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Mrs Emily Harley
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Dear Mrs Emily Harley

Short inspection of Endon Hall Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 October 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 June 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have successfully tackled that inspections' recommendations to ensure that pupils have more opportunities to understand what their next steps in learning are, and have reviewed and revised the curriculum so that pupils have more opportunities to use their reading, writing and mathematical skills in a range of other subjects. Evidence gathered during this inspection indicates that the curriculum now provides pupils with well-planned opportunities to learn about other subjects through exciting and relevant topics and themes. Pupils' writing shows imagination and flair. In mathematics, pupils undertake challenging problem-solving activities in which they apply reasoning. Pupils are tenacious in striving to reach high standards.

Since the last inspection, the permanent headteacher has established an effective senior leadership team, of which you are an important part. During the headteacher's maternity leave you have taken on the day-to-day leadership of the school and have continued to bring about improvements to teaching and learning across the school. There have been significant changes in staffing since the last inspection. Five of the former teachers have been replaced by new staff. You were appointed to the post of assistant headteacher shortly after the last inspection and then subsequently to the post of deputy headteacher. Since April 2016, you have taken on the role of acting headteacher, which will continue until the headteacher returns to the school in January 2017. She has recently

started working on a one day a week basis prior to her full-time return. This is proving effective in ensuring continuity of leadership. Together, you are involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in school and revising plans to bring about necessary improvements in outcomes for pupils.

A major change that leaders have brought about since the last inspection has been the successful establishment of a nursery class as part of the school. Children are now able to attend on a part-time basis in the year before they start in the Reception class. This has supported children in their social development and in learning early reading, writing and mathematical skills. Parents are highly appreciative of the opportunities that this offers to their children and recognise the positive impact that it has on the transition to full-time education.

You, together with other leaders, are committed to ensuring that pupils achieve high standards in all areas of school life. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Outcomes have generally been in line with or above the national average over the past three years. Unvalidated assessment information for 2016 indicates that attainment for pupils at the end of key stage 2 has fallen. You are aware of the reasons for this and have taken appropriate action to ensure that all pupils achieve the high outcomes of which they are capable. While the teaching of reading has in the past been successful in helping pupils to become fluent readers who achieve high standards in the national tests, in 2016 there was a decline in the overall standards. You recognise that there is a need to review the approach to how reading is taught in school to ensure teaching is appropriate to the needs of all pupils.

You correctly recognise that pupils need to feel happy, safe and cared for at school if they are to thrive academically. Pupils' personal development, welfare and behaviour is a strength of the school. This is reflected in the pride that pupils take in their school and the high standards of behaviour that are expected and achieved. Relationships are excellent and you have been particularly successful in supporting pupils who have previously had difficulties in maintaining appropriate behaviour.

The work that the school undertakes to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is generally very effective in helping children to become future citizens of this country. While pupils have a strong understanding of core British values such as democracy and respect, their understanding of the beliefs and faiths of other people is not as well developed. You have identified that this is an area that needs to be developed further.

Safeguarding is effective.

Arrangements and procedures to ensure that pupils are safe and secure in school are thorough and have helped to create a climate within school where safeguarding is seen as a collective responsibility. Regular training for staff helps to ensure they are all aware of how they can and must be vigilant in protecting

pupils. Newly appointed staff, as part of their induction process, are made aware of the safeguarding policies and practices that operate within school. Strong and effective liaison with external agencies helps to ensure that potentially vulnerable pupils are provided with the appropriate support that they need. Leaders have not been afraid to take difficult and challenging decisions where the well-being of pupils might be at risk.

Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. For example, a group of pupils spoken to during the inspection confidently explained the 'SMART' internet use rules that are displayed around school. They knew that the letters of the word reminded them of the dangers of meeting someone online or accepting emails or messages from people they didn't know.

Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is and say that it is extremely rare in school. The very large majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, supported and endorsed their children's views about positive behaviour and the effectiveness of systems for dealing with any bullying that might occur.

Inspection findings

- Leadership within the school is good. The headteacher has, since the last inspection, established a strong senior leadership team within the school, of which you are an effective element. During the headteacher's current maternity leave, you have continued her successful work in supporting teachers who are new to the profession. Following the last inspection, through monitoring and evaluation and management of teachers' performance, senior leaders identified that not all teaching was as effective as it could be in promoting good learning for the pupils. This has resulted in some lack of stability in staffing, with a number of teachers leaving the school. However, the appointments that have been made over the past three years have strengthened teaching, which is now firmly good across the school.
- Leaders, teachers and other staff all have high expectations for pupils. Pupils during the inspection commented on how they found the work that was set for them both interesting and challenging. This was particularly apparent through the topic and thematic work that pupils undertook and through their work in mathematics.
- Governors provide robust levels of challenge to school leaders. They are well informed about pupils' outcomes and recognise that while most pupils made good progress in 2016, attainment was not high enough for some of them, given their starting points in school. The recently appointed chair of governors is clear in his view that outcomes need to be consistently high for all pupils and is well supported by other governors who use their expertise and knowledge to monitor all aspects of the work of the school. They fulfil all their statutory duties well and ensure that any additional funding that is available to the school is used to bring about improvements. For example,

governors have made sure that the pupil premium is used effectively and that as a result the small number of disadvantaged pupils in school make progress that is consistently good.

- The careful planning of the curriculum by school leaders has resulted in a very well structured series of topics that are accurately matched to the requirements of the national curriculum and also designed to the specific interests and needs of the pupils at Endon Hall Primary. Topics, such as 'Magical and Mysterious', 'Who are our Neighbours?' and 'Into the Jungle' combine appropriate elements of different subjects and provide the pupils with interesting opportunities to apply their writing and mathematical skills and abilities in other subjects such as geography, history and science. For example, during the inspection pupils in one of the key stage 2 classes used their mathematical knowledge to solve problems linked to their studies of the Egyptians. The problems had been subtly worded by the teacher so that pupils had to work out their own approach to finding a solution. The topic themes are enhanced by termly visits by pupils in all classes to places such as Manchester Science Museum, Chester Zoo and Cannock Chase. The emphasis that leaders place on pupils' development of good social skills and acquisition of a clear understanding of Great Britain is further supported by annual residential trips for pupils from Year 3 upwards.
- School leaders have placed a strong emphasis on improving the teaching of writing and mathematics. They have provided teachers with opportunities to observe outstanding teaching in other schools and have used support and advice from the local authority effectively to bring about improvements. Teachers teach skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling effectively and provide pupils with good opportunities to apply this knowledge in their own writing. In mathematics the whole school approach to teaching computational skills, which is firmly in place, allows pupils to gain a good understanding of core concepts and facts. Evidence gathered during the inspection, including work seen in pupils' books and the school's own assessment information, indicates that pupils make good progress in these areas of learning.
- In 2014 and 2015 the proportion of pupils in Year 1 that reached the expected standard in the national phonics screening check was above the national figure. In 2016, pupils did not score as highly. This fall in reading standards was also seen in other year groups. While I saw evidence of effective phonics teaching during the inspection, there is not a sufficiently systematic and robust approach to the teaching of reading across the school. As a result, not enough pupils make the progress that they should in reading. This in turn means that some pupils, who struggle with reading, do not gain the pleasure from reading that they could do. School leaders have recognised this and have already provided some additional support for pupils who did not make the progress that they should have done last year.
- Teachers use questioning well to pose more challenging questions for the most able pupils in school. They also set tasks of increasing complexity for these pupils. Pupils that I spoke to during the inspection said that they found the work suitably demanding. However, there is a clear recognition

from school leaders that more pupils could reach the highest standards by the time they leave the school in Year 6.

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has been strengthened over the past 18 months and now is very effective in making sure that specific needs of these pupils are accurately and appropriately met. Leadership of this area of the school's work is now shared between a teacher and an experienced teaching assistant. This partnership has proved to be very successful in making sure that one-to-one support, small group work and advice and input from external services are used effectively to help pupils make accelerated progress and narrow any gaps in their learning.
- The ethos and values of the school are reflected through the positive attitudes that pupils show towards each other and their pride in their school. One pupil's comment that, 'Our school wants us to be the best at everything we do,' accurately represented the views of the school community. Parents expressed very high degrees of confidence in the work of the school, both through the Parent View online survey and through the free text comments that were received during the inspection.
- The promotion by school leaders and teachers of pupils' understanding of fundamental British values of tolerance, respect and democracy is very effective. Pupils greatly value the opportunities to become class representatives on the school council and understand the parallels to both local and national government. The opinions of the pupils are respected by school leaders and are taken into account when making important decisions. An example of this is the involvement of pupils in the interview and appointment of new members of staff.
- Pupils' knowledge of current affairs is promoted very well through a weekly assembly where they get to consider a pertinent national or local issue. For example, pupils recently discussed the industrial action that junior doctors had been taking and considered the reasons for and against. While pupils show empathy for other people, their understanding of the faiths, religions and convictions of different people is not as well developed. Opportunities to find out more about different beliefs have not been fully embedded within pupils' learning.
- Pupils' attendance has been above the national average for the past three years and very few pupils regularly miss school. This is a testament to the pleasure pupils get from their education and to the diligence of school leaders in promoting and encouraging good attendance.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- review the approaches that the school takes for the teaching of reading and ensure that it leads to improved outcomes for pupils

- broaden opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of different faiths, beliefs and religions to further embed the core values of respect and tolerance
- ensure that pupils across the school make consistently strong progress so that more can achieve the highest levels of attainment.

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

Yours sincerely

Adam Hewett
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Currently, the permanent headteacher is on maternity leave. During the inspection, she was in school for the day and was involved, along with you, in the inspection activities. On the day of the inspection, the Year 4 class was on a visit to Creswell Crags Stone Age Village.

During the inspection, I met with you, the permanent headteacher, a member of your senior leadership team and your staff. I also met the chair and vice chair of the governing body. I spoke to a group of parents at the beginning of the school day. I also considered the 28 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View and looked at free text comments from 17 parents. I visited, together with you and the permanent headteacher, all the classes that were in school to observe teaching and learning. I met with a group of pupils, including members of the school council, and listened to some pupils read. I also spoke with pupils in lessons and on the playground.

I scrutinised information about children's progress during last academic year. I considered other documentation, including the school's self-evaluation of its own performance and the school improvement plan. I scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures, including policies and checks on staff employed in the school, and checked the school website. I also considered the 11 responses to the online staff survey.