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Mrs Kim Divey
Headteacher
Hurst Park Primary School
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Dear Mrs Divey

Short inspection of Hurst Park Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 November 2017, 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 May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, together with your senior and middle leaders, have shaped a school in which pupils are happy and keen to learn. There is a strong culture of nurturing, mutual respect and support, as well as increasingly high expectations. Your calm, capable leadership, ably supported by your senior team, shows strong capacity for further improvement. An ethos of collective endeavour pervades the school, with staff and pupils clearly enjoying their work. There is a strong commitment to use detailed knowledge of each pupil to help them develop and achieve well. The school is inclusive and diversity is celebrated. Pupils who experience difficulties are well cared for. Staff are fully supportive of the direction you set for your school and feel proud to work at Hurst Park Primary School.

Pupils learn in a calm, friendly atmosphere. The school is well maintained and wonderful displays enrich the learning environment. During my visits to classrooms, the focus in each was purposeful and pupils were appropriately engaged in a range of learning activities. The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire would recommend the school to others. Many parents comment positively about the school's work, highlighting how approachable the staff are and the high levels of support provided for their children. Several parents I spoke to said how delighted they are with the school and how happy their children are.

Senior leaders are well aware of the strengths of the school and those aspects which could be even better. In 2016, pupils' achievement at the end of key stage 2

declined in writing and mathematics. Leaders acted decisively to change the way mathematics was taught throughout the school. The subject leader introduced a new approach, designed to provide greater challenge and promote deeper thinking. During my visits to mathematics lessons, pupils were working confidently, grappling with problems of increasing difficulty, and were also happy to check answers with each other and seek advice. Your specialist assistant for mathematics is helping to regularly assess pupils' understanding and promptly addresses any misconceptions as they arise, as well as providing extra stretch. Provisional key stage 2 results show that attainment in mathematics at both the expected and higher standards rose considerably in 2017. Your English subject leader promotes a greater emphasis on spelling, punctuation and grammar, which led to more pupils in Year 6 achieving the expected and higher standards in writing. As a result, many more pupils are reaching the expected standard for combined reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2, and so leave school well prepared for secondary education. Although pupils' attainment increased to well above the national average, the progress made by pupils from the end of key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is average for each subject. Clearly, leaders' action to develop teaching and learning have resulted in signs of improvement, but the full impact of the steps taken is not yet evident.

During the last academic year, leaders also set out to improve the quality of phonics teaching. Achievement rose in 2017, with a much higher proportion of Year 1 pupils meeting the phonics screening check standard. In addition, almost all of the pupils who had not previously met the standard in Year 1 in 2016 did so at the end of Year 2. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception Year also increased, to well above the national average. The progress made by disadvantaged pupils throughout the school is improving. These examples show the positive impact of actions you take to improve the school, and demonstrate your effective leadership.

You, senior leaders and governors are determined to improve the performance of the most able pupils further. This is being driven by senior and subject leaders and has been given useful impetus by your focus on raising the levels of challenge for pupils across the curriculum. The leaders of science and computing showed determination to ensure that teaching extends pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as they progress through the school. Leaders of foundation subjects have devised appropriate plans to raise teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement in all subjects further.

You have taken effective action to address the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. These were to raise the quality of teaching and help parents understand more clearly the work of the school. Leaders monitor the quality of teaching closely and provide effective training and bespoke support to ensure that the overall quality of teaching remains high. Nevertheless, leaders acknowledge that there is more to do to reach the Ofsted outstanding criteria, given that the progress of pupils by the end of key stage 2, and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard, are only in line with national averages. Parents are now very

supportive of the school. They appreciate the helpful regular newsletters and the time taken by staff to communicate with parents.

Senior leaders' evaluation of the school's work is accurate and well argued. This leads to a sensible number of priorities for improvement in the school's development plan. These documents and leaders' presentations to the governing body's committees help governors acquire a detailed knowledge and understanding of the school. Skilled governors conduct regular, focused visits to the school to see for themselves the impact of actions taken by leaders. Governors offer rigorous challenge when holding leaders to account and are clear about further necessary improvements to teaching and learning. Governors are aware of the level of care shown to individual pupils and the steps taken to support those in danger of falling behind.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, and that records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training, and that designated leaders hold relevant qualifications. Parents, staff and pupils are united in their view that pupils are safe in school. There are well-planned opportunities for pupils to learn to keep themselves safe, including work on e-safety. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of the risks associated with accessing or sharing information online. Almost all pupils are confident that any concerns about bullying will be followed up rapidly and effectively.

Due to strong relationships, teachers know pupils well, understand their needs and are alert to any changes. Staff take an active approach to safeguarding, following up concerns swiftly. Leaders ensure that they seek the right advice when necessary, and do all they can to enable pupils and their families to receive the support they need from other agencies.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we looked closely at specific aspects of the school's provision, including: the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements; the impact of leaders' responses to the previous inspection findings and the 2016 outcomes; and the achievement of the most able pupils.
- Children get off to a strong start in the Nursery and Reception Years. During my visit, children were well focused and staff were using questioning to develop children's language and understanding of concepts. Over the last three years, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year has risen to well above the national average. This is due to the high expectations of staff, who enable children to settle quickly and learn purposefully.
- There is a great deal of high-quality teaching within the school. Teachers regularly assess the progress pupils are making and plan tasks that are well matched to pupils' starting points. During activities, teachers check carefully

pupils' depth of understanding, appropriately readjusting activities if required. For example, during the inspection pupils in all year groups were observed working on challenges of different levels of difficulty in mathematics lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants were monitoring their progress closely.

- A review of pupils' work with English and mathematics leaders showed that teachers are now providing more stretch and challenge in both mathematics and writing. This is enabling current pupils, including the most able in Years 2 and 6, to achieve higher standards. Teachers' feedback usually meets leaders' expectations, urging pupils to think more deeply about their work and to take responsibility for improving it themselves, with teachers' support. Pupils respond by correcting work and also by explaining their thinking, when asked to do so.
- Achievement at the end of key stage 1 has been broadly in line with national averages for the last two years. This represented better progress for the 2016/2017 Year 2 cohort, who had lower starting points than the cohort of the previous year. Leaders are taking appropriate steps to increase the rate of progress of these pupils, now in Year 3, as they start their journey through key stage 2.
- Leaders carefully evaluate the school's performance, using first-hand observations alongside pupils' performance information to inform their judgements. Monitoring information is used effectively to drive further improvement. As a result, the school's improvement plan is detailed, clearly understood and focuses on the right priorities.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2
- teaching provides greater challenge for pupils across the curriculum, particularly for the most able 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 Surrey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Theresa Phillips
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, your deputy headteacher, your inclusion manager, pupil premium teacher, subject leaders, English and mathematics leaders, and three governors, including the chair. I visited classes across all year groups in the school with you. I reviewed samples of pupils' work across key stages 1 and 2. I considered 43 responses by staff to Ofsted's online survey. I took careful account of 97 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text comments, and conversations with parents picking up their children at the end of the school day. I spoke with pupils during playtime and reviewed 86 responses from pupils to Ofsted's online survey. I looked at documents, including: the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans; information about pupils' learning and progress; minutes of meetings; and records regarding safeguarding.