

9 March 2018

Mrs Claire Barwell  
Headteacher  
Maple Infant School  
Maple Road  
Surbiton  
KT6 4AL

Dear Mrs Barwell

### **Short inspection of Maple Infant School**

Following my visit to the school on 27 February 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 October 2014.

#### **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 taken effective steps to share leadership responsibilities across your team and secured a collective understanding of the improvements needed.

You pride yourself on leading a school that is nurturing and inclusive for all members of the community, supported by staff and governors. Pupils' progress and well-being are at the heart of all your decisions. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning because their opinions and ideas are valued. You regularly hold events to keep parents informed about their child's learning, such as the phonics workshops held on the day of the inspection.

In the survey, and during informal discussions, parents and carers overwhelmingly agreed that the school is welcoming; some parents requested that communication between the school and home be improved. Pupils report that they enjoy their lessons as teachers make them interesting.

Governors know the school well and are committed to driving improvement. Their visits to the school are well focused on the impact of actions taken to meet school development priorities. They have a secure understanding of how funds are allocated and monitor the impact of spending choices on pupils' outcomes.

The previous inspection report recommended that the school should improve procedures for checking pupils' progress. You have successfully reviewed and updated school assessment procedures to enable leaders to use data effectively to

inform their areas for school improvement and hold teachers to account. Your assessment system provides precise information and teachers are using it increasingly well to inform their planning. However, in some cases, assessment information, including questioning, is not used effectively enough to adapt the lesson in order to maximise pupils' progress.

In addition, the previous inspection report recommended that the school should improve teaching so that teachers always expect enough of the most able pupils, especially in mathematics. New systems have been implemented for the teaching of mathematics and are having a positive impact on the quality of the mathematical language used by pupils. They are able to articulate their ideas well and make reference to previous learning.

Pupils clearly enjoy their learning and leaders have made sure that teachers value pupils' contributions to lessons and praise them constructively. Pupils focus well in lessons and are interested in their learning. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge, consider the interests of pupils when planning their lessons and provide engaging activities. However, on occasion, teaching assistants are not deployed effectively to maximise pupils' learning.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Visitors to the school are provided with clear and precise information regarding safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding arrangements are clear and the staff team is regularly kept up to date with any changes to policy. Staff understand the expectations of them in regard to keeping children safe and adhere to these responsibilities well. Pupils are kept informed about what to do if they have any worries regarding their safety, or that of others, by displays and posters around the school. Pupils are regularly reminded about how to keep themselves safe and they told me that they are confident to report any concerns to teachers.

### **Inspection findings**

- A key line of enquiry for the inspection was to evaluate the procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance, as absence had risen in the academic year 2016/17.
- Leaders made attendance a school priority and strengthened the policy, resulting in the implementation of robust procedures. Absence is carefully monitored and action is taken to work with families of those children whose levels of absence causes concern. As a result, the current attendance figures show an improvement on the same period last year and a reduction in persistent absence.
- The second line of enquiry was the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. This was because the school's data showed that this group of pupils did not perform well at the end of key stage 1 when compared to pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.

- You have made sure that the progress of all pupils is carefully monitored and additional support is allocated as required. The focus on language development across subjects is having a positive impact. For example in science, key scientific language relevant to the topic is displayed in an engaging way. In mathematics, pupils are expected to explain their thinking in complete sentences using accurate mathematical vocabulary. Frequent opportunities for pupils to share their ideas through discussion with their peers supports their understanding of key concepts.
- The strategy for expenditure of the pupil premium grant is focused upon timely intervention to enable pupils to catch up. Evidence from the school's assessment information shows that these pupils now make strong progress from their starting points.
- My final key line of enquiry was to consider the actions leaders are taking to improve writing across the curriculum. In 2017, pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 1 for writing were below those in mathematics and reading.
- Significant attention has been given to handwriting. You have made sure that children in Reception have plenty of opportunities to develop their fine motor skills. In key stage 1, many children are now using a cursive script. They take pride in their work and accept guidance from teachers on how to improve. Teachers provide a wide variety of opportunities for writing for different purposes and at increasing length. For example, pupils in Year 1 enjoyed writing stories about pirates. Teachers use engaging strategies to support pupils to remember key features of writing, such as punctuation. Clear frameworks to support writing are evident through books. As a result of these strategies, pupils are now making good progress in writing.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching assistants are effectively deployed to maximise their impact on pupils' progress in lessons
- teachers use ongoing assessment in lessons, including questioning, to adapt teaching to meet the needs of all pupils across the curriculum.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and director of children's services for Kingston-upon-Thames. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Helen Rai  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the deputy headteacher, two key stage leaders, and a middle leader. I met with the office manager and a newly qualified teacher. I met with four members of the governing body and I spoke to a representative from the local authority.

I visited classes from Nursery to Year 2 with you, the deputy headteacher and the early years leader to observe teaching and to look at pupils' work.

I met a group of pupils and reviewed a selection of pupils' work.

I analysed 89 responses from parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. Together with this, I considered 22 questionnaire responses from staff and pupils. I also talked to seven parents in the playground.

I evaluated a range of documentation related to safeguarding and the school's website. School attendance information and assessment information were also evaluated.