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Guy Perkins
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Perkins

Short inspection of Yattendon School

Following my visit to the school on 24 January 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 February 2013.

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 begun your work as headteacher with an ambitious vision for pupils and you are supported well by your new deputy headteacher. You have inspired staff so that they share your vision. Consequently, they feel included in initiatives aimed at improving the school. The vast majority share your determination to improve the education that pupils receive.

Governors, many of whom are new, have developed their respective roles since the last inspection. A careful approach to monitoring and evaluating the work of the school has been implemented. This has strengthened the governors' knowledge of the school.

Parents told me how pleased they are that their children attend your school. A parent summarised many of these views by noting: 'My children are very happy with their school and all the staff, and there has never been a day when they have not been looking forward to going to school.' You and your team are ambitious for pupils to develop and learn both academically and personally, and, therefore, pupils develop into polite and well-behaved individuals who are well prepared for their next steps in education.

Pupils' achievement is improving and inspection evidence shows that the current

Year 6 are on track to attain above the national average in reading and writing and broadly average in mathematics. Uncharacteristically, fewer pupils reached the expected standard in reading and mathematics in 2016 because a small number of middle-attaining pupils did not make enough progress to reach expected standards. However, you have moved swiftly to improve this, with the result that the vast majority of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, make at least expected progress from their different starting points and higher proportions do better than this.

You and your staff have worked well to meet the recommendations from the previous inspection. As a result, the checks on pupils' assessments are more carefully tracked and teachers show an increasing confidence in using these to plan their work in reading and writing. However, this is not as consistent in mathematics. Leaders have improved the way pupils' work is checked by their teachers and a sophisticated system for self-evaluation and teacher comment ensures that everyone is clear about where pupils have difficulties or can celebrate when they grasp new ideas and skills. The focus on disadvantaged pupils has begun to diminish the differences in outcomes for this group when compared with others nationally. This is as a result of the importance that you place on this group. A change in the way some teachers organise their lessons has helped develop more resilient and independent learners.

Although the progress made by pupils with additional needs is now tracked, this is not analysed regularly enough. As a result, checks on the effectiveness of intervention strategies are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable.

Learning is mostly well matched to the needs of pupils. Occasionally, middle- and higher-attaining pupils spend too long repeating work that they can already do, especially in mathematics, and some pupils need more visual and practical support to understand complex concepts, such as fractions and percentages. Nonetheless, most pupils feel that teachers encourage them to do their best in lessons and many pupils feel that work challenges them.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your colleagues have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are robust and records are confidentially stored, detailed and of high quality. A recent audit of safeguarding has reinforced governors' careful monitoring of this area and has helped them to ensure that aspects of the school's practice in checking on adults employed to be with pupils have been covered well.

You are acutely aware of your responsibilities to protect pupils. You encourage staff to attend training regularly so that they can spot any abuse or concerns swiftly and understand their responsibility to protect pupils, including in relation to radicalisation. Pupils who are at risk are supported well and safeguarding leaders diligently pursue positive outcomes for the most vulnerable pupils in the school's care.

Almost all the pupils who responded to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire say they feel safe at the school. When asked, they know how to keep themselves safe and have a clear understanding of how to use the internet safely. Nearly all pupils feel strongly that there is an adult in the school that they can talk to if something is worrying them. They have a good understanding of what bullying is and say that it is extremely rare in school.

Inspection findings

- This short inspection focused on whether:
 - leaders, including governors, had addressed the key improvements since the last inspection
 - disadvantaged pupils and those with higher and middle prior attainment are supported to make good progress
 - teachers are helping disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make better progress
 - the attendance of specific groups is improving
 - safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- Together with governors, you are making effective use of the school improvement plan to drive forward initiatives and address areas identified in the last inspection report. Governors have maintained their high level of support and challenge. This has helped to ensure that leaders focused successfully on the unexpected dip in outcomes last year. As a result, differences in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are less evident for current pupils in the school.
- Issues which limited pupils' achievement last year have been tackled effectively through staff training and changes in the way subjects are taught. These actions, along with pupils' positive attitudes to their learning, have secured stronger progress this year in reading and writing. However, pupils' performance in mathematics has not made the same rate of improvement over time. This is because teachers do not consistently use the assessment information they hold to plan challenging tasks for middle- and higher-attaining pupils. You have recently introduced a different approach to the teaching of mathematics. Pupils speak positively about their improved learning in mathematics. They are expected to work on problem-solving and applying their learning to real-life situations more regularly.
- The analysis of assessment information is focused on the barriers for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities rather than the impact of interventions. Information about the progress this group of pupils make during the year is not gathered frequently enough. Consequently, additional support is not sufficiently responsive to their needs.
- You have correctly focused on improving the attendance of pupils, in particular pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Records maintained by the school indicate an improvement in the number of

pupils who are sustaining higher rates of attendance. A determined approach by staff to talk to parents makes coming to school attractive and rewarding good attendance is reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

- Pupils are kept safe and are supported effectively through a strong working relationship between the school, external agencies and the local authority. Referrals are made in a suitable manner and concerns followed up appropriately. The safeguarding training for staff is comprehensive. The vast majority of parents and carers, through Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that their children are kept safe.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' work in mathematics is strengthened through the use of practical equipment so they can picture the ideas being taught
- teachers consistently use assessment information to match work to pupils' different starting points, so that middle-ability and most-able pupils can move on to harder work more quickly
- leaders maintain a regular and up-to-date view of how different groups of pupils are doing from their starting points, so that action can be taken swiftly to address any shortfall, particularly for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

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

David Cousins
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and the deputy headteacher, middle leaders and other staff in the school. I had a discussion with the chair of the governing body and three other governors. You, your deputy headteacher and I made a series of visits to every class. I met with pupils from Year 3 and Year 5 and sought their views about their learning and the school. I considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan, records relating to pupils' attendance and current information on outcomes for pupils. I also reviewed the school's safeguarding practices. I took account of the views of 106 parents posted on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the free-text responses and staff and pupils' responses to their online surveys.