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Mrs Kate Law
Headteacher
Chilton Primary School
Chilton Lane
Ramsgate
Kent
CT11 0LQ

Dear Mrs Law

Short inspection of Chilton Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 21 March 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in March 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

You work with a relentless determination to instil a culture of high aspirations, expectations and achievement. You successfully motivate and inspire pupils and staff who share your ambition and work hard to live up to the high expectations. One member of staff wrote: 'The support received from the management and leadership team is outstanding, the support amongst the staff is second to none and the headteacher is inspirational in her approach, making this a fabulous school for the staff to work in.' Staff, pupils and governors are proud of their school, enjoy working in it and feel valued and respected. Morale is high.

Pupils enjoy learning, behave exceptionally well and have a strong voice in the school. They are polite, friendly and articulate and develop as well-rounded individuals. One parent wrote: 'There is a real family atmosphere at school. Children enjoy coming to school and they are happy. Children are included in decision making and are valued.' During the inspection, pupils in all classes were engrossed in their lessons and happy to explain what they were learning and why. In their survey, pupils said that the school encourages them to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally. They appreciate the opportunities they

have to be independent and take on responsibilities. The junior leadership team, for example, is proud of the work it does for the benefit of all the pupils.

Parents are very positive about the school and your leadership. A parent commented: 'Under the new head, the school, I feel, is going from strength to strength; she has a real connection to the children.' Parents praised school staff for their commitment to their children. One wrote: 'Teachers and staff go above and beyond to provide children with an exciting environment in which to thrive, as well as an engaging curriculum.' Another echoed the views of many with the comment: 'All staff take deep pride in all the children's education.' Many parents commented on the wide range of activities offered to their children and the celebration of pupils' personal development as well as their academic achievement. You and your team recognise the need to build on existing strengths in the curriculum to provide further creativity and challenge in all subjects.

You are mindful of the issues identified as needing improvement from the previous inspection of your predecessor school. The proportion of pupils who attain highly in writing, for example, has increased considerably to well above that found nationally. Pupils make rapid progress in reading, have many opportunities to talk about their learning and know what they need to do to improve. You and other leaders and governors conduct a range of monitoring activities that effectively and accurately identify the school's current strengths and areas for further development. You have recognised that middle leadership needs to strengthen the impact of its work.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. All arrangements are fit for purpose, and records are detailed and of high quality. You and governors commissioned a review of your safeguarding procedures to check on the effectiveness of your policies and practice. There was a positive outcome from this review, and the minor recommendations that were made were put in place immediately.

Staff receive regular training in keeping pupils safe from a variety of risks, including those related to online activity. The designated safeguarding leaders act swiftly when necessary and liaise well with other agencies to ensure that pupils in need receive timely and effective support. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being and recognise that child protection is everyone's responsibility.

Pupils say they feel safe and happy in school and that they are confident to talk to staff should any problems arise. Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that the school keeps their children safe. A parent wrote: 'As a parent at the school for the last eight years I have seen many staff go above and beyond what is expected, to make sure the children in their care are really well supported and nurtured. I know my child is safe and happy here.'

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection we agreed to focus on the following aspects of the school's work: how well the most able pupils are challenged; pupils' spelling skills; pupils' achievement from their starting points by the end of key stage 1; the impact of the work of middle leadership on the curriculum and teaching and learning; and the effectiveness of safeguarding.
- A current focus of your work is to ensure that learning consistently challenges pupils in all subjects. You ensure that pupils experience a wealth of enrichment opportunities to enhance their learning. Teachers have undertaken training to further develop their skills in ensuring that learning demands greater challenges of pupils and, particularly, the most able pupils. The impact of your work is very evident. In 2017, the proportion of pupils that reached the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was far greater than in the previous year, and well above that found nationally. This was the case for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Pupils' books in both key stages demonstrate work of a high quality, and pupils were able to articulate their knowledge and understanding in reading, writing and mathematics. There is no complacency, however, and you have correctly identified the scope for further challenge and creativity in subjects across the curriculum.
- You have introduced a new approach to spelling which has established consistency across the school in the way spelling is taught. The positive impact on pupils' skills is very evident and you know this through your rigorous monitoring procedures. Trained and skilled support staff make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning, including spelling, by helping to overcome any barriers to learning and employing a range of teaching strategies so that all needs are met well.
- In 2017 at the end of Year 2, fewer pupils achieved the expected attainment in reading, writing and mathematics than found nationally. The proportion that achieved greater depth in learning was at or above national figures. You convincingly explained that this was not a typical picture of achievement at the end of key stage 1. It was linked to the higher-than-usual proportion of pupils in the year group who had specific, and often complex, needs. Most importantly, you demonstrated that this group made strong progress from starting points well below those typical for their age when they started in the early years. In previous years, the proportion of pupils achieving age-related expectations and greater depth in learning has been above that found nationally. Your current assessments show that pupils are on track to replicate this picture in 2018.
- There is a commitment to developing leaders within the trust and the school. Your senior phase leaders of learning and your middle leaders share aspiration and ambition in the pursuit of excellence. Your focus on the quality of teaching and learning is unwavering. If any weaknesses in teaching are identified, leaders provide effective support and guidance, and improvement is expected. You challenge yourself, other leaders, staff and pupils to do even better. You welcome the helpful challenge and support from the trust and the local advisory board. The roles of middle leaders are clearly defined, and leaders have a clear line of accountability. They said they feel very well supported in developing their

leadership skills. They are knowledgeable and enthusiastic in their areas of responsibility. You acknowledge that there needs to be even greater impact on the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' outcomes from the work of middle leadership.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- middle leadership is strengthened so that there is even greater impact on the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' outcomes
- there are even more creative and challenging learning opportunities across the curriculum.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and your deputy headteacher and the executive headteacher, who is the chief executive officer of the Viking Academy Trust. I also met with other leaders in the school. I met with members of the local advisory body and trustees of the Viking Academy Trust. You, the executive headteacher, or your deputy accompanied me on my visits to classes. During these visits, I spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at their work. I held a meeting with the junior leadership team which is made up of pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 and asked them for their views on the school. I reviewed the school's website and sampled a range of documents and records including: information about pupils' achievement; the school improvement plan; your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness; and documents relating to safeguarding. I took into account 78 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 30 free-text comments. I also considered 57 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 67 responses to the pupil survey.