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Mr Jon Williams
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Dear Mr Williams

Short inspection of Nyewood CofE Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 17 July 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 March 2014.

This school continues to be good.

Together with your leadership team, you have maintained the good quality of education in the school, expanded provision and have implemented several improvements since the last inspection. Nyewood CofE Junior School continues to offer a very nurturing and inclusive atmosphere. Leaders, governors and staff share high ambitions for the pupils in your care and work as a united team to improve the quality of provision for all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. You provide vision and clear leadership which is recognised and highly valued by staff, parents and carers, and the local authority. As one parent commented, 'We think this school is fantastic. It's well led, the staff are enthusiastic, and you can tell they want the best for the children.' Another parent added, 'The school is all about inclusion and my children both love it!'

In the past, pupils have made rates of progress in reading and writing by the end of key stage 2 that were in line with the national average. However, progress in mathematics was weaker. Consequently, the proportions of pupils who achieved standards expected for their age in mathematics were well below national figures. This is changing. Recognising the need for improvements, you have recently restructured leadership, delivered training for teachers and re-invigorated teaching and learning, particularly in mathematics, across the school. Senior leaders are very aware that these improvements are ongoing, but current pupils' work and provisional results for the 2018 national tests demonstrate that pupils are now making much stronger progress in mathematics than in the past. At the same time, you have continued to improve teaching and assessment in reading and writing. As a result, all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as

an additional language, make strong progress from their starting points. Leaders are rightly focused on raising the level of challenge in teaching so that a greater proportion of pupils than previously achieve the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.

In lessons, pupils typically have very positive attitudes, engage well with teachers and teaching assistants and work hard. These strong relationships underpin the strong progress that they make. All pupils are encouraged to take pride in their learning and in making their work the best it can be. Pupils respect each other's ideas and they work and play very well together.

Senior leaders ensure that a range of bespoke support is offered to disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and that they are supported well. There is a strong sense of teamwork between leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. Parents appreciate the quality of support on offer, with comments such as: 'The teachers are very hard working and approachable at all times. My son is very shy, and finds life at school hard at times. He has flourished here. The teachers have worked at his pace and his confidence and academic ability have really improved.'

Your detailed self-evaluation of the school is very carefully considered and accurate. Consequently, staff and governors share a pride in the school's strengths and are sharply focused on the areas that the school can improve further. This includes a shared drive to continue to improve writing and to stretch and challenge the most able pupils. Detailed planning, regular monitoring, and the use of external consultants to support moderation ensures that leaders are taking the right actions to make these improvements. Governors pay regular visits to the school and are kept up to date via leaders' accurate tracking information and reports. Governors are self-reflective and keen to improve their level of challenge and support still further. To support this aim, governors have commissioned an external review of governance to take place next term.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, your staff and governors rightly place an appropriately high emphasis on pupils' safety and welfare. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a culture of vigilance, supported by thorough record keeping. Appropriate checks are made against all adults who work with pupils, and meticulous records are maintained. All staff have appropriate and up-to-date training and so know what to do should they be worried about a pupil. Governors are well informed, and work closely with staff to ensure that the work to keep pupils safe is given top priority and meets current requirements. When it has been necessary, open communication between leaders and other organisations has ensured timely and effective support for pupils of concern.

Staff, pupils and their parents report that pupils feel safe and well looked after at Nyewood. Pupils feel well cared for and told me they know who to go to should they have any concerns. They trust adults to resolve any issues that may arise. All

parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and those I spoke to during the day confirmed that their children are happy and feel safe here. Pupils report that they know how to keep themselves safe, including when on the internet.

This year you have worked hard to improve overall attendance which has been below the national average. You recognise that some groups, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, have had very high absence rates. To address this you have worked closely with outside agencies and families to support individual improvements. However, leaders and governors are aware that more needs to be done to ensure that the attendance of these pupils improves to match that of their peers. Bullying and discrimination are rare. Almost all pupils and parents responding to Ofsted surveys reported that children feel safe and well looked after at Nyewood. Any incidents of poor behaviour around the school are managed effectively.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, as well as evaluating safeguarding arrangements, I focused on specific aspects of the school's provision including:
 - how effectively pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, are being supported to improve their reading skills
 - how well leaders have responded to address previously weak outcomes for the most able pupils and in mathematics
 - the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - the quality and depth of learning across the wider curriculum.
- Leaders ensure that a well-planned series of interventions and bespoke support is offered to pupils who have previously underperformed in their reading. Working with feeder infant schools, leaders support teaching assistants to deliver high-quality phonics sessions. As a result, the younger disadvantaged pupils have made rapid progress in their reading skills, many from low starting points. Reading is promoted well throughout the school and pupils read confidently and with pride. Provisional progress information for 2018 shows that by the end of Year 6, pupils achieved reading outcomes that were in line with, or slightly above, the national average.
- Leaders have worked with the local authority and external consultants to deliver staff training and validate teachers' assessments. Consequently, teaching and assessment in mathematics has improved across the school. Pupils' books show that reasoning and problem-solving are now much more frequently promoted than they were in the past. Current pupils make strong progress in mathematics over time.
- Outcomes improved in 2018 with the proportion of pupils attaining age-related expectations in writing and mathematics being in line with the national average. The most able pupils performed well in mathematics, but the proportion attaining the higher standard in writing was low. You recognise the need to increase the level of challenge in writing across the school, particularly for the most able

pupils. To achieve this, you have reorganised year group leadership and have drawn up appropriate plans to address a need for further improvements to teaching.

- Overall attendance is just below national figures and has dipped over time. Aware that last year the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities was well below average, leaders have taken a range of appropriate actions to address this. As a result, the attendance of these groups has shown some signs of improvement during the course of this year. However, the punctuality of a small group of pupils remains poor. Leaders' analysis needs to be more sophisticated to prioritise the most effective actions to improve punctuality and reduce the persistent absence of these groups so that they attend in line with their peers.
- The school offers a broad and rich curriculum. The variety of clubs and trips are highly valued by pupils and parents. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted particularly well and religious education is a strength of the school. Pupils value the principle of equality and gain a good understanding of different faiths and cultures supporting them to become well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' books show that teachers' expectations are not as consistently high in science and topic work as they are in English, mathematics and religious education. Pupils, particularly the most able, are not set sufficiently challenging tasks which require them to problem-solve and think as deeply in science and the humanities as they do in these other areas. Although some exciting enrichment is offered, pupils' progress is not yet as strong across the curriculum as it is in reading, writing and mathematics.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- attendance, particularly that of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, continues to improve
- the most able pupils are provided with still higher levels of challenge in writing so that more achieve the higher standard by the end of Year 6 than in the past
- pupils are given more consistently challenging tasks in science and the wider curriculum so that their subject-specific knowledge and depth of thinking improves.

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

Yours sincerely

Matthew Newberry
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the diocese. Jointly with leaders, I visited classes in each of the year groups to look at teaching and learning. I looked at a range of pupils' work in their exercise books. I observed pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtime, and had a meeting with a small group of pupils.

I took into account 38 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as speaking to a number of parents at the beginning of the day. I took into account the views expressed in 18 responses to a staff survey and 41 responses to the pupil survey. I reviewed a range of documents, including reports from external consultants, minutes of meetings, pupils' progress information, and safeguarding policies, procedures and checks.