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Mrs Clare Wright
Headteacher
Frimley CofE Junior School
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Dear Mrs Wright

Short inspection of Frimley CofE Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 18 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 January 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since the last inspection you became headteacher and you quickly established a highly effective leadership team. Together, you have brought about improvements to the school that have raised standards for all pupils. You have improved the school grounds to provide more opportunities for outdoor learning and you have strengthened links with the local community. You have also created a bright and attractive reception area where parents and visitors are warmly welcomed. One parent reflected the views of many with her written comment: 'I can't thank Mrs Wright and her team enough for the outstanding and nurturing environment they provide for our children.'

You, together with your governors and staff, are justifiably proud of the school and what has been achieved. Together, you have worked hard to improve the quality of teaching so that much is now consistently strong across the school. You are aware, however, that in a few classes there is not always a high enough level of challenge, and this is something that you are taking action to address. In 2018, provisional performance information shows that pupils at the end of Year 6 made broadly expected progress in reading and mathematics to reach standards that are above average. Pupils make slower progress in writing. This is because pupils do not always use their basic skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation accurately when completing written work.

You provide a curriculum that is inspiring and engaging so that pupils progress well in all aspects of their learning. You, your leaders and governors are ambitious for the school and have a clear view of how you would like the school to develop over the next few years. Your strategic plan sets clear aims and reflects high expectations for staff and pupils. Owing to your open style of leadership, all staff share your high expectations. They are provided with the opportunity to voice their opinion to shape the direction of the school and they understand their role in achieving the shared goals and aims. As a result, teamwork is strong and staff morale is high. This was reflected in the comment made by a member of staff who wrote:

'I have seen the school go from strength to strength over the past four years. Staff are supportive of each other and are well led by the headteacher, who puts children at the centre of everything.'

Pupils love their school. They particularly like the broad range of opportunities they have to make their opinions known through the various pupil committees that exist within the school. Pupils feel that staff really listen to them and take their opinions and ideas seriously. They know that staff care for them and that they go out of their way to make learning enjoyable. Pupils have a genuine understanding of the school's values and know how these help them to develop their personal skills as well as their learning skills. They are reflective and understand that it is important to celebrate each other's differences. They say that staff treat all pupils equally and fairly and that discrimination on any grounds is not tolerated. Pupils behave exceptionally well in class and when they move around the school.

Governors play a key role working with school leaders to influence the direction of the school. They have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and where further improvements are needed. They visit school frequently and have effective working relationships with staff and leaders. Minutes from governors' meetings show that they are well organised and that they provide a high level of professional challenge to school leaders.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding pupils. The arrangements for protecting pupils are clear so that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff and governors attend training on a variety of aspects of safeguarding. The records of training are meticulously maintained by the school business manager. This ensures that all staff and governors are fully up to date and fully compliant with all requirements. Staff have a secure understanding of what they need to do should they have a concern that a pupil may be at risk from harm. The designated safeguarding leaders work in close cooperation with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families who are in need of help receive the right support in a timely way.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and are confident that adults will take their concerns seriously. They have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including those relating to modern technology. However, they are adamant that bullying does not occur in the school. Pupils are taught how to stay safe from other potential dangers such as those presented by roads, railways, and substances, including

tobacco. The vast majority of parents who responded to the survey agreed or strongly agreed that their children are happy and safe in school and are well looked after.

Inspection findings

- In addition to evaluating the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils, we also agreed to examine the following aspects of the school's work:
 - the effectiveness of actions taken by school leaders to ensure that boys make progress similar to that of girls in writing
 - the impact of actions taken to improve girls' attainment in mathematics
 - the quality of the curriculum and the extent to which pupils build their skills progressively and so make gains in their knowledge and understanding.
- School leaders were disappointed with boys' outcomes in writing in July 2017 so they changed the way in which writing is taught. They reviewed the topics taught across the school and introduced more books and texts to meet the interest of boys. This was largely successful, and provisional data shows that although boys still lag behind girls, they are now progressing at faster rates. Because some subjects, including history and religious education, are taught in a cross-curricular way, pupils now write frequently across a range of subjects. This gives them more time to develop stamina for writing.
- During visits to classrooms, boys demonstrated very positive attitudes towards writing, showing resilience and concentration. However, work in pupils' books shows that some pupils do not have a secure grasp of basic skills. Their spelling, punctuation and grammar are not as strong as they should be. Pupils' handwriting is sometimes untidy and they do not all present their work to a high standard.
- In the national tests in 2017, pupils' progress in mathematics was below average, with girls making slower progress than boys. Leaders acted swiftly by providing training for staff on the teaching of mathematics. This has led to improvements across the school. In classrooms, there is an evident enjoyment of mathematics, with girls showing enthusiasm and participating actively. They respond to teachers' questions and are not afraid to take risks. Many of the activities teachers provide offer a high level of challenge. For example, in Year 3 pupils showed they could complete missing number lists by ordering numbers beginning with the smallest. This provided a high level of intellectual challenge and helped pupils to deepen their understanding of number. However, this level of challenge is not as evident in all classrooms, or for all pupils.
- Work in pupils' books shows that pupils are provided with plenty of opportunities to apply their number skills to solve problems related to everyday life. They are expected to explain their answers and use their reasoning skills. This in turn has led to them having a greater fluency and understanding of the way in which numbers work and so allows them to progress well. Just occasionally, pupils do not present their work as well as they should and this can lead to inaccuracies in their calculations. Teachers are skilled at asking questions that probe pupils' understanding. They pick up on pupils' misconceptions and use these to ensure that pupils grasp new learning. Teachers provide effective feedback to pupils and so

pupils learn from their mistakes by correcting and improving their work. Performance information provided by the school shows that boys and girls both progress at similar rates.

- The broader curriculum is a strength of the school. Staff regularly review the range of topics and themes to capitalise both on their interests as well as those of the pupils. They carefully map out each subject and so ensure that pupils build skills and knowledge sequentially as they move through the school. The curriculum is enhanced with visits to local places of interest, and topics are frequently imaginative and capture pupils' interest. In addition to building pupils' academic skills, this also develops personal learning habits including cooperation, communication and resilience. One of the strengths of the curriculum is the way in which pupils are involved in evaluating their own learning and identifying for themselves what their next steps are. This encourages them to reflect on their learning and to develop independence and decision-making skills.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils learn and apply basic skills, including those of spelling, punctuation and grammar, in their writing, and that their work is presented to a high standard
- pupils are provided with a high level of challenge, and are moved on with their learning when they demonstrate that they are ready to do so.

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

Yours sincerely

Joy Considine
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, you accompanied me on short visits to eight lessons to see how well pupils were learning. I met you, other school leaders, and four governors, including the chair of the governing body. I met with a group of pupils and spoke informally to them during the day. I held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. I reviewed a range of documentation, including curriculum plans, the school development plan and a range of information relating to safeguarding. The views of parents were taken into account by analysing 96 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and the many written responses to the free-text service. I also considered the views of four parents and one former pupil who wrote letters. The views of the staff were taken into account by analysing the 30 responses to the staff survey.