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Ms Samantha Crinnion
Executive Headteacher
Tenterden Infant School
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Dear Ms Crinnion

Short inspection of Tenterden Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 5 February 2019, 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 February 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Together with the head of school, you have worked hard to lead staff and pupils through a period of change. You have driven a determined team which shares your commitment to ensure that pupils achieve well.

Parents and carers are very happy with the school. One comment, typical of the views of many parents, was: 'A wonderful school where children grow in confidence. I have nothing but praise for this amazing school.'

Staff feel well supported under your leadership and feel that the school has improved since the last inspection. Many staff highlight leaders' willingness to listen to their views and suggestions as a positive feature of the school. Middle leaders have benefited from the targeted professional development opportunities they have received. As a result, their work across the school impacts positively on pupils' outcomes.

Pupils say that they enjoy school and are enthusiastic about their learning. One pupil commented: 'School is all about learning the things I really need to know about. I love it.' Pupils state that they particularly enjoy mathematics as it is 'challenging and fun'.

At the time of the school's previous inspection, inspectors asked leaders to

accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics and improve the achievement of higher-attaining pupils. Throughout the school, teachers demonstrate high expectations of what pupils can achieve and do. Teachers' planning enables most pupils to learn well and work independently. A good example of this is the use of the 'mathematics passport', which encourages pupils to challenge their mathematical thinking daily. This, along with your work to develop the teaching of mathematics, particularly for the most able, has led to a rise in the outcomes for pupils in this subject.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. When employing new staff, stringent checks are made to confirm their suitability to work with children. Staff have been well trained to observe and listen to pupils carefully. They are confident in making referrals to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), who acts swiftly on this information.

The DSL and family liaison officer work closely together with families and external agencies to support the most vulnerable pupils. Helpfully, leaders have provided several safety workshops for parents. This ensures that everyone is aware of the actions to keep children safe.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we agreed to look at: the effectiveness of safeguarding; how successfully leaders are ensuring that more pupils are challenged to achieve at the highest standards in reading, mathematics and in the early years foundation stage; and how leaders' use of additional funding is improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- You have taken a series of steps to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics. For example, you have reviewed the curriculum to increase the level of challenge that pupils receive. Work in pupils' books demonstrates that they are using a variety of mathematical vocabulary accurately and developing their problem-solving and reasoning skills effectively. Consequently, mathematics learning is suitably challenging throughout the school and pupils rise to this challenge.
- Pupils across the school read well and show enthusiasm for books. Pupils use their phonological knowledge to decode unfamiliar words successfully. Reading is embedded across the curriculum and pupils are encouraged to read widely at home. As a result, pupils make strong progress in their reading.
- You have made several improvements to the early years provision. The learning environment is rich and resourced well. Children experience a plethora of opportunities to develop their skills across the prime areas of learning. For example, children refine their fine motor control through a range of daily activities, such as 'dough disco'. Children's learning journeys demonstrate the positive impact this has on their letter formation. Consequently, children make strong progress from their starting points.
- The plans and provision to support disadvantaged pupils are effective. Leaders

use additional funding to finance a range of suitable interventions. Governors hold leaders to account for this spending and carefully check its impact. Because of this, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils show strong improvement. However, leaders are aware that there is further work to do to ensure that all disadvantaged pupils attend school regularly.

- Current key stage 1 pupils attain well in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have changed the way that teachers plan learning over time. Work in books shows that this is having a positive impact on most pupils' outcomes. However, learning activities for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not consistently matched to their individual starting points. When this is the case, pupils make less progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the tasks set for pupils with SEND are well matched to their starting points so that these pupils make strong progress
- the attendance of disadvantaged pupils continues to improve.

I am copying this letter to the chief executive officer (CEO) of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Emma Sanderson
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and your team at the start of the day. We discussed your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and agreed the key areas I would focus on during the inspection. During the day, I held further discussions with you, your head of school, middle leaders, your deputy DSL and the family liaison officer. I met with the CEO of the multi-academy trust and two members of the governing body. I observed learning and scrutinised pupils' work with leaders in several lessons. I took account of 11 staff survey responses and 39 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I analysed a range of the school's documentation, including: the school's development plan; leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness; the school's single central record of recruitment checks made on staff; information about pupils' achievement; records of pupils' behaviour and attendance; and minutes of governing body meetings.