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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Pam Young
Headteacher
Hotham Primary School
Charlwood Road
Putney
London
SW15 1PN

Dear Ms Young

Short inspection of Hotham Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 8 March 2016, 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 November 2010.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leaders and governors have successfully managed the school's programme of building work, the expansion to two classes in each year and the introduction of a 'bilingual stream': additional French teaching in one class in each year group.

You have made sure that children get off to a strong start in the Nursery and Reception classes. In 2014 and 2015, the proportion of children reaching the expected standard by the end of the Reception Year was well above the national average. Children build up early reading skills swiftly when they join the school. In the Year 1 phonics screening check, more pupils reach the expected standard compared with national averages. (Phonics refers to letters and sounds that they make.) Compared with other pupils nationally, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is also high. A number of changes in teaching staff over recent years has meant that the impact of initiatives to raise standards overall at the end of Year 6 has not been as noticeably effective.

You have addressed the area for improvement from the previous inspection to increase pupils' progress in mathematics. Leaders have made sure that pupils build up mathematics skills securely. Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6 have risen significantly. More pupils reached the very highest standards in mathematics in the national assessments in 2015 when compared with the national average. You

are now developing further the school's approach to teaching mathematics in order to support pupils in deepening their understanding in the subject.

Pupils told me that they enjoy their time at school. In the online survey, Parent View, the overwhelming majority of parents who responded were confident that their child is happy at the school. You make sure that respect and tolerance are strongly promoted. Pupils learn about a wide variety of cultures, for example through events during international week. Caring attitudes are encouraged effectively through whole-school charity fund-raising activities. Class rules emphasise kindness towards others. Older pupils are keen to organise lunchtime activities for the younger ones. Pupils are polite, well mannered and friendly. They look after the school's resources carefully, including the sporting equipment that is available for them to use at lunchtime, and the school's 'secret garden'. The school site is graffiti- and litter-free.

You have made sure that pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are attentive in lessons, listen carefully and act quickly on teachers' instructions so that no time is wasted. Leaders and teachers encourage pupils to do their best and help pupils understand how to be a successful learner. Pupils are eager to meet their teachers' high expectations. Pupils develop fluent handwriting swiftly and take care to present their work neatly.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors found there was more work to do to raise pupils' attendance rates. You make the importance of regular attendance clear to the whole school community. You celebrate the class with the best attendance each week and acknowledge pupils who have attended school every day with a certificate each term. You check the attendance of pupils carefully and are quick to follow up pupils who do not attend school every day. Attendance is improving. Your monitoring of attendance rates this year shows that the attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved considerably.

Safeguarding is effective.

Staff are well trained. You make sure they benefit from additional training sessions that keep them up to date with current advice and guidance. Staff know the school's systems and procedures thoroughly and what action they need to take should any concerns arise. The school's records show that leaders act very promptly when necessary to keep pupils safe. You have made sure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe from harm, including when using computers, crossing the road, travelling on public transport and using scooters. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and governors have made sure that Hotham Primary continues to be a happy place that serves the local community well. You make sure the curriculum provides engaging activities that capture the pupils' interest. Specialist music sessions, outings and residential visits including to France

and the Isle of Wight, all make learning enjoyable. Pupils in the bilingual stream build language learning confidence, particularly in listening and speaking skills in French.

- You and senior leaders measure the performance of the school accurately. You identify where the school can improve the effectiveness of its work and make sure that actions to drive improvements are carefully selected.
- Together with senior leaders, you check the quality of teaching and learning regularly. Additional support and coaching for selected staff help to secure swift improvement and tackle any underperformance. Well-selected whole-staff training on key approaches to teaching mathematics, reading and writing help to improve teaching quality. This has been particularly effective in driving improvements to pupils' outcomes in Key Stage 1. You and senior leaders are rightly focused on improving teaching further in order to raise standards overall at the end of Year 6.
- Leaders and governors are determined to make sure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to access all that the school has to offer. In 2015, you successfully closed the gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and the others at the school at the end of Key Stage 1. Gaps in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils compared with the others narrowed by the end of Year 6, particularly in reading and writing.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and encouraging. Pupils told me teachers make tasks fun and demanding. Teachers' feedback helps pupils to improve their work. Pupils follow teachers' guidance carefully and are keen to demonstrate that they have responded to teachers' suggestions.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Leaders have made sure that they have received appropriate training to support them in their roles. For example, in the early years teaching assistants support children's phonics and early reading successfully. Throughout the school, they work effectively with teachers to promote the learning of pupils who have special educational needs or disability, providing tailored support for selected pupils. Pupils at the early stages of learning English benefit from help to build their knowledge of English vocabulary rapidly.
- You have made sure that children in the early years classes develop key skills quickly in the indoor and outside provision. Staff plan interesting activities that capture and hold children's interest and motivate them to learn. Children take turns readily and use sand timers to measure equal turns, for example when using computers.
- Pupils are clear that instances of bullying are rare, as the school's records show. They know what bullying is and what it is not. Activities during anti-bullying week, such as writing poems and letters, and making posters explaining why bullying is not acceptable, effectively reduce any issues. Pupils are confident that staff will help them should any problems arise.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- standards rise further by the end of Year 6 by continuing to improve teaching.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for the London Borough of Wandsworth. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Madeleine Gerard
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I held meetings with you and members of the senior leadership team. I met three governors including the Chair of the Governing Body. I visited classes from Nursery to Year 6 to observe teaching and look at pupils' work. I spoke to pupils in lessons and around the school and also met a group of Key Stage 2 pupils. I evaluated recent information about pupils' progress. Records about keeping pupils safe and about attendance were evaluated. I considered the views of 115 parents from Parent View, the online Ofsted survey tool.