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Mr Iain Witts
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mr Witts

Short inspection of Kingsnorth Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 October 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in September 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leaders and governors work together to provide opportunities for pupils to experience 'the best days of our lives', as reflected in the school's motto.

You have created a strong culture of teamwork within the school and adults work in harmony together. This harmonious atmosphere and a strong sense of moral purpose have created an environment in the school in which all pupils are keen to learn. One parent summed up the views of many when they said, 'The school is very welcoming and has a family feel.' The school's values of thankfulness, friendship, trust, compassion and endurance are visible in the attitudes and actions of staff and pupils. In a mathematics lesson, one pupil commented, 'I'm not giving up because I've got endurance!'

You and your leadership team are ambitious for the school. Teaching has improved as a result of the steps you have taken to provide training and support to staff. Improvements to the quality of teaching have resulted in increases in the attainment of pupils at the end of key stages 1 and 2. However, you also recognise that the progress of some groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, has not been consistently strong enough. Governors share the same high ambitions for the school and are equally aware of where progress is slower. They provide robust challenge and support for leaders following their careful analysis of the information you provide them with.

Pupils' attitudes to school are impeccable. Within lessons and around the school, pupils are courteous, conscientious and very well behaved. Pupils talked about the importance of the

school's rules and how these keep them safe and enable them to do their best. Pupils explained that disagreements with peers are rare but when they do occur their teachers help them resolve conflicts quickly and amicably.

Pupils' attendance at school is above the national average because they are eager to learn more and take part in the interesting lessons that are on offer to them. Leaders have begun work to further improve the curriculum and pupils are benefiting from learning about a range of interesting topics. Leaders know that this work needs to continue so that as pupils move through the school their knowledge and understanding build on what they have previously been taught.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. A strong culture of safeguarding permeates the work of the school. Staff receive appropriate training to ensure that they are vigilant to any risks posed to pupils. Systems for reporting any concerns are robust, well managed and information recorded is reviewed regularly. This regular review results in the careful targeting of support so that pupils can thrive. Adults undergo thorough checks to ensure their suitability to work with children. Governors effectively fulfil their duty to make sure that safeguarding is robust and that risks to pupils are minimised.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and trust adults if they have a concern or worry. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about how to stay safe. An example of this is that pupils were keen to share their knowledge of road safety and how to stay safe on school trips. The school teaches pupils how to stay safe online through regular lessons and annual events. A pupil in Year 2 was able to explain why personal information should not be shared online and pupils in Years 5 and 6 could describe what to do if they were victims of cyber bullying.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look at specific areas of the school's work including: the progress that pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, are making in mathematics in key stage 2; the progress that pupils, particularly those that are disadvantaged and boys, are making in writing in key stage 1; and the effectiveness of the curriculum in preparing pupils for the next stage of their education.
- The school's approach to teaching mathematics allows pupils to master the basic skills of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division so that they can apply a range of strategies to solve calculations. Teachers use assessment information effectively to identify gaps which have been caused by weaker teaching in the past. They then ensure that pupils have the opportunity to catch up.
- Teachers' explanations to pupils are clear. Teachers use diagrams and pictures effectively to help pupils understand mathematical concepts. Teachers' good use of the correct mathematical vocabulary helps pupils to provide clear explanations about their learning.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 enthusiastically tackle increasingly challenging mathematical tasks. Pupils who require additional support receive it to enable them to work at the age-

expected level.

- Leaders have taken effective action to improve the mathematics curriculum. This has resulted in improvements in the progress of all groups of pupils. However, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is still not strong enough to enable them to catch up from their typically lower starting points. The strategy for spending the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils does not clearly explain how it will be used to improve their progress.
- Leaders have improved the quality of the teaching of writing. High importance is placed on pupils mastering the basic skills of phonics and handwriting. Pupils in Year 1 were keen to apply the new spelling rule that they had been taught and formed their letters clearly and consistently. Teachers use their good understanding of pupils' misconceptions to plan and teach lessons effectively. An example of this was when pupils were learning to add 'ed' endings to verbs and their teacher carefully pronounced the sounds the letters made.
- Pupils make good progress in writing as a result of the strong teaching they receive. There are a range of interesting opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum both within English lessons and in other subjects. Pupils in early years were eagerly writing signs for the 'troll bridge' having read the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff'.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of interesting and exciting learning opportunities. Recent changes to the way the timetable is organised allow for sustained periods of focus on one subject or topic. Pupils report that they like these changes and that they have helped them remember more. Pupils in Year 5 could recall in detail how they had researched and then produced their own cereal bars over a week-long period in the previous academic year.
- The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to understand challenging concepts and think deeply. Pupils in Year 6 were learning about propaganda as part of their history topic, the Second World War. They were challenged to think deeply about what they were learning and were able to draw parallels to modern life. An example of this was when a pupil suggested that propaganda may be used to influence people's decision-making around current issues such as the European Union referendum.
- Teachers have begun to identify the most important parts of the subjects that they teach and these are now shared with pupils at the start of topics. Leaders recognise the need to ensure that progression is really carefully planned across the curriculum so that its impact on pupils' understanding can be properly evaluated.
- The curriculum is enriched by the trips and visits that pupils take part in. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the residential visit in Year 4 and the trip to France in Year 6. A wide range of extra-curricular activities are on offer to pupils, including the school choir which takes part in performances outside of school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is sharpened so that leaders have a clearer understanding of its impact on the progress of disadvantaged pupils
- they continue to develop how well the curriculum builds on pupils' skills and knowledge progressively in a wide range of subjects.

I am copying this letter to the chief executive officer, the director of education for the Diocese of Canterbury, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

James Freeston
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, senior leaders and governors, and spoke with a representative from the academy trust. I visited lessons in the early years and key stages 1 and 2 to observe learning and talk to pupils about their learning. I spoke with pupils about their experience of school. I scrutinised pupils' work in their books. I analysed 83 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. I examined a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan, documentation relating to safeguarding and the pupil premium strategy.