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Mrs Theresa Martin
Headteacher
Chapel End Infant School and Early Years Centre
Beresford Road
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Dear Mrs Martin

Short inspection of Chapel End Infant School and Early Years Centre

Following my visit to the school on 13 June 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 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You have stabilised leadership and have established a strong learning atmosphere that provides pupils with an oasis of calm. As a result, pupils are positive about learning and enjoy helping each other in class. They respond well to instructions from the teachers, such as using their 'magnetic eyes' to focus on what the teacher wants them to learn.

There is a clear sense of teamwork among all members of staff. Together, you are focused on continuing to improve the learning of every pupil and have clear plans to make the school even better. Members of staff say that they feel well supported by leaders and they are proud to work at this school. Effective use is made of the attractive and well-resourced classrooms, both indoors and outside, to make learning interesting.

You and your leaders have modified the curriculum so that you can provide a good level of challenge for various groups of pupils, including the most able. As a result, pupils are more motivated and engaged in their learning than in the past. In the early years provision, you are making good use of information you have collected on the children's specific interests and their prior learning to strengthen their progress further.

Reading is a strength at your school. Pupils enjoy books and use their knowledge of phonics to help them read unfamiliar words. Pupils' writing is interesting, but handwriting is variable and pupils do not consistently use their knowledge of

phonics to help them with their spelling. While pupils achieve well across the curriculum, teachers miss opportunities to make use of what pupils have learned in mathematics to support their learning in science and other subjects.

You provide clear information for parents, including on how they can help with their children's homework. Parents spoken with during the inspection made positive comments, such as, 'Pupils learn in a fun way' and 'Everything is good.' Governors have responded to parents' suggestions by making changes to the curriculum and strengthening the challenge for the most able pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. All adults working in the school are checked for suitability and have received training to help them look after pupils well. You and your staff are thorough in providing the right level of care for pupils, including those who are vulnerable. For example, you provide opportunities that enable pupils to talk about their concerns with a key adult. You work closely with external agencies to provide expert advice and relevant therapy to support the pupils' well-being. Pupils are kept safe as they work and play. For example, in the Nursery, the two-year-olds made sure that they were wearing sun hats before going out to water the plants. Pupils know how to stay safe and Year 2 pupils make comments such as, 'The golden rules keep us safe' and, 'Everyone is comfortable about talking to the teachers at this school.'

Inspection findings

- We agreed to explore four key lines of enquiry in addition to checking the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- First, we explored the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils currently at the school. Disadvantaged pupils did less well than others in 2016 in phonics and mathematics at key stage 1 and in the early years provision. While these pupils made at least the same, if not more, progress than other pupils at the school, their attainment was not as high as it should be.
- School information and pupils' current work show that there is now little difference between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils, and they make good progress across the school. You have changed the curriculum in the early years and Years 1 and 2 so that work is more closely matched to the individual needs and interests of each pupil. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and typically make comments such as, 'Coming to school is my favourite thing' and, 'I like learning.' You have rigorous procedures for checking that all pupils are learning quickly, and leaders take effective action if any pupils are at risk of falling behind.
- Next, we looked at the pace and challenge for learning in science and across the wider curriculum, including for the most able. The most able pupils found work to

be too easy at the time of the previous inspection, and outcomes in science in 2016 were slightly lower than for all schools nationally.

- The most able pupils did well in reading, writing and mathematics in national assessments in 2016. Pupils' work and lessons visited during our learning walks demonstrated that these pupils are continuing to make good progress. In most lessons, they complete work that provides the right level of challenge. In science and other subjects, there are good opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their writing skills but not their mathematical skills. The most able pupils write at greater depth than other pupils, but all pupils make frequent spelling mistakes and their handwriting is variable.
- After that, we checked the attendance of pupils, especially the boys, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the disadvantaged pupils. These groups of pupils had rates of attendance that fell into the lowest 10% in 2016, and the rate of persistent absence was high.
- You have increased the rigour with which you monitor and follow-up absences. Rates of attendance are not as high as for other schools nationally, but have improved significantly this year. You have raised the profile of the importance of regular attendance in newsletters and through competitions and reward schemes. You have been working more closely with parents to tackle poor attendance and have been strict about gaining evidence to show that absences are unavoidable.
- Finally, we explored how well leaders are improving information for parents. At the previous inspection, parents were not given enough support with homework.
- You now provide good information on how parents can support their children at home. In the early years provision, you work closely with parents to complete information about the children's learning, and parents are given the opportunity to come to school once a week to share books with their children. You provide workshops for parents in literacy and numeracy, and the mathematics scheme provides structured online homework for key stage 1 pupils in mathematics.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils improve their handwriting and consistently use their knowledge of phonics to help them with spelling
- teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their mathematics skills when working in other subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I carried out the following activities:

- observed teaching and learning across the school during learning walks with you
- met with leaders and members of the governing body
- held informal discussions with parents and considered the relevant responses to Parent View
- considered the 13 responses to the staff survey
- considered a range of information supplied by the school, the school development plan and records related to attendance and safeguarding procedures
- listened to pupils reading.