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Mr Paul Clayton
Executive Headteacher
Heathfield Junior School
Cobbett Road
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Dear Mr Clayton

Short inspection of Heathfield Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 19 September 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 May 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You set clear expectations for staff and pupils, underpinned by the school's values. This clarity is obvious in all of your systems and procedures.

You have created a caring and inclusive school. This is recognised by staff, pupils, and parents and carers. This is captured by one parent reported that, 'staff go above and beyond to bring out the best in the pupils'. Pupils are also proud of their school. They work hard, are keen to talk about their achievements and they play an active part in the life of the school. They enjoy helping the younger children in the infant school. They can see how these relationships are vital in supporting transitions from Year 2 to Year 3 and beyond.

You have a good understanding of what action needs to be taken to address any current areas of underperformance. Since the previous inspection, leaders have strengthened teaching across the school. However, you are aware that you still need to build on these improvements and ensure that outcomes for disadvantaged pupils by the end of Year 6 are as close to those of their peers.

Governors know the school well and demonstrate a clear understanding of their strategic role in both supporting and challenging you and your leaders on key aspects of the school's work. This includes asking relevant and probing questions relating to pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that the school meets statutory requirements. The designated safeguarding lead is knowledgeable and clear in their role. They are well known and well regarded by pupils, who speak confidently about complex safeguarding issues they have considered as a result of the curriculum input that they receive.

The safeguarding policy is comprehensive and clear. Leaders ensure that staff are regularly and thoroughly trained in the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures. Leaders understand the local and national safeguarding challenges that pupils face. They ensure that staff receive regular updates on these and that information is shared in a timely way. Record-keeping is methodical and rigorous.

Checks on visitors to the school are carried out with the utmost care. The school carries out pre-employment checks rigorously, and the single central record is well maintained. This is to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry focused on how leaders have managed the changes that have been brought by federation with Heathfield Infant School since the last inspection. This is because the school now shares resources and senior staff with them.
- School leaders have used the federation as an opportunity to retain and develop key staff for the benefit of all pupils. They have used these key people to improve teachers' subject knowledge and understanding of learning. Evidence from classroom visits shows that this work has improved teaching and learning across the school.
- A new assessment system came out of the initial work done by staff in both schools after federation. This has ensured that there is now an accurate view of pupils' progress and attainment throughout. As a result of this, targets set are sharp, focused and aspirational for all. Pupils and staff speak of the benefits that this individualised approach has had on outcomes and there is evidence in the books that assessment is used regularly and well.
- Leaders have used the federation to support vulnerable families and share their expertise across both schools. Attendance has improved as a result and relationships are stronger than ever.
- Families report that they see the schools as one school now and pupils say that they feel the learning has improved since federation, with tasks being more challenging. They talk about it being matched to their 'level of difficulty' and attribute this to teachers knowing them all the way through the school.
- My second line of enquiry focused on the teaching and learning of writing. This was because leaders have been working to increase attainment by the end of Year 6 to ensure that greater proportions of children reach the expected or

higher standard.

- Leaders have taken a systematic approach to raising standards in writing that supports teaching and learning in the classroom. We saw examples of strong practice in all classes visited. Pupils display high levels of engagement and resilience in writing tasks. The texts chosen to support the writing process are challenging and the vocabulary is stretching. There is evidence in books sampled of pupils demonstrating that they have used all of these strategies to produce high-quality outcomes.
- The clear assessment systems in place support pupils in understanding what they need to do to improve further. There is also evidence of well-placed feedback and opportunities for discussion that promote a culture of high expectations. The pupils report that they value these 'conferences' as they give them a chance to talk about their learning and the way in which they write.
- My final line of enquiry focused on provision for the most disadvantaged pupils. This is because the school have identified that the gap between these pupils and their peers has not significantly closed within the last two years and the school is working to address this.
- Your school development plan identified the need for training for staff in supporting those children in receipt of the pupil premium grant. There have already been a number of sessions this academic year for both teachers and support staff on strategies to raise attainment for this group. Evidence seen in classrooms and books shows that these strategies are being used on a regular basis to ensure equality of opportunity for all.
- Leaders have identified current interventions that have had significant impact for older pupils in closing the gap between them and their peers. They now plan to roll these out to younger pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

The percentage of pupils entitled to the pupil premium grant working at age-related expectations increases in reading, writing and mathematics to be in line with their peers by:

- continuing to check that all interventions are matched closely to specific need, thus ensuring the maximum impact on 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 Richmond upon Thames. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Karen Matthews
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection the following activities were carried out:

I met with you, other senior leaders and members of staff, two governors, including the chair and vice-chair, and the local authority school improvement partner. I met with pupils from across key stage 2. I visited classrooms with senior leaders across the school to gather evidence about our key areas of enquiry and look at pupils' work. I looked at key documents, including the school's self-evaluation of its own performance and the school development plan; information about pupil premium expenditure; information on the progress made by pupils and documents relating to safeguarding. I also looked at information on the school's website. I analysed the confidential online questionnaires of 29 members of staff and the views of 74 parents who responded on Parent View, including 67 free-text responses.