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Miss Mary Ashcroft
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Dear Miss Ashcroft

Short inspection of Claydon Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 February 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 July 2014.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

Following the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve the quality of pupils' work in science and humanities, and the leadership of subjects and special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Leaders have ensured that both these important areas have improved. All staff are held more accountable for leading improvements.

Staff training and support are empowering subject leaders to lead improvements in their areas of responsibility. They demonstrate a firm understanding of their roles. Discussions with leaders confirmed that all staff are working collaboratively to develop their teaching of science and foundation subjects. Each subject has an action plan in place to enable leaders to monitor and evaluate the rate of improvement made. Leaders carry out learning walks and scrutinise pupils' work to check the impact they are having in making improvements. All subject leaders have a specific, personal target to meet as part of the school's procedures to manage their performance.

The leader of science is making improvements. The subject is taught more often than in the past. A scrutiny of pupils' books in one Year 5 class confirmed that a wider range of science topics and investigations are taught each week. Pupils are

encouraged to apply their literacy skills when writing about friction, forces and the human body. Books also contained clear examples of how teachers incorporate mathematics into pupils' scientific work through drawing graphs and charts, and measuring forces. The quality and quantity of pupils' work in science were less evident in pupils' books in Year 3. The presentation of pupils' work in a range of subjects remains too variable.

A new coordinator of SEN is leading improvement. Statutory requirements are met and training is up to date. Increasingly, the provision and care for individual pupils who have SEN are tailored to enable them to integrate fully into school life. Specialist training in dyslexia and managing pupils' social and emotional needs has raised teachers' awareness of the different needs of pupils in their class. Teachers and support staff ensure that pupils receive the additional care and support they need to enable them to engage in learning and make progress. Learning walks enable the SEN leader to monitor how effectively pupils' needs are met in classrooms, and when working alongside a teaching assistant outside lessons. However, the coordination of this work needs further development. Not all teachers plan suitable learning for each pupil in lessons. At times, some tasks are too difficult for them to do, even with one-to-one support.

Recent improvements made in reading, including phonics, and pupils' writing have not been matched by similar improvements in mathematics. Achievement has deteriorated since the last inspection. Leaders and governors acknowledge that raising achievement in mathematics is the school's top priority. Leaders of mathematics have implemented a wide range of actions to improve pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics this year. The school's own assessment information indicates that these actions are leading to improvement.

Safeguarding is effective.

All necessary checks are made when recruiting new staff to work with pupils. A few omissions when presenting this information on the single central record were quickly resolved during the inspection. Training for staff in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty is up to date. Procedures to protect pupils from harm are securely in place. The site is secure and closely supervised during play and lunch breaks. During the inspection, assembly time was used exceptionally well to teach pupils through song about the importance of keeping safe online.

A team of designated leads responds promptly to concerns raised by staff and follows them up to keep pupils safe. A nominated governor takes responsibility for checking routinely that the school's records and procedures are kept up to date. A newly appointed pastoral support leader has established good links between school and pupils' parents and carers. Good communication with staff was praised by parents who responded to Ofsted during the inspection.

Inspection findings

- To determine whether the school remained good, I followed four lines of enquiry

during the inspection. These were based on issues raised in the last inspection, recent performance information and an analysis of the school's website. I focused on the progress made by pupils in mathematics, including disadvantaged pupils, and the actions taken by leaders to improve this; the extent to which leaders had resolved the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection; whether the school is a safe, stimulating and enjoyable place to be; and the school's arrangements to safeguard pupils.

- The school is a safe, stimulating and enjoyable place to be. Pupils say that it is very friendly. They feel safe, enjoy their learning and value highly the wide range of enrichment activities provided for them. Pupils readily volunteer as school councillors and make a good contribution to school life. They take responsibility for helping younger pupils at lunchtimes, providing sports activities, helping in the library and maintaining the school grounds. High-quality noticeboards around the school display pupils' work well and celebrate their successes. Pupils said that behaviour is really good in lessons but not so good outside the classroom. This is mainly because a few pupils spoil things by pushing and shoving others and, at times, using bad language. Attendance is broadly average.
- You, your staff and governors are demonstrating the capacity to improve the school further. You have maintained the above-average standards achieved by pupils in reading and made significant improvements to their writing. The proportions of pupils in both key stages meeting and exceeding expectations in these two subjects were above national averages in 2017. A similar drive to improve the quality of teaching of phonics in key stage 1 led to an above-average proportion of younger pupils meeting national expectations last year.
- Leaders have identified why, over the past two years, pupils have underachieved in mathematics. Teachers have found the expectations of the new mathematics curriculum very challenging. Pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills, and their use of mathematical vocabulary, have not been developed fully. To improve this, two subject leaders are providing additional resources, training and support for staff to improve pupils' learning and progress. Pupils value the extra tuition in mathematics during Wednesday lunchtimes, and the further opportunities provided on two afternoons each week to practise 'hands-on' learning of mathematics.
- A new calculation policy and scheme of work have been introduced to promote greater consistency in teaching mathematics. Pupils are provided with a range of resources in lessons to aid their counting skills. Lessons include more opportunities for pupils to solve problems, learn in greater depth and explain the reasons for their answers. 'Talking partners' encourage them to discuss their findings and describe how they have worked things out. Teaching assistants supervise pupils during assemblies and breaktimes to give teachers time to review promptly the quality of work completed in lessons and to spot any gaps in pupils' learning.
- You feel this is leading to significant improvement. Your latest assessments indicate that, since June 2017, pupils in all classes have made sustained progress, and the proportions of pupils making the progress against the targets

you have set for them have increased in all year groups. This is not fully supported by the evidence found in pupils' books or in the quality of their learning observed in lessons. There are clear inconsistencies in the expectations of staff, particularly in the quality and quantity of work done by pupils and in what the most able pupils are capable of attaining. Not all teachers plan tasks suited to the different abilities of pupils. A lack of clear timescales for completing work leads to pupils working steadily, rather than quickly.

- This year, all staff are being held accountable for contributing towards maintaining the school's high achievement in reading and writing, raising the profile of foundation subjects and improving mathematics. You ensure that plans for improvement are routinely checked to gauge the rate of improvement made. You are working closely with the local authority to assist you in your monitoring and to enable staff to learn from the good practice in other schools locally. You acknowledge that further external validation of your work would provide you and your governors with an accurate overview of the impact you are having in securing improvements in mathematics, and also identify what else needs to be done to improve further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the range of initiatives introduced to raise achievement in mathematics become fully established this year and lead to significant gains in the progress made by pupils, particularly in key stage 2
- they add further rigour to their monitoring of lessons, and scrutiny of pupils' work, to gain greater consistency in the quality of teaching of mathematics
- they gain an accurate, external overview of the impact they are having in raising pupils' achievement in mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and other senior leaders, a group of middle leaders, six members of the governing body and a group of key stage 2 pupils. I attended an assembly. I spent time outside lessons at lunchtime observing pupils at

play and chatting informally to them. You and your deputy headteacher joined me in observing pupils at work in lessons. I reviewed your self-evaluation and improvement planning, safeguarding policy and procedures, including the single central record, and records of behaviour and attendance. I also considered 40 free-text responses from parents, 47 responses to the questionnaire for staff and 58 responses from pupils.