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Mr Richard Meekings
Headteacher
Great Addington CofE Primary School
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Dear Mr Meekings

Short inspection of Great Addington CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 14 September 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in February 2014.

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 a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders, other staff and governors know and understand these well. All share your high aspirations for all pupils. You work together effectively to improve continually the quality of education for pupils. You lead by example and are determined to improve further the quality of teaching and learning at the school.

You and the school's highly committed team of staff provide a warm and caring environment. Teachers know the pupils well. They use their skills and expertise to provide vibrant learning opportunities for all pupils. They often hold purposeful conversations about the quality of teaching and learning. They constantly reflect on the quality of provision and adapt their teaching to meet every pupil's needs.

The school has limited space but you do not allow this to affect the quality of pupils' learning experiences. You and the staff use the school's mini-bus to ensure that pupils are able to play sport on the local sports field. This commitment to ensuring that pupils practise their sporting skills has led to the renewal of the school's gold sports mark award.

Pupils spoke proudly about their school and the range of experiences they have. One pupil said that she is looking forward to the school's visit to Osbourne House

on the Isle of Wight as part of their history topic on the Victorians. Visits like this enrich the curriculum. They provide real-life experiences in which pupils can apply their knowledge.

The school emanates warmth, providing pupils with a safe and secure environment. Pupils who spoke to me said they feel special. One child said, 'All staff know all of the pupils.' They felt reassured that, should they have any worries, they can tell their class teacher.

The vast majority of pupils make rapid progress in reading by the end of key stage 2. However, you recognise that more pupils could make even faster progress. You have introduced a range of new English programmes. You recognise that the programmes need further refinement to ensure that they meet the needs of the pupils and fit in to the Great Addington way of learning. The English leader and assistant headteacher work together to ensure that the new programmes match the school's curriculum. They ensure that pupils have in-depth learning experiences linked to class books. For example, children in the early years enjoyed reading 'Meg and Mog' and then created 'rhyming soup'. All staff are committed to raising pupils' achievement further using fun and creative ideas.

You and the mathematics leader recognise that more middle-attaining pupils are capable of reaching the higher standard at the end of key stage 2. The mathematics leader has trained staff to use a range of problem-solving activities. She is now working with teachers to make sure they provide these activities regularly so that more middle-attaining pupils make rapid progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You provide regular and frequent training for the staff. Most recently, for example, they undertook training in combating radicalisation. Staff are aware of the different types of safeguarding concerns and can identify potential issues. The staff operate the school's systems dutifully, so they can alert senior colleagues to any such issues.

Staff with responsibility for safeguarding know in detail the cases when individual pupils have needed additional support. You show initiative in working with outside agencies to get the right support for pupils, when they need it. Your approach is careful, considered, thoughtful and persistent. You are meticulous in every detail of your record-keeping.

Staff encourage pupils, successfully, to care for each other. I saw, for example, the work of the 'friendship pals' in the playground. They make sure that everything goes well and that anyone who needs help gets it. The friendship pals understand their responsibility for looking after other pupils. They spoke knowledgeably about how to help others, including getting staff involved if needed.

Pupils are confident that staff look after them well. They told me that they feel very safe at school. All of the parents with whom I spoke, and those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, confirmed that their children feel safe. Many parents stated that the school provides a warm and nurturing environment. Pupils reported that there is rarely any bullying.

Inspection findings

- The governing body contains a high level of expertise. It is committed to developing the school further. The governors have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the school's development priorities. They understand the importance of raising pupils' achievement. Governors challenge staff effectively to make sure they do this. You and other staff keep them well informed with the information they need. The governing body carefully checks the use of pupil premium funding and sport premium funding. They know that the funding is spent wisely and ensure that it has the greatest benefit for pupils.
- Teachers provide interesting and stimulating learning opportunities. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 wrote detailed character descriptions about the experiences of a Victorian street child based on their class story book. One pupil wrote, 'The night is cold and my body feels like it is turning to ice.' Teachers challenge pupils to build on their vocabulary and use words precisely. For example, in the same class, pupils held a lively discussion about using the word 'exhausted' or 'fatigued' in their character descriptions. Teachers' high expectations support learning well. They make good use of resources and word lists.
- The early years provision is led by a senior leader of education who provides a firm foundation for all new pupils. The vibrant classroom and outside space provide children with exciting learning opportunities. For example, one child eagerly washed socks, pegged them on the line and then expertly counted the socks. Staff use activities creatively to develop pupils' counting and fine motor skills. Staff regularly talk about pupils' progress to ensure that activities meet their needs. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been significantly above the national average for the past three years.
- Pupils develop good phonics skills and knowledge. Teachers and other staff build on pupils' existing knowledge. They use stimulating resources and activities. The most able pupils use and apply their phonics knowledge well in their written work. This year's phonics screening check shows that all pupils reached the expected standard.
- You recognise the importance of sport and music at your school. You have a talented staff team that nurtures pupils' talents and ensures that they have the opportunity to share their skills. For example, you use the local theatre to share your school productions with parents and the local community. Pupils have also achieved success at local sports tournaments.
- You clearly explained that the recent high level of persistent absence resulted from complex medical issues and circumstances. You have positive relationships

with parents and have provided the necessary support to ensure that the school meets these pupils' needs.

- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the grammar, punctuation and spelling test was below the national average in 2016. In 2017, however, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard has increased considerably. It is above last year's national average.
- In 2016, the proportion of the most able pupils in mathematics who achieved the higher standard at the end of key stage 2 was below the national average. Results at the end of 2017, however, show that this has improved. The mathematics leader has worked with teachers on this. Teachers now provide pupils with more problem-solving activities and other opportunities to develop their mastery skills. The mathematics leader continues to support staff to ensure that pupils' work is challenging enough. She recognises that further work is needed to ensure that more middle-attaining pupils achieve the higher standard.
- The proportion of higher-attaining pupils achieving the higher standard in reading in 2016 was above the national average at the end of key stage 2. In 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard was not as high; however, it was still above last year's national average. You are keen to ensure that this improves through a review of reading activities. You have made this a key priority in the school's development plan.
- You and other teachers carefully check pupils' progress. You hold regular meetings with teachers to ensure that they meet each pupil's needs. When pupils are falling behind, you provide additional support. Its impact is also checked carefully by teachers. The school's tracking system is rigorous. It provides useful assessment information so that teachers can check pupils' progress regularly. One of your staff is a moderator for the local authority and supports other staff effectively. You also use local and trust-wide moderation meetings to check the accuracy of teachers' assessments.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers improve reading activities so that a greater proportion of pupils make rapid progress in reading by the end of key stage 2
- teachers make greater use of problem-solving activities to ensure that more middle-attaining pupils make rapid progress in mathematics and achieve the higher standard by the end of key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

Emma Nuttall
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior leaders and governors, including the chair of the governing body. I also spoke with a representative of the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust. I spoke with parents before school and with a group of pupils about their school experience. Jointly with you, I visited a range of classes and we sampled pupils' books. In addition, I checked the school's safeguarding arrangements and records, including the single central register (the school's record of safeguarding recruitment checks on staff). I evaluated the school's documentation about pupils' achievement, planning for improvement and attendance, and the minutes of meetings of the governing body. I took account of the 102 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the 24 responses from parents to Ofsted's free-text service. There were no responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff or pupils for me to consider.