

4 February 2019

Mrs Kelly Bird
Headteacher
Anton Infant School
Wellesley Road
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 2HF

Dear Mrs Bird

Short inspection of Anton Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 23 January 2019, 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 March 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. At the time of the previous inspection you were the school's acting headteacher and subsequently appointed as headteacher. Since your appointment you have established a clear vision for the success of the school. You have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have developed a clear plan for improvement. The leadership of the school has recently been reinforced by the appointment of a deputy headteacher. You have built upon the school's existing effectiveness and have introduced improvements. For example, you have developed an early years tracking system to identify gaps in learning, which are then addressed quickly by staff.

You are developing a strong team around you. Your belief that every teacher is a leader is reflected in the high-quality training provided. For example, you have enabled staff to develop professional skills by attending courses such as 'Making Headway' and 'Excellent Leadership'. Leaders are currently developing the role of middle leaders within the school. You recognise, however, that this is still in its infancy and, as such, more needs to be done before the impact of their actions can be measured. You also ensure that staff have good subject knowledge by arranging courses linked to their needs.

Pupils achieve well at your school. Information for the past three years shows that standards achieved by pupils at the end of key stage 1 have been rising. In 2018 outcomes were well above the national average at both the expected standard and at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

You have addressed the last inspection's recommendations to ensure that all pupils develop good handwriting. You have introduced a new handwriting scheme and have established high expectations across the school that the chosen style is used across the whole curriculum. Handwriting is modelled effectively by all staff when writing on whiteboards or displays. Work in books and displays of pupils' writing around the school show that standards of handwriting are generally high. Pupils who find handwriting difficult are given focused support. Examples of pupils' excellent handwriting are regularly celebrated in Friday assemblies.

The previous report also recommended improving the outdoor provision in the early years. The enhanced outdoor area now encourages children to take their learning outside, where they can build on skills and activities started in the classroom. They use the area fully, learn through play, communicate well and share equipment with one another. Activities are now regularly planned by staff to ensure that this area is used to its maximum potential. You have involved the local community in your plans to further develop the outdoor provision. As a result, a local builder has donated equipment to enable you to build a water wall.

The final area of improvement from the previous inspection recommended that greater opportunities are provided for pupils to participate in activities that developed their creativity. Work in books, displays around the school and information shared during the inspection show that pupils now have many opportunities to develop their artistic and creative skills throughout the year.

Parents are highly supportive of the school. One parent, reflecting the views of many, said, 'It is a nurturing school where each child is important, and they all make great progress.'

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding that underpins all aspects of the school's work. You have developed effective procedures for recording and following up concerns regarding any pupil who may be at risk. Staff use these procedures immediately and risks are assessed and acted upon quickly. The school has well established links with outside agencies and when necessary readily engages their support. Pupils feel safe in school and this is a view shared by parents and staff.

Safeguarding training is effective. All members of staff and governors have been trained on the latest version of 'Keeping children safe in education' and receive regular updates about safeguarding. Governors regularly check that policies and procedures are up to date and are implemented effectively.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look at specific areas of the school's provision: the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements; the progress of disadvantaged pupils; the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and the breadth and balance of the curriculum provided.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils at the school, although rising, is well below the average of other schools nationally. As leaders pointed out during the inspection, comparing the performance of these pupils with the national picture is difficult because of the small numbers involved. However, these pupils are carefully monitored and are supported well both emotionally and with their learning. As a result, they make strong progress. Historically, disadvantaged pupils do very well at the school and many outperform other pupils nationally. There was, however, a dip in the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard at the end of key stage 1 in 2018, due in part to the complex needs of many of these pupils. Work in books and school tracking information show that disadvantaged pupils currently at the school are making strong progress; many are performing above the standard expected at their age. Governors ensure that the funding received to support disadvantaged pupils is used effectively.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND has also risen in the past two years, yet remains below the average for schools nationally. Pupils with SEND are well catered for. They are quickly identified, and programmes put in place to help support their individual needs. These programmes are closely monitored, assessed and altered if they are not having the desired impact on learning and progress. Where possible, pupils receive these interventions in the classroom alongside their peers. Current progress information indicates that these pupils make very strong progress from their various starting points. Where required, outside agencies readily provide additional support to ensure that these pupils' needs are met effectively.
- The present curriculum is broad, balanced and accessible to all. Leaders have designed the curriculum so that it links to the school values: to become responsible young learners, successful individuals and inspired learners. These values underpin all aspects of your curriculum. Where possible, learning in the Reception classes is linked to these values to enable a strong transition between early years and key stage 1. Leaders regularly check to ensure that there is full coverage of all subjects across the curriculum. Where possible, meaningful links are made, for example by using rich texts in reading sessions to inform or stimulate activities in other curriculum areas.
- Educational trips and visits to the school by, for example, drama groups help to make learning exciting for your pupils. A group of pupils I spoke with at lunchtime described how 'Teachers are fun, and learning is fun.' Alongside the curriculum, pupils have opportunities to take part in many extra activities, including orienteering, badminton, dance or sewing.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- further develop the skills and expertise of middle leaders so they identify priorities and accurately evaluate the impact of their actions on pupils' achievement in the subjects they lead.

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

Yours sincerely

Brian Macdonald
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher to discuss the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. I held discussions with your special educational needs coordinator and members of the governing body. I held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. Together, we observed learning in every year group. I considered the school's documentation relating to governance, safeguarding and pupils' progress and attainment. I took account of the seven responses submitted by staff and the 41 parent responses to Ofsted's confidential online survey, Parent View. I also spoke to several parents before school and considered the 32 free-text messages submitted by parents to Ofsted. I talked with pupils both in class and at breaktime.