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Miss Jessica Alford
Head of School
Kingswear Community Primary School
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Dear Miss Alford

Short inspection of Kingswear Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 3 October 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 predecessor school was judged to be good in November 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 a realistic understanding of the school's strengths and are working on the right aspects for improvement. You are highly committed to your school and well respected for the work you undertake. Your leadership has fostered a fully inclusive school culture. Pupils feel happy and valued.

You draw well on the support provided by other schools within the trust. Leaders ensure that staff training is closely aligned to the school development priorities. Consequently, staff have the skills and expertise to provide well-targeted support to pupils in their learning.

Governors share your high aspirations for what pupils can achieve. They are knowledgeable, observant and self-assured in their work. Governors have an accurate analysis of the school's outcomes in national tests. They understand the purpose of school improvement actions. They use information effectively to check the impact of leaders' work in raising standards.

My visit to the early years highlighted children's interest and engagement in their learning. Staff are patient and attentive to children's needs. They listen carefully. They encourage children to talk about what they are doing. Children's good behaviour shows that they feel safe. Leaders ensure that staffing provides suitable

care and supervision. Leaders have ensured that welfare requirements in the early years are met.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have developed a robust culture of keeping pupils safe. The school's approach to safeguarding pupils is effective. Staff articulate confidently what to do if they have concerns; they are alert to potential signs of abuse. Staff understand school policies and procedures on safeguarding. Key information is shared appropriately. Safer recruitment procedures meet requirements.

Leaders know the needs of vulnerable pupils and their families. There are clear systems in place to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. The school works effectively with external agencies. Leaders are active in seeking early help from the local authority. They review the quality of support to ensure that it is having the intended impact.

My discussions with pupils revealed that they feel safe and well looked after at school. All parents who responded to the parent survey agree that their child is happy, feels safe and is well looked after. A typical comment written by a parent was, 'The school is an excellent, nurturing environment for my child.'

Part of our discussions around safeguarding focused on pupils' attendance. The school's own attendance information for the academic year 2016 to 2017 shows that overall absence has risen. Leaders have put a range of measures in place to effectively check and improve pupils' attendance. These actions are proving to be successful.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry focused on evaluating leaders' actions in ensuring that pupils, particularly boys, make strong progress in writing across the school. This is because in the 2017 end of key stage tests, pupils' progress in writing was below the national average. Teachers use a range of strategies in both key stages to improve pupils' writing. As a result, pupils master subject-specific language quickly. They use this effectively to develop their ideas. Pupils' presentation of their writing is good across the wider curriculum. They take pride in their work. Evidence in pupils' books, including boys', shows that writing is progressing well. Pupils are acquiring a range of age-related skills. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are using a variety of complex devices and techniques to engage the reader. The most able pupils use a range of punctuation marks and detailed descriptions. This adds depth to their writing. However, you know pupils need opportunities to write at length routinely. This will develop their skills further.
- Your analysis of writing skills in the early years identified weaknesses in moving and handling skills. As a result, well-targeted actions have been put in place. These ensure that children, including boys, make good progress. Our visit to the early years showed that strategies to support and develop early mark-making

skills are working. Evidence in children's writing shows that they are making strong progress.

- I focused on evaluating actions taken to ensure that pupils, particularly girls, make strong progress in mathematics. Leaders have reviewed and identified areas for development in this subject. Central to this is an improved use of assessment information which highlights gaps in pupils' subject knowledge. Pupils' books show better progress as a result of actions taken.
- Staff explanations are precise and modelled to secure pupils' mathematical understanding of key concepts. Staff use practical apparatus to support learning. They are adept at questioning pupils to check for misconceptions and misunderstandings. Teaching assistants are well directed in the support that they provide. They encourage pupils to articulate their mathematical thinking and make an effective contribution to accelerating pupils' progress. Evidence in pupils' books, including those of girls and disadvantaged pupils, shows that they are acquiring a range of age-related skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils apply this effectively when solving problems. However, the most able pupils who grasp concepts quickly are not challenged enough. You acknowledge that the level of challenge in mathematics must be high consistently so that these pupils can make rapid progress and reach the higher standards.
- My final line of enquiry evaluated how well leaders and managers are demonstrating the capacity to drive improvement. Leaders have a precise understanding of the school's current performance. They are ambitious in their roles and hold high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Leaders' views on the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils are accurate and well founded. School monitoring documentation shows that leaders provide staff with clear guidance on how to improve their practice. Furthermore, leaders' evaluations note the impact teaching is having on outcomes for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- All staff who responded to the staff survey agreed that leaders use professional development to encourage, challenge and support their improvement. They unanimously agree that leaders have created a climate in which they are trusted to take risks and innovate in ways that are right for the pupils.
- Leaders ensure that objectives for school improvement work are firmly rooted in improving outcomes for pupils. As a result, decisive action taken by leaders is ensuring that areas of weakness are being addressed. Leaders demonstrate good capacity to drive school improvement initiatives.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are routinely provided with opportunities to write at length in English and across the curriculum, to apply and develop their skills further
- the level of challenge in mathematics is consistently high so that the most able pupils can make rapid progress and reach the higher standards.

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

Yours sincerely

Neil Swait
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I spoke to you, the headteacher, the executive headteacher, four members of the governing body, staff and pupils across the school. I made visits to lessons to observe pupils' learning and to scrutinise their work.

I considered a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's development plans, attendance and monitoring records, and safeguarding documentation.

In addition, I took account of 14 responses to the Parent View online survey and nine responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey to take into consideration.