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Mrs Kyrsty Beattie
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Beattie

Short inspection of Kingsfleet Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 21 February 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 June 2014.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

You, your leaders and governors have not maintained the quality of teaching or the good achievement of pupils noted at the time of the last inspection. Changes in staffing have had a negative impact on the quality of pupils' learning. Outcomes achieved by Year 6 pupils at the end of key stage 2 have declined over the last two years. Pupils' progress was particularly low in reading, writing and mathematics last year. The government's floor targets (the minimum standards pupils are expected to meet) were not met in 2017.

Challenge and support from the local authority in September 2017 helped you to identify the reasons why pupils underachieve in key stage 2, and put in place plans to improve this. A follow-up review by the local authority earlier this month confirmed that improvements are being made. The review also found that the school is at risk of coasting this year, and therefore it continues to be monitored closely by the local authority.

You and your leaders have maintained above average standards in key stage 1 since the last inspection. Furthermore, you have continued to provide pupils with high-quality care and support. The school remains a safe, stimulating place to be. This is valued highly by parents and carers. The vast majority of those parents who responded during the inspection praised this aspect of the school's work and would

recommend the school to others.

Safeguarding is effective.

All necessary checks are made when recruiting new staff to work with pupils. My scrutiny showed that even though all checks are made, not all of them are recorded systematically on the single central record. These minor errors were quickly resolved by support staff during the inspection. Governors do make periodic checks of these records, and have recently audited the school's safeguarding arrangements. However, minor gaps in the information recorded on the single central record are not followed up routinely.

Training for staff in safeguarding and in 'Prevent' duty is up to date. Procedures to protect pupils from harm are securely in place. Two designated leads respond promptly to concerns raised by staff and follow them up in a timely way to keep pupils safe. These procedures are well established and fully understood. Links with local support agencies, particularly the local multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH), are well established and are used effectively to maintain pupils' safety and well-being.

Inspection findings

- To determine whether the school remained good, I followed five lines of enquiry during the inspection. These were based on issues raised in the last inspection, recent performance information and an analysis of the school's website. I focused on: the reasons why pupils do not make enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and the actions taken by leaders to improve this; how effectively the pupil premium is used to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils; the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and the impact it has on pupils' progress; whether the school is a safe, stimulating and enjoyable place to be; and the school's arrangements to safeguard pupils.
- From their above average starting points at the end of key stage 1, the majority of Year 6 pupils went on to underachieve at the end of key stage 2 last year. Progress measures in 2017 showed widespread underachievement in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils attaining what they were capable of in all three of these subjects was well below the national average. Similarly, the proportions of more able pupils attaining highly in reading, writing and mathematics were also below national averages. These low outcomes prompted the local authority to issue governors with a declaration of concern in September 2017.
- You have evaluated the reasons for this underachievement. Significant staffing changes in upper key stage 2 in recent years have had a detrimental effect upon the learning and progress of pupils. These pupils were much less able compared to previous classes. Furthermore, a significant proportion of them had special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, or other medical and health issues. You also found that the school's assessment procedures have not been rigorous enough to help spot gaps in pupils' learning and take action to prevent them

from underachieving in national tests.

- To improve this, new assessment procedures have been introduced that hold staff more accountable for the progress made by pupils in their classes. Teachers are expected to update regularly the information gained from their assessments of pupils, and meet regularly with you and your deputy headteacher to discuss the progress individual pupils are making. These new procedures are providing leaders with a better overview of how well individual pupils are doing. Staff are now able to spot early those at risk of underachieving and do something about it.
- Current assessments show that, this year, a higher than average proportion of Year 6 pupils are expected to attain well in reading, and outcomes in writing and mathematics will be much closer to national averages. Assessments in other classes in key stage 2 show a similar, improving trend. These assessments have been validated using previous test papers and other resources to ensure their accuracy.
- You have less information about the current progress of disadvantaged pupils. Assessment information is not analysed in detail to show how well these pupils are doing. You and your governors are unable to show what aspect of their spending of the pupil premium is having the most impact on improving outcomes for this group of pupils. Spending plans this year are very similar to last year's, even though the pupil premium had little impact on raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils in 2017. This aspect of the school's work requires strengthening significantly.
- You have increased the monitoring of teaching, through learning walks, observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. The local authority's recent review found that the pace of securing improvements had increased, that higher expectations were evident, pupils' presentation had improved, and teachers were being held accountable for progress made by pupils in their classes.
- The inspector's observations, carried out jointly with you, confirmed that pupils' progress in key stage 2 is improving. However, this is wholly dependent upon the quality of teaching, which is inconsistent. You feel that teaching is good, but this was not confirmed in joint observations of pupils at work in lessons. Your formal observations of lessons so far this year have not identified accurately the weaker aspects of teaching and learning that need improving. Lesson monitoring carried out by the local authority and an external consultant provided governors with some understanding of the quality of teaching. However, this monitoring does not identify all of the strengths and weaknesses evident in lessons and in pupils' books, or the actions needed to improve them.
- The inspection confirmed that, currently, pupils make steady, rather than rapid, progress, because expectations of them are not always high enough. At times, pupils spend too long on the carpet rather than getting on with their own work. Books show that much of the work set for the most able pupils is too easy and does not challenge them fully. Not all teachers make regular checks during lessons to see whether pupils understand what to do and are working hard enough. In mathematics, pupils have a range of resources to choose from to aid their calculation. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to show pupils how to work things out and lay out their work neatly. The school's new

procedures for marking pupils' work are beginning to be used more effectively. Teaching assistants are usually deployed effectively to support pupils at work.

- Pupils' and parents' views shared during the inspection confirmed that the school is a safe, friendly place to be. Pupils enjoy learning and feel that they are making good progress. They eagerly listed their favourite subjects and enthused about the wide range of off-site visits to London and in the local area. The school's high-quality pastoral care was clearly evident during assembly. Pupils love the 'achievement alley', and those selected to talk about their good work beamed with pride when they were selected by the headteacher. Pupils contributed well to this wonderful celebration through their attention, applause and excellent singing.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- Pupils in key stage 2 make much better progress than they currently do, by routinely monitoring that all staff:
 - raise their expectations of what pupils, particularly the most able, are capable of attaining
 - take full responsibility for assessment information and what it shows about the progress made by pupils in their classes
 - make regular checks during lessons that pupils understand what to do and are working hard
 - use the school's new marking procedures systematically.
- They analyse in detail the impact of the spending of the pupil premium, to gain a clearer overview of what works well and what needs changing, and to improve the outcomes achieved by disadvantaged pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher, three members of the governing body and a group of key stage 2 pupils. I attended an assembly. I spent time outside of lessons at lunchtime observing pupils at play and chatting informally to them. You joined me in observing pupils at work in lessons.

I reviewed your self-evaluation and improvement planning, safeguarding policy and procedures, including the single central record, and records of behaviour and attendance. I also considered the 64 free-text responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 18 responses to the questionnaire for staff. No responses were received from pupils.