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Mrs Jennifer Hughes
Pinfold Primary School
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Dear Mrs Hughes

Short inspection of Pinfold Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 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 May 2013.

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 responded to a dip in attainment and progress in 2016 very effectively. In the current year standards have risen and pupils in all key stages have achieved good outcomes.

The school presents a stimulating and delightful working environment. Your artist in residence has overseen some outstanding work created by the pupils. Huge sculptures enhance the corridors and communal areas. The three little pigs and the big, bad wolf, Humpty Dumpty teetering on his wall and others make a wonderful display in key stage 1. Huge characters such as Egyptian pharaohs and King Henry VIII adorn the corridors of key stage 2. Displays such as these bring the rich and rewarding curriculum alive. Your pupils benefit from many visits, such as to the Macclesfield Silk Museum. You have further broadened the curriculum by introducing the forest school initiative and opportunities to learn musical instruments.

Positive relationships underpin all learning. The staff have a strong sense of teamwork so that they support and learn from each other. Relationships between staff and pupils, and pupils with each other, are open and friendly. Parents who responded to the online questionnaire, and those who came into school to talk to me, all spoke with enthusiasm about the good work you are doing. Parents are impressed by how approachable the staff are and the support you give to families to help them contribute to their children's education. They appreciate the care and

nurture you provide for their children and the very great majority of parents are confident that their children are safe in school.

You and your leadership team have dealt with all the issues from the previous inspection. Teaching has improved because of greater consistency across the school. Learning is very well adapted to suit the needs of pupils of all abilities. Spacious and well-resourced areas for the youngest children have enhanced learning in the early years. The progress made by all groups of pupils, including girls, boys, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, has increased. Any gaps in their achievement are closing rapidly. Pupils make strong progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

Your governing body is very well informed about what is happening in school. Governors keep a very close eye on pupils' progress and make sure that the school receives value for money for all funds and especially the pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, your staff and governors share a commitment to keeping pupils safe. Your arrangements for safeguarding are robust and highly effective. The senior leader responsible for safeguarding arrangements in school is an expert in her field and has introduced some excellent practices. These include sending regular safeguarding information to parents in the weekly newsletters. A pupil forum has also been established, where pupils can contribute ideas on school policy.

You work successfully with other agencies to minimise the possibility of harm to any pupils. Staff told me that they receive regular and high-quality safeguarding training to keep them well informed. They felt that they knew how to act in a range of different circumstances. The staff told me that they do not consider what may appear to be small concerns to be unimportant and so are always prepared to raise a concern quickly. You carefully evaluate the risks involved when pupils take part in different activities. You are assiduous in ensuring that staff recruitment is conducted safely. You were able to show me the records of pupils who had benefited substantially from support provided by the school in different circumstances.

Pupils are confident that they are well looked after and can share any worries they might have with an adult. They describe their school as a happy and safe place. Pupils told me that they have no concerns about bullying. Examples of discussions at pupil forum meetings show how deeply they have thought about keeping themselves safe in many different situations. Pupils' comments on looking after themselves and their friends show real maturity and thoughtfulness. Their understanding of the rules for e-safety is equally detailed and secure. They are aware that a healthy lifestyle involves keeping fit, eating healthy food and having good rules for physical and mental health.

You have responded to a decrease in rates of attendance by appointing an attendance officer to manage this aspect of school life. Your senior staff keep a very

careful watch on attendance and work with families to ensure that all pupils attend regularly. In the main, pupils enjoy school and want to be there. You make sure that any unexplained absence is rigorously followed up and that every child is accounted for. You are also working to improve punctuality so that pupils and their parents recognise the importance of arriving at school on time and being well prepared.

Inspection findings

- I looked particularly at how the school is teaching phonics because published data suggested that outcomes were less good than previously. You were able to explain to me that Year 1 classes were affected by unavoidable staffing issues last year, which contributed to a dip. You have invested in a whole new system for the teaching of phonics, with impressive results. Staff have transformed the way in which phonics is taught. Children learn reading and writing skills alongside their work on letters and sounds. This approach is rapidly accelerating their progress. Your assessment system is very accurate so that teachers and teaching assistants know exactly how to pitch learning so that pupils make the best progress. Pupils have done very well in phonics this year and have made a very substantial increase on the outcomes achieved in 2016.
- You have responded quickly to a dip in reading outcomes in 2016 by appointing an effective new subject leader and reorganising how guided reading sessions are conducted. You have provided extra training for staff in teaching reading skills and put the emphasis for pupils on reading for understanding. You have helped parents to support reading at home more effectively. The school has an excellent library and many enticing displays of books. You are quite rightly working to develop a love of reading, not just the skill of being able to read. All of these strategies have already been effective because standards have risen this year and pupils across the school have made more progress.
- You have particularly focused on making sure that middle-ability pupils succeed as well as they can in both reading and writing in order to improve their opportunities for success at secondary school. All your staff clearly identify middle-ability pupils and plan work to support their learning. A scrutiny of the work of these pupils in several year groups and in writing, mathematics, science and topic books showed that their progress is good over the academic year. Your strategies to improve writing have been successful. For example, the introduction of '10-minute write' sessions has helped pupils to overcome the 'fear of the blank page', to start writing quickly and to check their spelling and grammar. Their books show a marked increase in the quality and quantity of writing over time. However, in some of the books of younger pupils, there tend to be many worksheets, which limit the opportunity for pupils to improve their writing skills.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school works closely with parents to tackle persistent absence so that more pupils attend school regularly

- successful strategies to improve progress in writing are further embedded and that staff reduce their use of worksheets.

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

Yours sincerely

Judith Straw
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During my visit I met with you, your senior leaders, the executive headteacher and three governors, including the chair of the governing body. I spoke to a member of the local authority school improvement team. I met with a group of parents and looked at the survey results from the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. I spoke to many members of staff during the day. I visited phonics and guided-reading sessions in the early years and key stage 1. You and I toured the school watching older pupils enjoying the many activities on their 'healthy school' day. I looked closely at a sample of pupils' workbooks in English, mathematics, science and topic work across the school. I met with a group of pupils from Year 6 and talked to other children during the day. I listened to pupils reading and talked to them about their progress. I reviewed your current assessment system and tracking data showing pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. I especially looked at pupils' progress in reading, outcomes for middle-ability pupils in writing and the progress of younger children in phonics. I evaluated the accuracy of your self-evaluation and school development priorities. I checked the effectiveness of your safeguarding arrangements and your work to ensure the regular attendance of your pupils.