

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



17 May 2017

Ms Alison Dowding
Harold Wood Primary School
Recreation Avenue
Harold Wood
Romford
Essex
RM3 0TH

Dear Ms Dowding

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Harold Wood Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 12 May 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in July 2016. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- continue to refine the school's assessment system to support teachers to assess pupils' progress in the wider curriculum subjects.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, pupils, the governing body, the headteacher from the partner school arrangement and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement and action plans were evaluated. I looked at learning in a number of classes with you and both deputy headteachers. I observed playtimes and lunchtime. I also checked the safeguarding records and procedures.

Context

Since the previous inspection, the school has expanded. There are three forms of entry from Reception to Year 3 and two forms in Years 4, 5 and 6.

Main findings

You, your school leaders and governors have been proactive in addressing the areas identified at the last inspection. Despite the disappointing judgement, you quickly rallied the school community and kept staff morale high. Consequently, there is a renewed sense of purpose across the school. This has ensured that pupils' quality of education has remained a priority. The honest evaluation of the school's performance has meant that you were swift to put plans in place to strengthen the safeguarding procedures. This has resulted in an effective team approach to gathering information in order to ensure pupils' safety. The safeguarding posters to inform pupils, staff and any visitor around the school are informative and demonstrate that safeguarding is everybody's priority. You have sharpened up the procedure for clear and timely recording of any concerns. This has further improved the school's safeguarding systems. The training for the growing number of volunteers is as rigorous as staff's recent updates on government guidelines.

You have ensured that pupils develop a clear understanding of how the school celebrates the diverse community. The refined school curriculum has resulted in the successful promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They eagerly explain the school's 'REACH' (respect, equality, achievement, curiosity and happiness) values. They know how they help: as a pupil said, 'it gives you a sense of what you need in life'. The way the pupils demonstrate these values is evident across the school. At breaktimes, they play together in a harmonious and happy environment. They enjoy playing with a variety of friends and say that this is typical of how behaviour is at Harold Wood.

Middle leaders have further developed their roles to improve pupils' progress. They have been encouraged to challenge underperformance and offer support to teachers following their regular monitoring procedures. Middle leaders are held to account through the robust performance management systems. Access to high-quality professional development has ensured that middle leaders make an impact on pupils' standards across their subjects and year groups. For example, recent phonics training has improved the number of pupils reaching the expected standards in the last assessment to well above the national average. Middle leaders regularly present reports on their subjects for governors. This enables the governors to challenge the information. This effective system adds to their professional development as leaders. Leaders agree that they are continuing work to enable the school's assessment system to fully support teachers to measure pupils' progress in the wider curriculum subjects.

You, alongside your able group of governors, have kept the confidence of parents

since the last inspection. A growing number of parents are volunteering in school. Parents now run the school library effectively. The drive to widen cultural understanding has meant that more parents visit the school to share their own cultural heritage. This gives another dimension to the pupils' deepening appreciation of the value of 'respect'.

External support

Your partnership work with a local school has enabled the school to grow in confidence in the way leaders present the improvements made since the last inspection. The positive relationships have enabled you and your team to demonstrate rapid gains in addressing the areas identified in the last inspection. The reviews and audits from this support system and the local authority have provided senior leaders, including governors, with valuable opportunities to moderate their judgements. This has resulted in the school demonstrating a zeal for continuing school improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Sara Morgan

Her Majesty's Inspector