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Mrs Sarah Tarrant
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Tarrant

Short inspection of Ashford Park Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 26 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. You have established a very capable and enthusiastic leadership team. Together, you ensure that high standards are maintained. The school's value of 'life-long learning' is demonstrated by leaders' actions. They are highly committed to school improvement, use research to find out what works and they complete nationally recognised qualifications. Leaders have a deep understanding of the school's effectiveness because they carefully evaluate the strategies used. The school's self-evaluation shows a clear and accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. As a result, your plans for improvement are appropriate and ensure that resources are allocated to the right areas for pupils to do well.

Since the last inspection, you have worked tirelessly to secure good progress for pupils across the curriculum, particularly in reading and writing. You intend to build on this further by ensuring that their progress in mathematics is as strong as it is in English. The progress of disadvantaged pupils has strengthened over recent years, but you recognise that this needs to improve further.

At the time of the last inspection, you were asked to improve spelling across all subjects. You have established approaches that promote better spelling in all year groups. Pupils' books show that they have frequent opportunities to improve their spelling in most subjects by reflecting on misspelled words and correcting them. Consequently, pupils' spelling has improved.

Leaders' expectations for high standards are understood by staff. Teachers and teaching assistants are proud to work at the school. They feel supported by leaders and appreciate the range of training that they can access. Staff believe that this training helps them to further improve pupils' outcomes. Staff are highly motivated and feel valued. As a result, they work hard, provide effective support and ensure that pupils make increasingly strong progress.

Overall, high standards have been maintained in most subjects. The provisional results for the 2018 end of key stage 2 assessments show that the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standards for reading and writing are similar to the national average for primary schools. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make strong progress from their starting points because they receive high-quality care and teaching to meet their specific needs.

Safeguarding is effective.

The vigilant safeguarding culture that you have established keeps pupils safe and secure. Safeguarding procedures, including the rigorous suitability checks on all adults who work with pupils, are fit for purpose. Staff have frequent training and updates about how to keep pupils safe. Consequently, they know how to recognise the signs that a pupil may need help.

Pupils told me that they feel safe in school and know who to speak to if they need extra support or are worried. Staff ensure that pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe when online and what to do if they are concerned about something that they experience. Because of this, pupils feel confident and able to talk to staff. Staff work well with external agencies to provide support for vulnerable pupils. If help is not forthcoming from external agencies, staff are relentless in following it up so that pupils can receive timely support.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we decided to look at: the actions you are taking to improve writing and mathematics; how well you have improved communication with parents; how effective you have been in improving pupils' behaviour; and how governors make sure that funding for disadvantaged pupils is used well.
- Pupils' progress in writing has improved steadily since 2016. Leaders have put in place several strategies to help pupils improve and increase their vocabulary and writing composition skills. Teachers show pupils how to develop their descriptive writing. For example, in Year 5, teachers use excerpts from challenging texts to demonstrate how language can be used to create suspense. Consequently, current pupils' progress in writing is strong.
- Provisional results for 2018 show that outcomes in mathematics have strengthened over the past three years. Teachers have improved the teaching of mathematics and ensure that pupils understand subject-specific vocabulary. Teachers carefully assess pupils' skills and understanding and plan work that is appropriately challenging. Nevertheless, pupils need to make better progress in mathematics.

- Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to other parents. Parents have very positive attitudes regarding their children's education and believe that the school is well led. One parent commented that the school has an 'open and friendly feel' and another described the school as: 'A great school with strong leadership, talented and caring staff, supported by a mature governing board and very supportive parent-teacher association.' You have improved communication with parents by increasing the opportunities for them to become involved in the school's events. Parents regularly participate. For example, your popular six-week course, 'Dads and autism', supported fathers of children who have autism spectrum disorder. Parents who attended now feel they have a better understanding of their children's needs.
- Pupils' behaviour is calm and orderly. They are keen to work hard in lessons and they listen carefully to staff. A small proportion of pupils demonstrate challenging behaviour, and leaders have appropriate plans in place to support them. Over the past three years, fewer pupils have received fixed-term exclusions. This is because of the increasingly effective work of leaders in promoting positive behaviour.
- Governors ensure that leaders use extra funding to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils effectively. For example, leaders identify inspirational role models, often from local businesses. These 'role models' work with teachers to mentor disadvantaged pupils so that they can fully understand the importance of education and the choices in life it gives. In this way, pupils are encouraged to try their best. Governors are knowledgeable about the impact of this extra funding because they visit school frequently to check the effectiveness of leaders' actions. Disadvantaged pupils' outcomes are now stronger in reading, writing and mathematics, but need to improve further so that pupils achieve as well as others nationally.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue their work to strengthen teaching and pupils' progress in mathematics
- the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics continue to improve.

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

Harry Ingham
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

At the start of the inspection, I met with you and senior leaders to consider your view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. We agreed on lines of enquiry for this inspection. I also met with senior leaders to discuss pupils' outcomes, behaviour and safeguarding.

I observed learning in classes, accompanied by senior leaders, and spoke to pupils about their work. I looked at pupils' work across subjects and year groups. I met with three members of the governing body and spoke to the local authority's representative on the telephone. I held meetings with pupils to gather their views and observed behaviour in and around the school. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including: the school's self-evaluation; the plans for improvement; and safeguarding policies and procedures. I took account of 118 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, including 97 free-text comments. I also considered 39 responses to Ofsted's confidential staff survey.