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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Joanne Davies
Headteacher
Hawkedale Infant School
Stratton Road
Sunbury-on-Thames
Surrey
TW16 6PG

Dear Mrs Davies

Short inspection of Hawkedale Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 11 July 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 October 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 maintained the focus on ensuring that pupils are safe and making good progress, despite the plans to expand into a primary school and the inconvenience of major building work on the site. You have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in your school and you know your pupils well.

You are well supported and suitably challenged by a well-informed, passionate and very active governing body. Governors ensure that there is a suitable range of skills within the governing body. They are well informed about the school through reports and presentations from school leaders, but they also visit the school often to find out things for themselves.

The changes you have made to the school's leadership structure have made sure that teaching and learning continue to improve in all subjects. You are acutely aware of the potential negative impact of staff turnover on the quality of teaching in such a small school. You support your staff well through regular training and by effective checks on the quality of teaching and learning. The positive impact of recent training on 'mastery' and effective questioning was seen when Year 2 pupils responded enthusiastically to challenging questions in mathematics. They were able to explain their thinking clearly.

During the inspection, most staff completed the Ofsted questionnaire. All staff who

did so were proud to be part of the team working at the school and were clear about what the school is trying to achieve. They said you supported them well.

You have responded well to the points for improvement in the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and learning has improved. For example, teachers provide suitably challenging work for all pupils. The impact of this was very evident in the outcomes for the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, in reading and mathematics. Significantly higher proportions of these pupils in Year 2 are reaching greater depth in reading and mathematics than last year. In addition, you have successfully focused on improving children's progress in the early years. Despite the current restrictions on available space for Reception children, you and the early years team have created exciting and motivating indoor and outside areas for children. I saw them selecting and enjoying challenging activities that linked play to learning. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development this year is above average and continues a rising trend.

All the parents I spoke to were very pleased with the progress their children were making and the support they get to help their children at home. They explained to me how happy their children were at school and how strong the community spirit is.

I enjoyed meeting and talking to your pupils. I saw pupils in the breakfast club enjoying the engaging sporting activities before settling down convivially together for something to eat. Pupils enjoy coming to school and like their teachers. They feel safe, secure and valued. One pupil said, 'it's like a big family'.

Safeguarding is effective.

Quite rightly, you give the highest priority to keeping all the children in your care safe. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Training for staff is regularly updated, for example, in such issues as child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and the 'Prevent' duty. You make sure staff know how to report concerns. You work very closely with families, including through the home-school link worker, to ensure that children are safe and protected.

Staff know pupils well. You have identified the barriers that your vulnerable pupils may face in their learning, which helps staff to understand their pupils better. Pupils confirmed that they feel safe and they have an adult they can turn to if they are ever upset. They expressed no concerns about bullying and were confident that staff would sort out any incidents quickly and fairly.

Staff recruitment procedures are thorough. The single central record is maintained appropriately. Governors regularly check safeguarding arrangements to ensure that they are effective.

Inspection findings

- In our first meeting, we agreed the areas we would look at to confirm the school remained good. As the proportions of Year 2 pupils attaining greater depth in 2016 were disappointing, you agreed with me that teaching needed to be suitably challenging, particularly for the most able, for pupils to make rapid progress. As a result of the frequent checks you make on teaching, and staff training on such things as mastery and effective questioning, pupils of different abilities are now tackling appropriately challenging work. More of the most able pupils in Year 2 are reaching greater depth in mathematics and, particularly, reading this year. However, we saw in mathematics folders that pupils do not have enough opportunities to explain their thinking, and sometimes spend more time than is necessary on work they have already mastered.
- You have identified that pupils' writing has not developed as well as their reading or mathematical skills. Although pupils already write widely in subjects other than English, such as science, you recognise that they do not have enough opportunities to practise their skills by writing extended pieces. You have taken appropriate steps to address this through a focus on improving handwriting and spelling, and raising teachers' expectations for extended writing. Work seen in Year 1 pupils' English books showed they were making good progress from their starting points in developing their writing skills.
- You have managed the increase in the numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language well. You have taken steps to ensure that these pupils are familiar with essential vocabulary. For example, each week parents receive in advance the words their children will meet in lessons. Teaching assistants help pupils to understand the words before learning activities begin. Staff have been well trained in supporting pupils who speak English as an additional language. They can assess accurately how proficient pupils are in using English. New books in different languages have been bought to help pupils to develop their comprehension. As a consequence, this group of pupils is making progress at least as good as that of their peers.
- We noted that overall attendance last year was just below average, but that attendance of the few disadvantaged pupils was much lower still. You have worked hard to promote regular attendance of all pupils. As well as giving attendance a high profile in school, you ensure absences are checked and followed up carefully. You have involved the educational welfare officer where appropriate. As a result, overall attendance has improved and is currently above average. While the attendance of most disadvantaged pupils has improved, the attendance rate of the group as a whole remains below average.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils have more opportunities for extended writing
- in mathematics, pupils do not spend too long on work they have mastered and have more opportunities to explain their thinking

- the attendance of disadvantaged pupils matches the same good attendance as other 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 Surrey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

James McVeigh
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I held discussions with you, the leader responsible for teaching and learning, the business manager, and the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. I also spoke to a representative of the local authority by telephone. I visited all classrooms with you. At breaktimes, I toured the playground and the dining hall. I looked at pupils' written work together, on occasions, with the headteacher and leader for teaching and learning. You shared information with me about pupils' performance.

I examined school documents, including records about safeguarding, self-evaluation and governors' visits. I spoke to a group of Year 2 pupils formally and with other pupils informally in class and around the school. I spoke to several parents as they dropped off their children at school. I considered 66 responses to the online survey, Parent View, including 46 written comments, and 13 responses to the Ofsted staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey, but a school-generated questionnaire for pupils was considered, as well as two letters from current pupils.