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Mr Mark Crouch
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Dear Mr Crouch

Short inspection of Hepworth Junior and Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 21 November 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 May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. As headteacher, you have a clear vision of the experience you want pupils to encounter. Pupils develop a love of learning through a broad and exciting curriculum, which allows them to excel both academically and personally. Your vision is shared by governors, staff and parents who work together effectively to achieve it. You know the school well and since your appointment have worked hard to effect improvements in many aspects.

Hepworth Junior and Infant School is welcoming and friendly. Pupils are happy to come to school and they enjoy their learning. Pupils learn in an environment of trust and respect. There is an air of calm around the school, which is the same in lessons as it is outside them. Pupils support each other well, and their relationships with each other and with adults are a strength of the school. Pupils are polite and well-mannered and their conduct around the school is good. All of the pupils I spoke to told me how much they enjoy coming to school. Parents are very positive. One parent commented that 'We are delighted with the school. Since the arrival of the new headteacher, we love the focus on academic and non-academic excellence. My child wants to go to school and comes home happy. He has transformed our school.'

You have strengthened leadership and are committed to working in partnership with other schools. This is improving and developing the skills of staff at all levels. Close

working with other schools has ensured that assessment information about pupils' learning is reliable and is used to carefully see how well pupils are progressing. You ensure that your staff take full responsibility for pupils' outcomes. You hold them to account through regular checks on pupils' progress and you work with staff on strategies to improve their practice. Consequently, pupils' outcomes and rates of progress in English and mathematics are improving in all year groups. You have rightly identified that the progress of boys in reading and the most able pupils in mathematics remain as whole-school focuses.

Your improvement planning identifies the correct priorities for further improvement. Your evaluation of the quality of teaching provides an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. You and your leaders continue to work to ensure that effective strategies are widely shared to bring about further improvements where required. However, you recognise that there is still more to be done to ensure high-quality teaching across school.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors identified that pupils needed to be given more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in other subject areas. Leaders have responded well and pupils' work shows that they regularly apply mathematical skills across the curriculum. Consequently, pupils are now making better progress in mathematics and more pupils are reaching the standard expected for their age.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school, with a tangible atmosphere of care and respect throughout. Pupils say that they feel safe and parents agree. Pupils also say that bullying is rare and that staff would help them if they were worried. Pupils have an understanding of how to keep themselves safe online and have had recent assemblies by the NSPCC to help them understand how to keep safe in a range of situations. The school responds well to any concerns and uses partners, including the police, to provide helpful information to pupils and their parents.

Systems for recruitment are rigorous. Senior leaders ensure that appropriate checks are carried out when appointing new members of staff.

You have made sure that all staff know the school's safeguarding procedures and systems well. They are in no doubt about what action leaders expect them to take should they have any concerns. Regular training (including online training) is accessed by staff members and the governing body. This means that they are kept up to date with current policy issues, such as the government's 'Prevent' duty.

Inspection findings

- As part of the inspection, I explored how effectively leaders are improving outcomes in reading for boys by the end of key stage 2. This is because in 2016 and 2017, boys made weaker progress than girls. I found that, throughout the

school, boys are enthusiastic about reading and read well. Teachers carefully select fiction and non-fiction books to ensure that they interest boys while also being appropriately challenging. In key stage 2, teachers use challenging texts and questions to ensure that boys develop complex reading skills such as inference. You harness the support of 'Reading Friends', who regularly spend time in school supporting less fluent readers. You recognise that more work is needed to improve the consistency of challenge for boys throughout key stage 2 to raise standards in reading further.

- I also explored whether the most able pupils are making enough progress in English and mathematics. In English, these pupils are well supported in their learning. They routinely assess their own work and check, edit and improve their work to good effect. In mathematics, pupils' learning is extended through carefully selected 'fluency' problems that deepen pupils' understanding. However, occasionally, pupils spend too long practising skills that they have already grasped and are not given opportunities to apply these skills by solving reasoning problems.
- Another of my key lines of enquiry was to explore how effectively the curriculum prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. Together, you and your staff have developed a well-planned curriculum which promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. You have developed strong links with a local school that is culturally different to yours. Pupils enthusiastically told me about joint visits to places of worship, such as the mosque, church and gurdwara, which helps them understand more about different backgrounds and beliefs. Pupils have a good understanding of British values, such as democracy, respect and tolerance.
- Governors are fully committed to the continued success of the school and have an accurate view of what is working well and what could be better still. Through regular visits, they assure themselves that pupils are well cared for and safe. They offer a healthy balance of challenge and support to you and your team.
- The final focus of the inspection was to evaluate how well leaders ensure that all pupils make good progress through the early years and key stage 1. By the end of Reception, the proportion of children reaching levels of development expected for their age is above the national average. Children are well prepared for key stage 1. Across key stage 1, pupils continue to make good progress as a result of teaching that meets their needs.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- work is always challenging enough for the most able pupils, especially in mathematics
- greater consistency is introduced to improve rates of progress and the attainment of boys in reading.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools

commissioner and the director of children's services for Kirklees. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon McCarthy
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, eight parents, four members of the governing body, including the chair, and a representative from the local authority. I held meetings with the school's leaders for mathematics and English. I talked with small groups of pupils during lessons and informally during playtime and during lunchtime. Along with you, I visited all classes and scrutinised the work in pupils' books. I also listened to some pupils read.

I examined a range of documents, including those relating to attendance and safeguarding. I took account of the minutes of the governing body meetings, reports written by the local authority adviser, the school's evaluation of how well it is doing, improvement priorities, assessment information and the sport premium action plan. I reviewed the school's website. I also considered the responses from parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.