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Ms Anna Roche
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Dear Ms Roche

Short inspection of Hazel Grove Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 18 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. The school remains successful because you provide honest, insightful leadership. Your vision for the school is clear and shared fully by other leaders and by governors. Leaders make sure that the school improves in every aspect, from the early years through to Year 6. You give staff frequent access to training. You seek opportunities for staff to take on new responsibilities in school. Leaders encourage staff to help one another to improve. You give staff the chance to assist the work of other schools. You want your staff to bring back insights that will help your school.

Staff morale is high and pupils are happy. A typical comment from a member of staff is, 'Our ethos builds on support, encouragement, kindness and well-being for all.' Pupils with whom I spoke agree strongly with this view.

Hazel Grove is a calm school where classrooms focus purposefully on learning. Staff place high value on the quality of all pupils' work. They celebrate many examples of pupils' learning in attractive wall displays. Leaders promote messages about learning throughout the school, even on some toilet doors. Pupils across the school make good progress in their learning in different subjects. Teaching over time remains good. It is little wonder that the school is an increasingly popular choice with local parents.

When inspectors visited the school in 2012, leaders were asked to improve the quality of the school curriculum. Staff now plan and organise pupils' learning well. Pupils say they

learn from regular opportunities to meet visitors. They enjoy taking part in school trips and the chance to attend clubs before and after school.

At the previous inspection, inspectors identified that governors did not check the work of the school in enough detail. The governing body now considers the work of the school with much care and precision. They question and debate what leaders tell them. They visit the school frequently and with a clear focus to understand the work of staff and leaders. They are unafraid to challenge leaders. Governors confidently seek insight about the quality and direction of the school's improvement.

Inspectors also asked leaders to improve how they check and review the work of the school. You have addressed this issue with success. Improvements are now tracked and measured more precisely. More leaders now contribute to the debate about and analysis of how well the school is improving. Your current priorities for improvement draw from your well-informed analysis of the school. For example, in mathematics leaders correctly spotted some weaknesses in boys' learning in key stage 1 in 2016. Clear actions by leaders and staff are leading to improvements in mathematics for many pupils this year. Throughout the school, there is a clear sense of unity and purpose in the leadership team.

Pupils' attendance is average and the attendance of most groups of pupils is good. However, not enough disadvantaged pupils attend school as often as they could. Leaders and governors are aware of this issue. They are taking steps to drive improvement but it is too soon to see the impact. In the past, disadvantaged young children in the school have not achieved as well as other children nationally. Disadvantaged children now in the Reception class achieve well because of improved support for them and their parents.

A key strength of the school remains the positive attitudes and behaviour of pupils. They are keen, polite and well mannered. They want to learn. Staff and leaders focus closely and successfully on helping pupils to be ready for many of the opportunities of life in modern Britain. For example, pupils are respectful of differences between themselves and others. They understand how to respect rules and express differences of opinion appropriately. Even so, I identified that pupils do not have enough understanding of different faiths and religions.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Communication between staff and with parents is good. Leaders and staff discuss emerging concerns about pupils' well-being regularly. Leaders track and review not only the individual cases, but also the pattern of issues arising in the school. They maintain close links with external agencies to help pupils and their families. Child protection training for staff and governors is frequent. Staff receive regular extra updates from leaders about local and national safeguarding issues. Pupils benefit from regular, well-planned opportunities to learn about safety, for example such as how to stay safe when online. They told me they can share any concerns about school or home life with staff. Staff frequently share advice with parents about keeping pupils safe.

Inspection findings

- Governors at Hazel Grove have overhauled their work to review the school since the previous inspection. A new chair of the governing body has steered the governors on a strong path of improvement. Governors ask clear and considered questions of leaders about the work of the school. They do not accept all information at face value. Instead, they probe, test out and debate what leaders tell them. They visit the school frequently and with a well-planned focus. They keep careful records of their checks on the school. Governors use these insights to support their discussions. Governors are keen to do their best to assist the school, and update their training regularly. They make sure leaders have many opportunities to think about how the school can become even better.
- Pupils told me that the most popular subject in the school is mathematics. This is not because the teaching of the subject is too easy. This is because teaching is exciting and thought provoking and planned well. Leaders give staff more high-quality teaching resources, training and support. In 2016, one weakness that arose was the low attainment of some boys at the end of Year 2 in mathematics. Leaders' prompt and precise analysis of weaknesses is helping to improve learning in mathematics. Pupils now in Year 3 are catching up quickly in their learning. Staff now make sure that pupils grasp mathematical concepts through better use of problem-solving and reasoning. Pupils have good opportunities to revisit and deepen their learning. Staff help pupils to understand mathematics in real-life situations.
- Throughout the inspection, children's eagerness to learn and to talk proudly about their school shone through. Pupils love attending Hazel Grove. They talk excitedly about recent improvements in the curriculum. They respect the fact that people are different and unique. For example, they understand that disability does not prevent success. They understand that if included, all people can achieve much. Pupils respect that children may live in different types of family. Pupils feel that their views about the world matter to staff. They feel listened to and respected. Older pupils benefit from learning about topical issues, such as Britain's exit from the European Union. Pupils care about one another, their school and about the wider world. Although teaching covers faiths and religions, pupils' understanding of these is not well developed.
- Staff and leaders track information about the attendance of individual pupils carefully. Where concerns arise, staff act, for example, by making prompt telephone calls to parents. Staff arrange meetings with other agencies quickly where families need extra help. Clear arrangements help pupils catch up with missed work when they return to school. School information shows that disadvantaged pupils' attendance is starting to improve because of the individual help they receive. Leaders and governors are not complacent and they are pursuing further steps to make sure that the level of attendance rises over time.
- Leaders in the early years are focusing their work much more successfully on supporting the learning of disadvantaged children. They have challenged themselves and staff about disadvantaged children's achievement. Leaders identify the potential barriers that children face in their development. Leaders make sure staff use assessment of children's needs carefully to guide their teaching. The attainment and progress of current disadvantaged children in the Reception class has risen. The

difference between their achievement and the achievement of other children nationally is diminishing. The extra help for disadvantaged children and their parents is making a positive difference to children's learning at school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all disadvantaged pupils attend school as much as they should
- pupils have a well-developed understanding of the main faiths and religions found in modern Britain.

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

Yours sincerely

Tim Vaughan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, you and I observed teaching in some classes. We spoke with pupils and looked at their work. I met with you and other leaders to consider your reviews of the school and your plans for improvement. I met with some staff to hear about the school's work. I considered 17 responses from staff to an Ofsted questionnaire. I met with three members of the governing body, including the chair. I met with a representative of Stockport local authority. I reviewed 36 responses from parents to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View. I spoke with some parents as they dropped off their children at the start of the school day. I spoke with a random sample of 15 pupils from Years 3 to 6. I took account of 18 responses from pupils to an Ofsted questionnaire. I considered school arrangements to safeguard pupils. I reviewed checks made by the school on the suitability of staff to work with pupils.