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Jacky Farnell
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Dear Jacky Farnell

Short inspection of Hope Hamilton CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 10 January 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 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, senior leaders and governors have continued to ensure that pupils achieve well during a time of school expansion and some changes to staffing. You insist upon a consistent approach to teaching throughout the school and use staff expertise well. Subject leaders keep a focus on what needs to improve in their subjects and they are involved in school improvement planning. Those leaders who are new to their roles receive good guidance from more-experienced members of staff and are well prepared to take on their responsibilities.

You and the leadership team identify what the school needs to do in order to move forward. You evaluate the effectiveness of new initiatives and you have a realistic view of how well the school is doing. You have ensured that the new curriculum and assessment systems are now well established and recognise which areas of the curriculum still require further modification. Consequently, any shortcomings in subjects such as reading, writing and mathematics are identified and addressed.

Your school is an attractive and purposeful place. Pupils say they like school. In the lessons that I visited, pupils concentrated well and took an interest in their learning. Pupils say that they get on well together, reflected in the comment, 'Everyone fits in really well.' The 'Hope Hamilton way' instils a strong sense of community and celebrates the cultural diversity of the school's population. Pupils recognise the importance of values such as tolerance and respect because issues such as

prejudice and discrimination are addressed well in the curriculum. Parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, are supportive of the school's work and value the school's ethos.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have addressed well the areas they were asked to improve. You have adopted a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics which enables pupils to make good progress in the acquisition and application of mathematical skills. You and your leaders continue to widen the ways in which pupils use their mathematics skills in a range of subjects. However, teaching does not consistently ensure that the most able pupils make good progress in developing their mathematical thinking.

You have established a whole-school approach to the teaching of handwriting which means that the majority of pupils present work in their books well.

At the time of the previous inspection, you were also asked to reduce the number of pupils who are late at the start of the school day. You have a range of ways to help pupils and parents to understand the importance of being at school on time. These are having a positive effect on improving punctuality, with a reduction in the number of pupils who are persistently late. However, you ensure that this continues to be an ongoing focus.

Since the previous inspection, you have identified the need to raise pupils' attainment in reading, especially at key stage 2. You have made a good start in raising the profile of reading throughout the school and pupils are enthusiastic about the new books and class reading areas. All of the pupils who read to me during my visit said that they like reading and they knew about popular authors. You have established a consistent approach to the teaching of reading. However, books provided for the pupils do not always match their reading abilities. This slows down the progress of pupils, particularly the less able readers. The school has not yet ensured that all parents are actively involved in helping improve their children's reading skills.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your team of designated leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are regularly maintained. You have a 'joined-up' approach to safeguarding and stress that keeping children safe is the responsibility of all. You ensure that staff, including those who are new to the school, receive regular and relevant training and you keep them informed of recent legislation and updates. Staff are clear about the school's systems and what to do if they have any concerns over children's welfare. There are good links with external agencies and clear channels for recording and following up any child protection issues. Leaders establish good relationships with parents, which aids communication should concerns arise. Governors undertake the necessary training and use expertise within the governing body to help them to meet their safeguarding obligations.

Pupils say that they feel safe and all of the parents who completed Parent View

agree. Pupils are helped to understand risk and what to do if they have any worries, because safety issues are addressed well by the curriculum. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare, but they understand the different forms that bullying can take. They know about the potential dangers of using technology, including social media. They say that name-calling is not an issue in their school because they are taught to respect each other. Leaders use outside visitors such as the local police force and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children to run workshops. These provide pupils with useful guidance on how to keep themselves safe from issues such as exploitation, extremism and drug misuse.

Inspection findings

- There is a good whole-school focus on making sure that pupils learn, practise and consolidate their mathematical skills. In lessons, teachers use assessment well to recap and build upon previous learning. They expect pupils to explain their reasoning in order to check their understanding. However, on occasions, the progress made by the most able pupils in deepening their understanding is not as rapid as it could be as they spend time working on tasks that they already can do.
- The new approaches to the teaching of reading are starting to take effect and pupils' attainment is rising. Teachers teach guided reading sessions consistently well. They check pupils' understanding of what they read and challenge pupils to gather information from a range of texts. Teachers link reading well to writing so that pupils identify techniques used by authors to enhance their writing. However, there is some variation in how well teachers check what pupils read on a daily basis. This means that sometimes texts are too hard for some pupils, which slows the progress they make.
- The most able pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, read with fluency and enjoy the opportunities they have to carry out book reviews. They, together with other pupils, like being selected as 'star reader'. Leaders recognise that there is room for improvement in how well the most able pupils develop the higher-level reading skills such as inference.
- Leaders have carried out an external evaluation of the effectiveness of the pupil premium spending. They have adopted the recommendations in order to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils in reading and mathematics, especially at key stage 2. As a result, eligible pupils who need extra help are receiving a greater level of support than previously. This is having a positive effect on the amount of progress they make.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers check regularly what pupils choose to read in order to ensure a good match of text to pupils' abilities, especially for those who find reading difficult
- there is a consistent approach to helping parents to be engaged in their children's reading
- the most able pupils are sufficiently well challenged to develop higher-level

reading skills and to make more rapid progress in deepening their mathematical understanding.

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

Yours sincerely

Vivienne McTiffen
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and the deputy headteacher. I met with subject leaders responsible for English and mathematics. I also met the chair and one other member of the governing body. I visited some classes with you to observe the teaching of reading and mathematics. I spoke to pupils during lessons about their work and I listened to some of the most able and the less able pupils read. I also met with a group of pupils. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and the improvement plan. I looked at the school's assessment information and samples of pupils' work with leaders. I took into account the 11 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 11 free-text responses from parents. I analysed the 25 responses to the questionnaire submitted by school staff and the 19 responses from the pupil survey. I scrutinised the single central record of recruitment checks and other documentation relating to safeguarding. The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.