dear Ms Spencer

Short inspection of Chew Magna Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 18 July 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 September 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your co-headteacher lead the school effectively, well supported by other leaders and governors. Staff feel valued and respected. You are dedicated to reflecting on your practice, which leads to secure improvements in the academic and pastoral support you provide for pupils.

Adults form warm, caring relationships with pupils and have high expectations of their behaviour. Pupils enjoy learning and are proud to attend the school. They are extremely polite and behave impeccably in and out of lessons. Pupils listen respectfully to instructions and work hard, because they are keen to do well. Almost all parents are happy with the school. They say there is a welcoming, friendly atmosphere and typically comment, 'This is not like a school, it is more like a home.'

Your latest assessment information and current pupils' work show that good teaching generally helps the majority of pupils to make strong progress. Consequently, most pupils achieve well in all subjects. However, the teaching of writing has not been sufficiently effective for a small proportion of pupils, particularly boys in key stage 1. As a result, they have not achieved so well in this subject as other subjects. In addition, a minority of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities have made weak progress and fallen behind in their learning. This is because they have particularly complex needs and additional support that you are providing will take more time to have an impact.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a clear culture of safeguarding in the school where everyone is committed to caring for pupils. You take the time to get to know your pupils and their families well, which helps you to establish support when they need your help. Some pupils have benefited from additional emotional and social support. This is having a positive impact on improving their confidence and attitudes to learning. Pupils say they feel safe and are well looked after. A pupil commented, 'You can talk to the teachers about anything.'

You provide appropriate training for staff which ensures that all adults understand what to do if they are worried about a pupil. You keep secure and detailed records, and follow up concerns in a timely manner. This helps you to check that your actions are making a difference. You make detailed checks to ensure that all adults working in the school are safe to work with children and record this on the school's single central record. Staff are suitably trained to support pupils' medical needs. You ensure that all staff undertake detailed risk assessments to keep pupils safe on school trips. You have well-understood routines in place so that everyone knows what to do in the event of an emergency.

Inspection findings

- We agreed that my first line of enquiry would look at how leaders are improving teaching at key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. This was because there was a decline in standards in reading and mathematics last year and standards in writing had been lower than those nationally over time. Your latest assessment information and pupils' learning confirm that improvements to teaching have led to current pupils making strong progress in reading and mathematics. This has resulted in almost all pupils in key stage 1 achieving well, particularly in reading. However, pupils' progress in writing has not been as effective. This is particularly the case for boys. Therefore, fewer pupils achieve standards appropriate to their age in writing compared to other subjects.
- My second line of enquiry was to find out how well teaching supports disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to make strong progress. Along with your special educational needs coordinator, you work closely with teachers to plan additional teaching and pastoral support. This has been particularly effective in improving pupils' emotional well-being and attitudes to learning. Teaching assistants model learning effectively and intervene appropriately to support pupils' learning. As a result of the extra support that you provide, some pupils are making good progress. However, a small number of pupils who have complex needs have made weaker progress. This is because ongoing support to address their particular needs is taking time to have an impact.
- We also looked at the actions you are taking to improve writing at key stage 2. This is because in recent years progress in writing has been well below that of pupils nationally. You have provided training for staff to improve the teaching of writing. This is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' accurate use of grammar. For example, pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 enjoyed applying their

understanding of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs to develop their descriptive writing. Writing included sentences such as, 'White water was bashing heavily against the mossy rocks' and 'Quickly, the small yellow boat accelerated through the bubbling river.' All leaders, including governors, check the quality of teaching to confirm that your actions are having a positive impact. Improved teaching has led to good progress in writing for older pupils and consequently standards are improving. Provisional results for Year 6 this year indicate that the majority of pupils have achieved well. Approximately one third of pupils have achieved higher standards. However, inspection activities reveal that, despite early improvements to the teaching of writing, this has not yet had sufficient impact. Consequently, younger pupils in key stage 2 make weaker progress in writing and do not achieve as well as they do in reading and mathematics.

- Finally, I wanted to establish what actions leaders and governors are taking to improve attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. You work hard to emphasise the importance of regular attendance to pupils and parents. As a result, attendance is improving. However, attendance for a small proportion of pupils is proving more difficult to improve. You tackle attendance issues sensitively and communicate with parents well. This allows you to provide families with the bespoke support they need to help their children attend regularly. Governors monitor attendance to assure themselves that your actions are making a difference. A parent who commented on the nurturing support you provide stated, 'The pastoral care is second to none.'

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the teaching of writing improves so that pupils routinely achieve well
- targeted academic and pastoral support for pupils who need to catch up, including some disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, helps them to make consistently strong progress
- continued support of pupils and their families ensures that pupils attend regularly.

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

Yours sincerely

Catherine Beeks
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your co-headteacher, as well as other leaders. I held a meeting with two governors and had a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body. I also met with the local authority adviser. You and I reviewed the school's latest assessment information and I read the school's self-evaluation and development plans.

I checked the school's single central record and we discussed your safeguarding procedures. Together, we observed learning in all classes. I spoke with pupils in lessons and at breaktime. We jointly reviewed pupils' English and mathematics workbooks in several year groups. The co-headteacher joined us to review the work of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

I talked to parents at the beginning of the school day and considered 36 responses to Ofsted's online survey Parent View, along with 21 additional free-text comments. I also took account of 32 responses from your most recent questionnaire for parents. I reviewed 14 responses to the online staff questionnaire.