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Mr Gareth O'Shea
Headteacher
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Dear Mr O'Shea

Short inspection of Hawkedon Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 26 September 2018 with Christopher Crouch, 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 October 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. During this time, you have redesigned and reinvigorated the senior leadership of the school. Leaders at all levels are well trained and given the right amount of challenge, trust and support to thrive in their roles. Parents are, rightly, delighted to send their children to the school. One parent summarised the thoughts of many, noting, 'I love the school, the staff here are so friendly and caring.' This is a happy school where everyone is welcome and able to achieve.

Pupils are polite, hardworking and courteous. They value their school and appreciate the range of opportunities to pursue their interests. They particularly enjoy the clubs and activities they are able to attend, such as hockey, tag rugby, fencing and archery. Pupils play happily together in the well-equipped playground. They report that they feel safe in school because bullying is extremely rare and staff are always on hand to help out when needed. At the time of the inspection, pupils in the early years had only been at school for three weeks. Nevertheless, these pupils have integrated well, following the rules and showing great attitudes towards their learning.

In class, pupils are diligent and attentive. They try hard to meet their teachers' high expectations and work well with their classmates to discuss their thoughts and ideas. For example, in Year 1, pupils investigated ways to partition numbers, patiently listening to and recording each other's different methods for solving the

problem. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils well and offer tailored support to help pupils understand and complete their tasks. As a result, classrooms are happy and productive spaces where pupils feel confident and try their best.

Governors are well organised and appropriately curious. They understand their roles and responsibilities and use these to ensure that their work is sharply focused. For example, the safeguarding committee checks the absence patterns of groups of pupils in the school to ensure that no group is disadvantaged by poor attendance. The governors have relished the opportunity to work with other governing bodies. This has enabled them to strengthen their expertise and challenge leaders to improve the school further.

Since the previous inspection, you have improved systems for supporting and developing teachers. Leaders at all levels visit classrooms often, offering staff bespoke and focused feedback to help them improve their practice. Using this information, leaders pair staff with particular skill sets, allowing them to share ideas and learn from each other's strengths. As a result, the quality of teaching across the school is continually improving.

Safeguarding is effective.

Child-protection documents are detailed and well maintained. Leaders and governors ensure that statutory checks and training are completed on all new staff before they commence employment. Staff know their pupils well and use their training to identify and report any concerns they have to leaders. When a concern is raised, leaders waste no time, working with families and external agencies, in getting pupils the help they need.

Parents receive useful information on internet safety, which helps them to keep their children safe from harm online. Pupils spoke confidently about staying safe in the community, particularly around roads and rivers, and about what to do if approached by a stranger. Pupils understand their responsibility to keep themselves and their friends safe.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection we agreed to look at: the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements; the progress of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, in writing; the quality of teaching in mathematics; and how effectively leaders and governors evaluate and improve the school.
- Over the past two years, leaders have worked hard to improve pupils' skills and attitudes towards writing. They have revitalised the range of books and texts pupils read to ensure that they develop a broad range of vocabulary and an understanding of the different ways that writing can be used. In English lessons, pupils write well for a range of purposes. Their writing is thoughtful and interesting, conveying clear messages to the reader. However, in some lessons, particularly the humanities, pupils do not write at the standard they are capable of.

- Disadvantaged pupils are offered strong support to improve their writing. Teachers offer these pupils precise feedback on their work which helps them to improve. 'Pupil premium champions' meet with disadvantaged pupils on most days to encourage them to achieve their best and help them with any learning they have found tricky. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make strong progress.
- In 2016, leaders found that too many pupils did not possess the fundamental mathematical skills required to solve complex problems. In response to this they redesigned the mathematics curriculum to ensure that all pupils gain a secure understanding of the basics of calculation. Pupils practise these skills often to ensure they can access and apply them quickly and confidently. The results have been impressive. Pupils in the lower school and Year 3 confidently use their skills to discuss, reason and solve complex mathematical challenges. Leaders recognise that some older pupils have not benefited from this approach early on and will need further support to achieve the expected standard by the end of key stage 2.
- The leadership team is a cohesive, ambitious and skilled group. Leaders visit classrooms often to see what is working well and to evaluate the effectiveness of their actions. They share this information readily and efficiently, working with governors and colleagues to identify areas for improvement and form comprehensive plans to address these. Leaders are well placed to secure further improvement.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' writing in other subjects matches the high standards seen in English
- greater proportions of pupils in key stage 2 attain the expected standard in mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Daniel Lambert
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors met with you, senior and middle leaders, and five governors, including the chair of the governing body. Inspectors observed learning in 12 classes, all jointly with leaders. Inspectors looked at pupils' work, including the early years learning journeys and pupils' books. Inspectors analysed a range of the school's

documentation, including information about pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. We discussed your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. Inspectors considered the 99 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 98 free-text comments, and spoke to parents at the beginning of the day. Inspectors met with five pupils from Years 3 to 6 and gathered the views of other pupils throughout the day.