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Mrs Delvyan Affleck
Principal
Hindley Green Community Primary School
Thomas Street
Hindley Green
Wigan
Lancashire
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Dear Mrs Affleck

Short inspection of Hindley Green Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 September 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in June 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. This is because you and your staff are rigorous in evaluating the effectiveness of your work. You identify precisely what needs to be improved and conduct research to identify what approaches have been successful in tackling a specific issue and how these might be adapted to your own circumstances. Most importantly, you evaluate the impact of any project that you put in place. You compare pupils' results at the beginning and the end, to make sure that time, money and resources have been used to good effect. In order to get an objective view of the impact of any project, you ask external staff to evaluate the work.

You draw very effectively on the expertise of your partners in the multi-academy trust and the local consortium of schools to help you with this work. In turn, you share your best practice with them. In addition, you ensure that successful practice in one part of the school is disseminated to other staff. For example, the model that you used to bring about rapid improvement in science in key stage 2 is now being adapted to tackle the underperformance in science at key stage 1. Where necessary, you also draw on the support available regionally and nationally. You are doing this currently to develop the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics further.

The data and information that we discussed show that you have been able to bring

about clear improvements in several aspects of the school's work. For example, you have improved the progress of pupils in key stage 1 and pupils' attainment in key stage 2. However, we agreed that there is still further work to be done to raise the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils.

The responsibility for raising standards is clearly shared across several levels of the school. Senior leaders work very closely and effectively together. You also have a strong team of subject coordinators who conduct regular analyses of pupils' progress in all subjects, to ensure that the breadth of the curriculum is matched by depth of learning.

You have worked very closely with parents to improve attendance, which is now broadly in line with national averages. Every one of the parents I spoke to was highly complimentary about the school, particularly about the care shown by staff.

The school is a very well ordered, purposeful community where staff work well together and have the best interests of the pupils at heart. Behaviour in and around the school is very good. I was particularly impressed to see how quickly the children in Year 1 had settled into the new routines, when they had only been in school a week. The pupils relate well to each other and to staff. They show respect for the building, which is kept spotlessly clean by the estates management team.

The school has strong governance. The directors are dedicated and knowledgeable. They have a detailed and accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development and hold you and your colleagues rigorously and regularly to account. They agreed that there is a need to refine the way in which they assess the impact of the physical education and sports funding.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Your records are up to date and detailed.

The pupils who met with me said that they enjoy coming to school. They feel safe both in school and on the way to and from school. Bullying is rare and, when it does happen, is dealt with effectively. Pupils know who should be contacted if they have any worries and are confident that they will receive any necessary help. Through their work in computing and science, they have been taught how to use electrical equipment safely and how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and social media. They have all been taught to swim. They know about road safety but are less sure about how to keep themselves safe near railway lines. Their views reflect those of the pupils who responded to the online questionnaire.

All the parents who met me and the great majority of those who responded to Parent View said that their children are safe and happy at the school. All the staff who responded to the questionnaire were also confident about the pupils' safety. The staff I spoke to knew precisely what to do if they had any concerns about safeguarding and had clearly been well trained.

Inspection findings

- Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills that are below what is typical for their age. Many face particular challenges with their speech and language. You have placed a specific focus on improving language in the early years. As a result, the children make rapid progress. In 2017, for the third year in succession, the proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development was above average. Therefore, as your self-evaluation indicates, provision in the early years continues to be strong.
- Given this good start to their education, I was interested to know why the reading and writing results for seven-year-olds were not as high as one might expect. Our discussions showed that, to a large extent, this was the result of staffing issues and the quality of teaching in one year group. You have made changes to the staffing and have brought in leaders and teachers from other schools in your academy trust to provide additional support in key stage 1. As a result, pupils' progress in reading and writing is now back on track. Through the work led by your assistant principal, progress in mathematics has increased rapidly. Results in the most recent national tests were above average. You now have very clear plans to build on this success by working with other schools locally and regionally.
- Science results for seven-year-olds are below average. In the past, this was also the case for 11-year-olds. At key stage 2, you introduced a project which led to dramatic improvements. Therefore, you are now using the same approach in key stage 1, with a view to bringing about a similar transformation.
- Attainment in reading at the end of key stage 2 has improved over the last three years. In 2017, the proportion of middle- and higher-ability pupils who reached the higher standard rose to be in line with, or above, the average for the previous year. The writing results for 11-year-olds have improved to above average. The proportion of pupils achieving greater depth has also increased. In mathematics, the proportion achieving the expected standard and the higher standard increased. However, results were still below the most recent national averages. Despite these overall improvements, the results for disadvantaged pupils in 2017 did not rise in the same way. I questioned you about this. You were able to show that in 2017, the great majority of the disadvantaged pupils had complex needs which affected their results. The school has received notification from the Department for Education and the local authority that, in view of the circumstances, the progress results for these pupils will be revised upwards when the figures for 2017 are validated.
- Another area that I explored with you was the progress made by pupils during their time in key stage 2. The most recent figures indicate that the progress made by the pupils who left the school this summer was below average. You were able to demonstrate that progress for pupils currently in the school is far stronger. For example, last June, the pupils in Year 5 sat the external tests to see how well they could do. On the basis of their results, you were able to demonstrate that these pupils had made considerable improvements from their starting points. Your analysis has been externally moderated by leaders from

within the trust and the local consortium of schools.

- In 2015, the attendance of girls and of pupils entitled to free school meals was worse than the national average. The attendance of pupils with a statement of special educational needs and/or disabilities or an education, health and care plan was in the lowest 10% of maintained schools nationally. Because of this, I asked you to provide me with attendance figures for the last two years. These showed that the attendance of girls, boys and pupils entitled to free school meals has risen to be broadly in line with the national average. The attendance for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was below average last year. This was the result of specific family circumstances relating to a very tiny number of pupils. These had a significant impact on the attendance figures for this small group of pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the difference between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils in the school is reduced further
- the information on the school's website on physical education and sports funding relates the outcomes to stated intentions, so that the reader has a clear understanding of how effectively it is being used.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the executive board, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Wigan. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Aelwyn Pugh
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I held meetings with you, the chief executive officer and the director of academy excellence. I met the key stage 1 and key stage 2 coordinators for mathematics, English and physical education and also spoke to other members of staff. I held a meeting with the chair of the board of directors, three directors and a member of the local advisory committee. I had a telephone conversation with the chair of the local school consortium. I visited lessons with you to observe teaching. I discussed safeguarding with you and the learning mentor and also with other members of staff. I met a group of nine pupils chosen at random from Years 3 to 6. I reviewed the 37 responses to the pupil survey, the 12 responses to the staff survey and the 43 responses to Parent View. I also spoke to parents as they brought their children to school and read correspondence from parents.