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James McGowan and Ann-Marie Kedzior
Headteachers
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Dear Mr McGowan and Miss Kedzior

Short inspection of Alderman Richard Hallam Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 26 January 2017 with Sally Manz, Ofsted Inspector, 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 September 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 and your senior leaders have high expectations of both staff and pupils. You ensure that pupils receive appropriate support to enable them to make the progress they should in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. Furthermore, you ensure that all staff receive the training they require to ensure that they are effective in supporting pupils in their learning. Your actions as leaders reflect the school's aim to ensure that everyone at the school works together to raise pupils' achievement.

You and your senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the school's provision, including those areas where further improvement is necessary. Where you identify any such areas, you take timely and effective action to resolve the issue. For example, you have been quick to establish why pupils' outcomes at key stage 2 were below national levels in reading, writing and mathematics last academic year. The action you have taken as a result has ensured that greater proportions of current pupils across all years are now making the progress they should, particularly in reading and mathematics. You rightly recognise, however, that pupils' skills in writing, including in their spelling, are less strong, particularly in Year 4. You are undertaking action to resolve this.

At the last inspection, you were asked to:

- develop strategies to accelerate pupils' progress

- develop the use of data with leaders and staff at all levels to increase the proportion of pupils making accelerated progress.

You have taken effective action to resolve these issues. Teachers have received training to use information about pupils' prior attainment and progress to plan activities that meet their individual needs. You have also ensured that pupils are aware of what they must do to ensure that they make the necessary progress in their learning. You have introduced the 'ingredients for success' to ensure that pupils understand the steps they must follow to secure their learning. In the lessons that inspectors observed, teachers had planned activities that met pupils' needs, and provided appropriate support. As a result, pupils engaged well with their learning. For example, Year 3 pupils, who were converting kilograms to grams, were able to explain confidently the steps they took to make the conversion. They were secure in their understanding due to the carefully planned activities the teacher had set them.

You regularly check on the progress pupils make in their learning. Where you identify pupils who are falling behind, you ensure that appropriate support is in place. You closely monitor the impact of this support, to ensure that pupils are able to catch up in their learning. You recognise, however, that your procedures for checking the progress of different pupil groups, including the disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who speak English as an additional language, are not as sharp as they could be. This includes checking on the progress that pupils who belong to these groups make from their different starting points.

You closely monitor the quality of teaching to ensure that teachers receive appropriate training to develop their practice in the classroom. You encourage teachers to work together, observing each other teach and comparing their assessment of pupils' work. As a result, teachers share best classroom practice, and have a secure understanding of what good progress in pupils' learning looks like. Furthermore, you ensure that your school works closely with other schools, through which your staff are able to learn from, and contribute to the development of, teachers in other schools. Working with colleagues from other schools also enables your teachers to be accurate in their assessment of pupils' work.

The school provides pupils with effective opportunities to prepare for life in modern Britain. Through the wall displays that focus on different aspects of culture, the assemblies and the curriculum, pupils learn how to appreciate other cultures and to respect those who are different to them. Furthermore, pupils learn how to be safe, and how to care for each other, themselves and their environment.

Governors provide you and your leaders with close support and appropriate levels of challenge to ensure that you maintain and improve the effectiveness of the school's provision. Governors are ambitious for, and committed to, the school. They undertake regular visits to the school to check for themselves the quality of the education pupils receive. In so doing, they speak with pupils and visit classrooms. Governors undertake regular training, including in safeguarding, to ensure that they

have the skills to be effective in the support and direction they provide to the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders who have responsibility for safeguarding work well as a team to provide effective and robust support for pupils about whom they have welfare concerns. These leaders work well with parents and local agencies to ensure that the pupils receive the support they need. They are sensitive to the issues in the local area that may affect pupils' welfare. Leaders ensure that staff receive appropriate information to enable them to support pupils where such issues affect them. In safeguarding the pupils, these leaders are conscientious and committed.

All staff have received comprehensive training relating to safeguarding. As a result, they are aware of the different types of abuse, and the signs to look for. They fully understand the actions that they should take where they have a concern about the welfare of one of their pupils. Their comprehensive understanding of safeguarding procedures underlines each member of staff's recognition of their crucial role in ensuring that pupils are safe, and know how to stay safe.

You and your senior leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- Senior leaders have been swift to review the reasons behind the below-national outcomes at key stage 2 last academic year. The actions they have taken have ensured that greater proportions of pupils are now making at least the progress they should in reading and mathematics. Leaders recognise, however, that standards in writing and spelling are not high enough, particularly in Year 4.
- Due to the effective support that disadvantaged pupils receive, greater proportions of these pupils make the progress they should in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders recognise how their evaluation of the achievement of this group of pupils can be sharper.
- Leaders have adapted the curriculum to ensure that low prior-attaining boys engage in their learning more effectively, particularly in reading. For example, leaders have purchased books that appeal to boys. As a result, low prior-attaining boys now demonstrate greater engagement in their learning.
- Overall attendance of all pupils is good. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special needs and/or disabilities, although improving, is still below national levels for all pupils.
- The special educational needs coordinator ensures that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support. As a result, these pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Behaviour at the school is good. Pupils conduct themselves well around the school site, and have positive attitudes to learning. Those pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour receive close support from staff. This support enables them to manage their behaviour more effectively.

- All pupils whom inspectors met said that they are safe at the school. They said that they have an adult they can speak with if they have a concern. They are confident that staff will take their concerns seriously and take effective action.
- Almost all parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their child is safe at the school, and would recommend the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers enable all pupils, particularly those in Year 4, to be secure in their writing skills, including their spelling
- they further develop their procedures for checking the achievement of different groups of pupils, particularly the disadvantaged pupils and the pupils who speak English as an additional language, including the progress pupils within these groups make from their different starting points
- the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities continues to improve, to be in line with national levels for all 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 Leicester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Hollingsworth
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors met with you, your senior leaders, members of the governing body including the chair of governors, a selection of staff, and a representative of the local authority who supports the school in its improvement work. An inspector also met with phase and year leaders, as well as subject leaders. Inspectors observed 16 lessons from across all year groups. I conducted two of these lesson observations with you, as headteachers of the school. An inspector spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day, and with pupils informally during break and lunchtime, when the inspector also observed behaviour. I formally met with six pupils from Years 3, 5 and 6. An inspector heard pupils read, including some most-able pupils. Inspectors took into account the 57 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 52 responses to the free text service. Inspectors also considered the 33 responses to the staff questionnaire. Inspectors examined a range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, attendance, the school's use of pupil premium funding, achievement and governance. Inspectors also took into account the school's own self-evaluation and school improvement plan. I scrutinised the school's single central record and the

school's recruitment procedures. At the end of the day, I gave feedback to you, senior leaders, members of the governing body and the representative of the local authority.