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Mrs Susan Chrysanthou
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Chrysanthou

Short inspection of Furzefield Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 November 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 November 2012.

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 senior leadership team have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and next steps for development. Your school's self-evaluation is accurate, and the development plan outlines clear strategies to bring about improvement. You have a clear vision for the pupils in your school, which all staff share and effectively put into practice. Staff are highly motivated and inspired to achieve your high expectations. Governors know the school well and mirror your aspirations for school improvement. They take their responsibilities seriously, providing school leaders with effective challenge, guidance and support.

You and your staff work tirelessly to create a caring, homely and nurturing atmosphere. All staff are dedicated to developing a 'climate of trust and happiness', which is a core part of the school's vision. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities as learners and classmates.

Pupils are happy at school, behave well and enjoy learning. They describe learning as 'fun and interesting'. Pupils speak with much enthusiasm about the curriculum and are able to draw upon key memories from their experiences and learning in school. For example, one pupil described how they went to the 'cinema' in the school hall, followed by a 'sleepover' in their classroom. Another described an

exciting trip to the National History Museum, linked to their topic about dinosaurs. One pupil also gave an enthusiastic and detailed recount of their fun, engaging outdoor adventures.

Parents are highly supportive and positive about the school. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said that their children are taught well at school, and all parents would recommend the school to others. The vast majority of parents feel that the school is led and managed efficiently and that their children are well looked after. Parents praise the school greatly for the extra-curricular opportunities offered to pupils at the school. Examples highlighted were a visit to Oxford University as part of the Croydon Children's University, singing at the O2 as part of the school choir, and the wide range of sporting facilities available for pupils, including the running track on the school field.

At the time of the previous inspection, leaders were asked to provide more opportunities for pupils to work independently and to improve standards in writing. During the inspection, I observed pupils working independently in English and mathematics, carefully applying their skills to the tasks set for them. Your focus on the development of writing has brought about significant improvements. In 2017, pupils' progress in writing at the end of Year 6 was in the top 20% of all schools nationally. Inspectors also asked you to improve communication between home and school, and ensure that parents felt that their views were heard and valued. Almost all parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire reported that the school responds appropriately to any concerns that they have. One parent commented that all staff, including senior staff, are accessible to talk to.

You are also keen to keep improving all aspects of the school. You are currently focusing on improvements to the teaching of phonics and reading in key stage 1, so that more pupils achieve the expected standards at the end of Year 2. In addition, you also acknowledge that in key stage 2, teachers do not provide sufficient challenge or opportunities for pupils to reason and solve problems in mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and thorough.

The safety of pupils is of paramount importance to all members of the school community. Policies and procedures are comprehensive and provide clear guidance for staff. You keep safeguarding under constant review and take swift and effective action, when needed, to further strengthen safeguarding procedures. You have recently made improvements to site security by carrying out enhanced risk assessments of all of the school's extended services.

You ensure that all staff and governors receive high-quality training in order to keep them well informed. You have highly effective procedures in place to induct new members of staff and volunteers. The procedures for the vetting and recruitment of

new staff are extremely thorough. The school's records show that all checks on staff, governors and volunteers are completed diligently.

Pupils explain with confidence how the school teaches them to stay safe through lessons about fire safety, stranger danger and e-safety. They report that behaviour is usually good and that bullying is rare. When an occasional bullying incident occurs, all pupils feel that teachers take their concerns seriously and deal swiftly with the situation. Pupils are entirely confident that they can talk to any adult in the school if they ever have a worry or concern.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, I evaluated: how well the teaching of phonics and reading impacts on pupils' progress in key stage 1; what actions leaders are taking to ensure that pupils make the same rapid progress in mathematics as they do in reading and writing in key stage 2; and the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- You have rightly identified the teaching of phonics and reading in key stage 1 as a priority for development. In 2017, a lower-than-average proportion of pupils achieved the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. In addition, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standards in reading at the end of Year 2 was below the national average.
- From our joint observations of the teaching of phonics we could see improvements are taking shape. The good practice in phonics teaching in the early years is helping improvements to get underway in key stage 1. The school's assessment information also indicates that pupils' progress is improving. However, you and your leaders are rightly continuing to focus on securing improvements to the teaching of phonics and reading.
- In recent years in key stage 2, pupils' progress in mathematics has been similar to that of other pupils nationally. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their fluency and calculation in mathematics. However, teachers do not routinely challenge pupils enough through tasks that require pupils to reason and to solve problems. Leaders recognise that there is sometimes insufficient challenge in the tasks pupils are set in mathematics to enable them to progress as well as they do in reading and writing. Pupils, on occasion, are not moved on quickly enough to the next steps in their learning.
- Leaders' and governors' effective use of the school's pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils is having a positive impact. In 2017, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 made very good progress from their low starting points at the end of key stage 1. In reading and writing, these pupils made better progress than their classmates. However, fewer disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics than other disadvantaged pupils nationally. The school's assessment information shows that in some year groups and subjects the progress of disadvantaged pupils is more rapid than it is in others. You are, rightly, making sure that all leaders and staff continue their focus on accelerating the progress of these pupils, so that they are fully prepared for the next stage of their education.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of the teaching of phonics is consistently high, so that pupils' progress in their phonics skills and reading accelerates and a greater proportion reach the expected standards in key stage 1
- teachers provide greater challenge and opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning skills and solve problems in mathematics in key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

Luisa Gould
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, your senior leaders and a group of governors. I had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. We discussed and agreed the key lines of enquiry for the inspection. Jointly, we visited classes in the Nursery, Reception, key stage 1 and key stage 2. Alongside your subject leaders, I reviewed a range of English and mathematics books. We discussed the school assessment information about outcomes for current pupils, your plans for improvement, and your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I considered 47 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and took account of parents' free-text comments. I analysed a range of school documentation, including policies and procedures, and minutes from governing body meetings. I met with your school business manager to review the pre-employment checks made on the suitability of staff to work with children. I checked other safeguarding documentation and procedures.