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Mrs Verity Poole
Headteacher
Maynards Green Community Primary School
Maynards Green
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East Sussex
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Dear Mrs Poole

Short inspection of Maynards Green Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 14 June 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. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Your dedicated leadership has ensured that the school has continued to improve since the previous inspection. You know the community you serve very well and have the highest expectations about what can be achieved. You and your deputy headteacher make a highly effective team who have the best interests of your pupils at heart. Every decision you make about the leadership of the school is about doing the right thing for your pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or are disadvantaged. Your skilled and committed governing body are right to describe your leadership as 'strong and driven'.

Members of staff are universally proud to work at Maynards Green. They appreciate your actions to help with their workload by ensuring that every task they complete has a real impact on improving outcomes for pupils. Furthermore, they benefit from the excellent professional development you provide in school and elsewhere. This has helped to improve not only teaching but also the wider leadership of the school. As a result of your trust in them, many of your staff now have wider roles beyond the school. These include supporting the local authority with assessment and moderation, and sharing high-quality practice with other early years settings.

Pupils told me that they love school. They are thankful for the excellent environment they have to work and play in together. Behaviour around the school is often exemplary and pupils have excellent manners. Pupils take responsibility for making the school an even better place themselves. For example, they have supported the work of leaders and governors to help parents and pupils to understand the difference between 'bullying' and unkind behaviour. Bullying is very rare, but very occasionally pupils can be unkind to each other.

Your pupils achieve very well. Children make a great start to school in the Reception class. Nearly all Year 1 pupils meet the phonics screening standard. A greater proportion of pupils reach the expected standard at the end of key stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics than found nationally. Pupils throughout the school produce work of the highest quality, especially in art and when writing about their learning in history, geography and science in their topic books.

Parents are overwhelmingly happy with the school and would recommend it to others. One parent explained how they were 'extremely pleased with the level of care and education' their children receive. However, a few parents feel that more information about how well their children are progressing would be helpful. You were already aware of this concern and have introduced short summary reports on progress three times a year. Parents also have the opportunity to see pupils' work each term at the very well-attended 'book looks'.

At the time of the previous inspection you were asked to improve teaching further so that more was outstanding. You and your deputy know very clearly about the many strengths in teaching across the school. As one parent said, 'Teaching is inventive, supportive, inspiring and engaging.' You have well-placed confidence in your staff to help pupils to make strong progress in a wide range of subjects. However, you also know that there are times when pupils, especially the most able, could be moved on to more challenging work more quickly.

You have kept a constant review on how teachers give pupils feedback on their learning. There have been many thoughtful updates and changes since the previous inspection. You have realised that quite often pupils in your school gain more from immediate verbal feedback from adults and their peers rather than lengthy written comments. This also helps teachers to spend more of their energy on helping pupils to improve in lessons.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Checks on staff and volunteers meet statutory requirements, and training for leaders and staff is up to date.

When it comes to protecting pupils, there is a strong culture in the school. Staff know when to report and refer concerns. As one governor said, when it comes to pupils' safety, 'If in doubt, shout!' This rightly promotes a culture of sharing concerns and keeping pupils safe.

Pupils have many opportunities to learn how to keep safe and the school makes use of organisations such as the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children to enhance this. Parents appreciate the school's efforts to help them to keep their pupils safe online.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection we focused on how well the most able pupils progress in writing, as well as how effectively the curriculum enables pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in a wide range of subjects.
- In recent years, pupils have made slower progress in writing during key stage 2 because some of the most able pupils have not achieved the highest standards. For younger pupils in Reception and Year 2, the proportion meeting the expected standard in writing has been high, although the number of pupils exceeding this benchmark to achieve a 'greater depth' is broadly average. Governors were aware of this and challenged leaders to make improvements. Decisive action by leaders has led to very visible improvements. Inspection evidence demonstrated that writing across the curriculum is of a very high quality in all subjects and in all year groups.
- Children in Reception use their phonic skills and understanding of story structure to write well independently. Current pupils are making stronger progress, and attainment at a greater depth at the end of key stage 1 and 2 is on track to be better this year.
- The curriculum helps pupils to flourish. As governors explained to me, it allows pupils to be 'confident and independent'. Excellent use is made of the school's setting, the local environment, external trips and visitors to the school to bring learning to life. For example, the 'Where my wellies take me project' based on the adjoining Cuckoo Trail leads to some exemplary work in writing, geography, art and science.
- Careful links between subjects are made to create interesting topics. Key skills of reading, writing and, where appropriate, mathematics are applied throughout the curriculum. Pupils develop key skills, such as how to use increasingly complex map skills in geography as they move through the school. Progress is strong in nearly all subjects. It is especially good in art, for example where some older pupils have produced excellent collages based on Shackleton's expeditions.
- Progress sometimes slows where teachers do not adapt tasks quickly enough in lessons to stretch the most able. In some subjects, including mathematics, teachers sometimes only provide challenging tasks when simpler work has been completed first.
- Extra-curricular opportunities are varied and far-reaching. The school often makes use of expertise from within the parent or wider community to give pupils an even more exciting range of experiences. The school has enjoyed many recent sporting successes that are a matter of pride for pupils, staff, parents and governors alike.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers have the confidence to adapt lessons quickly to provide pupils, including the most able, with greater challenge.

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

Yours sincerely

Lee Selby
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and your deputy headteacher throughout the day to discuss your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and safeguarding. I also met with other members of the leadership team and six members of the governing body, including the chair. I held a telephone call with a representative of the local authority. I looked at a wide range of work belonging to the most able pupils with school leaders. Together we visited classrooms to observe learning and talk to pupils about their work. I considered 40 responses to the pupil survey, 19 responses to the staff survey and 50 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including a large number of free-text comments. I evaluated a wide range of documentation relating to safeguarding, self-evaluation, pupils' progress and governance.