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Chilton Saint  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Saint

### **Short inspection of Davington Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 20 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 September 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your team continue to demonstrate high levels of commitment to the pupils of Davington Primary School. You are determined that the school continues to improve. Under your clear and purposeful leadership decisions are made which ensure that pupils enjoy a rich and fulfilling educational experience. Staff, parents, carers and pupils are fully behind you and the leadership team, in whom they display trust and confidence. Leaders work swiftly and effectively to address any occasional dips in performance. For example, following a drop in pupils' progress in reading at key stage 2 in 2017, leaders acted promptly, analysing results and adapting systems. Consequently, standards in this aspect are now rising quickly and strongly.

This is a school where pupils thrive and develop as confident, articulate learners. Pupils talk excitedly about the range of activities on offer, the support their teachers give them and the kindness of their fellow pupils. High-quality art work adorns the walls and great care is taken to create a stimulating learning environment. Pupils appreciate this and are proud of their school. They relish the many opportunities for after-school activities; one pupil excitedly told me how he goes to a different club every day. Pupils radiate confidence in their learning and in the adults who care for them. Parents too have very positive views. Most parents who spoke to me or completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, felt their children were happy, safe and well cared for, with 97% happy to recommend the school. You have helped forge a strong community spirit, and families appreciate the warmth

and opportunities provided by this large school with a family feel. One parent commented: 'A lovely school with a close-knit feel despite its size.' Everyone upholds your high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils blossom in the atmosphere of mutual respect that permeates every level of school life. Pupils are well mannered, thoughtful and happily engaged in learning and playing together. Great care is taken to support pupils in their next steps, from home visits in the early years to transition meetings, and ensuring that every pupil has their pen licence and can write in ink by Year 5. One parent encapsulated the views of many when describing the school as 'a great school with many opportunities available for all children... I recommend it to everyone who asks!'

You have maintained the strengths identified at the last inspection. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 is in line with or above that seen nationally. Most pupils achieve the standards expected for their age. Achievement is highest in writing so that in 2017 more pupils exceeded age-related expectations in key stage 2 than was seen nationally. This strength was seen in the written work of current pupils during the inspection. Pupils throughout the school take great care with their writing, their handwriting in particular. You are not complacent, however. You aspire to even higher standards so that more pupils attain the higher standards across the curriculum than in the past, especially disadvantaged pupils.

You have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Pupils' mathematics books show regular opportunities to solve problems and develop their mathematical reasoning. Pupils are often able to explain very clearly why an answer cannot be correct, or why they have selected a particular answer. They use a range of equipment and methods underpinned by sound computational skills to demonstrate the mathematical processes they have gone through to arrive at an answer. As a result, progress in mathematics across the school has improved.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Child welfare is at the heart of the school. The well-being team is proactive in creating bespoke programmes to support pupils in developing the habits and attitudes which help them to keep themselves and others safe. Good relationships, built on trust and mutual respect help ensure that needs are known and families get the support that they need from time to time. This supports good attendance and punctuality. All the parents and staff who spoke to me or completed the Ofsted questionnaires felt that pupils were safe at school. Pupils who completed the questionnaire or spoke to me felt safe, listened to and cared for, telling me 'People are kind, people are there to help.'

The school's safeguarding policy adheres to the latest government guidance. All appropriate checks are completed concerning the appointment of staff. Staff receive regular training and are aware of what to do if they have worries about a pupil. Concerns are reported, recorded and acted on in a timely fashion. Leaders are tenacious in following up on any referrals to outside agencies.

## Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we looked closely at specific aspects of the school's provision, including the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, pupils' achievement in writing in the early years, reading progress in key stage 2, how well governors ensure that requirements are met, and the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- The proportions of pupils attaining age-related expectations in reading were in line with proportions seen nationally in 2017 at the end of key stage 2. Despite this you were disappointed with the progress pupils had made in reading from their starting points, which was below national averages. A thorough analysis of pupils' reading comprehension skills enabled leaders to develop a clear action plan to develop understanding of a wider range of vocabulary and precision in answering questions. Teachers now use the plan effectively as a guide to supporting good progress. Pupils who read to me did so with fluency and understanding. Even the youngest pupils were able to explain terms such as 'predator' and discuss their reading in a way that demonstrated comprehension of both fiction and non-fiction texts. Pupils are excited to use the inviting newly refurbished library area and to share their reading from home using the new online system.
- Children join the school in Reception Year from a range of nursery settings. Their communication, language and literacy skills are often less well developed for their age than the skills required for other curriculum areas. Leaders ensure that the early years environment and curriculum develop early phonics, speaking and writing skills well. For example, during the inspection children were working outside to explore materials which would make a good umbrella. They were excitedly testing materials in water and then recording their results on their clipboards. Leaders ensure that opportunities to write are both meaningful and fun. As a result, children are currently making good progress from their starting points, although the proportions of children reaching a good level of development were slightly below the proportions seen nationally in 2017.
- At the start of the inspection some aspects of the school's website did not contain all of the necessary information. These omissions were quickly rectified by leaders. Governors are aware of their obligations to review policies, and there is a schedule in place to help to ensure that this is done regularly. They fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities, attending relevant training and monitoring procedures through auditing and discussions with staff and pupils.
- Governors are a key and effective part of the successful leadership of the school. They understand your vision and complement the work of your team well. They have an assortment of relevant skills, which they use effectively both to support and challenge leaders. Governors have a range of information available to them about school performance and they use this to ask relevant questions about key groups of pupils including disadvantaged pupils. This means that they have an accurate understanding of both the strengths of the school and the appropriate next steps for improvement.
- The pupil premium grant is used effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils

have full access to the wider life of the school. Attendance at residential trips and after-school clubs is high. This supports pupils' enjoyment of school and regular attendance. However disadvantaged pupils do not attain as well as their peers and other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly at higher levels. In some subjects and year groups, such as Year 6, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils is improving, but you acknowledge that this is not yet consistent across the school.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- disadvantaged pupils make consistently strong progress across the school to support them in realising their potential across the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Deborah Gordon  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, members of the governing body, staff, and a representative from the local authority. I reviewed documentation, including information about pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. I observed pupils around the school and in their classes. Together, we visited classes across the school. In the classes I observed teaching, looked at books, and spoke to pupils about their work. I met with six pupils to get their views of the school and to hear them read. I took account of parents' views in the playground in the morning, and considered 76 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 77 free-text responses. I also considered 299 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 14 responses to the staff questionnaire.