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Mrs Emma Walford
Headteacher
Hackbridge Primary School
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Dear Mrs Walford

Short inspection of Hackbridge Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 17 July 2018 with Jason Hughes, Ofsted Inspector, 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 March 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have a clear plan for school improvement with well-focused priorities. Leaders have established a positive learning culture in the school, where staff are encouraged to develop and implement new teaching approaches to raise standards further.

Governors know the school well and are committed to driving improvement. They make visits to the school to meet leaders, review aspects of the school's work and accompany leaders around the school to observe learning. Governors work effectively with school leaders to promote the school's values and ethos.

Your school is an inclusive and welcoming environment where pupils are well supported in their learning and well-being. Senior and subject leaders work alongside you to plan and implement improvements that will have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Pupils say that they enjoy school because learning activities are interesting and varied. They value the support that teachers provide and, along with staff, are proud of their school. In lessons, pupils are keen to do their best and take pride in presenting their work. Around school, pupils are well behaved. Pupils told me that they feel safe and that teachers deal effectively with the rare incidents of bullying.

Parents and carers who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and sent additional comments are overwhelmingly positive about the school. The

majority of parents would recommend the school to other families. Typical of parents' comments, one wrote: 'Hackbridge is a dynamic and forward-thinking school, which gives the children so many opportunities to progress in every subject. The teachers are nurturing and supportive and really push the children to achieve.'

Leaders have maintained the strengths identified at the previous inspection, and successfully addressed areas identified for improvement. Your actions to improve boys' progress in writing have been successful. Evidence in pupils' books shows that most pupils, including boys, are making good progress in writing, and are working at standards expected for their age by the end of key stage 2. Furthermore, a higher proportion of pupils than previously is working at the greater depth standard in writing at the end of Year 6.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders, including governors, ensure that pupils are safe. You have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Arrangements for checking that staff are suitable to work with children meet requirements. Staff receive appropriate training, and regular updates ensure that they are aware of potential risks to the pupils' safety. As a result, staff understand the actions they should take if they are concerned about a pupil's welfare.

The curriculum supports pupils well in maintaining their own safety by giving opportunities for discussing various topics, including road safety and e-safety. The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agreed that their children are safe and happy in school.

Inspection findings

- The inspection focused on three key lines of enquiry, the first of which related to the achievement of disadvantaged pupils in writing at the end of key stage 1. This was because, in 2017, a below-average proportion of disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard in writing by the end of Year 2.
- You have taken concerted action to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils this year. There is now a sharper focus on the progress of disadvantaged pupils. School leaders have put additional support in place to help these pupils overcome their barriers to learning. Their progress is regularly and carefully reviewed. This has made teachers more accountable for the progress of this group of pupils.
- You provided training for staff to strengthen their understanding of how pupils learn to write. As a result, teachers are confident and skilled in planning work to support and challenge pupils. Work in books confirms that there are regular opportunities for pupils to write at length about ideas that interest them. Pupils use a wide range of vocabulary, and write for different purposes. For example, in Year 2, pupils wrote an account of their trip to Littlehampton. As a result, a greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils than previously is making better progress in writing. However, some disadvantaged pupils require more practice

and support with their spelling. This is so that attainment gaps in writing between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, nationally, diminish by the end of key stage 1.

- Second, we focused on the achievement of the most able mathematicians in key stage 1. This was because the proportion of this group of pupils achieving the greater depth standard in mathematics by the end of key stage 1 was below average in 2017.
- You have implemented a new approach this year across the school to enhance the teaching of mathematics. Staff have received training to enable pupils to gain a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts. Pupils now use practical resources to help them learn new skills. As a result, most pupils make good progress in mathematics.
- In spite of this, the most able pupils in key stage 1 spend too much of their time on work that is too easy for them. They are not consistently challenged with sophisticated opportunities to reason and problem-solve within the topic they are studying. Consequently, their progress is slowed.
- The third line of enquiry focused on pupils' attendance and considered the proportion of pupils who have persistent levels of absence. Leaders have been relentless in addressing the issues of low attendance. Systems for monitoring and checking attendance are robust. A wide range of rewards and incentives encourage pupils to attend. You have been successful in improving overall and persistent absence. However, there is still more work to be done in this area.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the difference in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in writing, compared to others nationally, continues to diminish by the end of key stage 1
- work to raise pupils' attendance continues, so that rates of attendance at least match or exceed those found nationally
- teachers in key stage 1 challenge the most able mathematicians with opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Jenell Chetty
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with you and senior leaders. I held a telephone call with the chair of the governing body, and a meeting was held with another governor. I met with eight pupils from Year 2 to Year 6, and we spoke informally with other pupils during lessons and playtime.

Inspectors observed learning across the school jointly with senior leaders. We looked at examples of pupils' work in lessons, as well as conducting a more detailed scrutiny of pupils' work in books. We scrutinised a variety of documents, including the school's own evaluation of its performance, assessment information, records of checks leaders make on the suitability of staff to work with children, and information relating to behaviour and attendance. We looked at the survey results from staff and parents, and considered the free-text comments that had been placed on Parent View, as well as speaking directly to some parents.