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Mr Andy Leach
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Dear Mr Leach

Short inspection of Haddenham Community Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 13 September 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 December 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. In the four years since the previous inspection, there have been considerable changes in staffing. You were appointed in September 2016 and you quickly established a culture of high ambition, both academically and for pupils' personal development. You provide a clear focus on ensuring high-quality teaching and learning. This is recognised and greatly valued by staff, pupils, parents and carers. One parent commented, 'A new energy to learning is obvious from all teachers as a result of the headteacher who joined the school two years ago.'

Relationships between staff and children are excellent. Pupils receive high-quality pastoral care which enables them to flourish and learn well together. All members of the school community are committed to living up to the school's vision of providing a 'safe, stimulating and successful environment to enable all children to develop their potential'. Pupils are polite, well-mannered and show respect for each other and for adults. Pupils are very proud of their school and describe their school as 'fantastic', 'exciting' and 'unique'. They enjoy a broad range of activities and are well behaved in and around the school. They feel valued and they know that every member of staff will listen to them. One pupil said, 'They always deal with our problems. The teachers are very caring.'

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors highlighted good teaching, exemplary behaviour and strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These aspects remain strong. Inspectors asked you to strengthen aspects of teaching to

ensure that pupils worked at a faster rate so that more pupils made strong progress. In lessons, there are now more opportunities to allow pupils time to reflect on their previous learning and think more deeply. As a result, pupils are clear about what they need to do to develop their learning. Staff morale is high and there is a strong sense of teamwork that pervades the school. All staff who completed the Ofsted questionnaire said that they were proud to be part of the team working at the school. They said you supported them well and were clear about what the school is trying to achieve. One member of staff said, 'The climate around Haddenham is very much centred on teamwork.'

You and your leaders are good at identifying how to improve pupils' progress. Pupils make stronger progress in writing and reading than they do in mathematics. There are some inconsistencies in the quality of the teaching of mathematics in some classes. You have rightly identified that the teaching of mathematics needs to be more challenging, and that staff need to have higher expectations for the most able pupils, particularly girls, to enable them to make greater progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors make sure that all safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose and rigorously maintained. Record-keeping is detailed and all actions are followed up meticulously. Precise and detailed procedures ensure that school staff are properly vetted before they work at the school. All school staff receive timely and good-quality training to ensure that they are confident in applying the school's policies and guidance in relation to child protection issues. There are effective relationships with other agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and well looked after.

Safeguarding is at the heart of the school's culture. Pupils are very knowledgeable about how to stay safe, including fire safety and safety when using the internet. They say that they feel safe as the teachers are 'friendly, kind and amazing'. All of the parents who completed the online questionnaire agreed that their children are well looked after and feel safe in school. Parents describe the school as 'welcoming, informative and helpful' with 'warm friendly and caring' staff.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look at the effectiveness of safeguarding, how effectively you have improved the teaching of writing, the progress of pupils, including girls, in mathematics and the progress of the most able pupils in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Leaders have effectively improved the teaching of writing. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who were making expected progress and better than expected progress in writing had fallen significantly from previous years and was below the national average. The school's reorganised curriculum enables teachers to focus on improving the range of writing that pupils experience. The changes that you implemented to improve the teaching of writing have been effective.

You and your leaders recognise that the focus on writing must continue to ensure sustained pupils' progress over time.

- Pupils make good progress in writing. Pupils told me that they enjoy the writing topics and that they love the 'Wow days' that enable them to showcase their work. Current assessment information shows that these are having a positive effect on writing outcomes. The proportion of pupils making strong progress is improving rapidly.
- Leaders have reviewed the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar to ensure that more pupils than previously make strong progress. You have implemented a programme that enables pupils to refine and develop their skills. Children's workbooks that I looked at illustrated a considerable improvement in many pupils' writing. However, you and your team recognise that there is still too much variability in how well pupils apply their skills in writing across the curriculum. On occasions, teachers' expectations are not sufficiently high enough and pupils' writing demonstrates an inconsistent use of spelling and punctuation.
- My final line of enquiry focused on evaluating leaders' actions in improving mathematics. In 2017, the proportion of girls that made expected progress in mathematics was lower than that of other girls nationally with similar starting points. The mathematics leader has identified weaknesses in pupils' understanding in mathematics and has revised the curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils, particularly the girls. Regular problem-solving activities now form a regular part of the mathematics work to help pupils apply their understanding to real-life contexts. You and your team have identified that further work is needed to challenge girls in mathematics and to enable them to develop a deep understanding and reach high standards.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' rates of progress in mathematics continue to improve, particularly for the most able girls
- pupils use and apply their spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately in their writing.

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

Yours sincerely

David Harris
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, your assistant headteachers and several members of staff. We talked about the improvements which have been made since the last inspection. I observed learning with your assistant headteachers in several lessons. I examined pupils' work, focusing on writing. I held a meeting with six governors, including the co-chairs. Before the inspection, I examined a variety of documents, including the school's website, published performance information and a summary of your school's self-evaluation document. I took account of the 61 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 30 written comments. I also considered the 31 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. A range of documentary evidence was evaluated, including documents relating to safeguarding and governance.