

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



9 November 2017

Mr D Stammers  
Headteacher  
Little Hoole Primary School  
Dob Lane  
Walmer Bridge  
Preston  
Lancashire  
PR4 5QL

Dear Mr Stammers

### **Short inspection of Little Hoole Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 17 October 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 September 2012.

#### **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 a welcoming and happy school. The school motto, 'Where children grow in self-esteem', underpins all that you do. Pupils and staff are keen to learn and challenge themselves to be the best that they can be. You have established a supportive and caring ethos where staff thrive and develop professionally. Staff who responded to the online survey state that they enjoy working at the school and are proud to be a part of it.

Since your appointment as headteacher, you have implemented a new leadership structure, which is enabling you to make improvements across the school. Throughout the inspection, it was evident that the leadership team and governors share your vision for the school. You and your deputy headteacher work as a highly effective team. Together, you are implementing improvements across the school.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and they are very proud to be part of it. They are polite and well mannered. Relationships between pupils and staff are supportive and respectful. As one pupil was keen to tell me, 'Teachers always listen to us.' As a result, pupils are eager to share their views and challenge themselves in their learning. Leaders have created an exciting curriculum, which ensures that pupils have a broad range of experiences. Consequently, pupils love learning and enjoy their time at school.

Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were very positive about the school. As one parent commented, 'The school has improved dramatically over the last five years. The opportunities that children experience are fantastic and the nurturing nature of teachers and support staff is excellent.' Parents value your leadership and the many changes that you have implemented. They say that leaders and teachers do everything they can to ensure that their children develop academically and socially. Many parents were keen to praise the rich opportunities that children experience across the wider curriculum.

At the last inspection, the lead inspector asked you to ensure that teachers challenge the most able pupils in mathematics. Over the last few years, published performance information has shown that this has been achieved. Enthusiastic leadership of mathematics has led the improvements across the school, implementing changes to improve teaching and learning. There have been many opportunities for staff to improve their teaching through training and sharing good practice. Teachers use assessment to plan tasks that match pupils' abilities. This is particularly strong in key stage 2, where there are many opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. Work in pupils' books and the lessons observed demonstrate that the most able pupils achieve well.

The previous inspection also reported that leaders needed to further develop the roles of senior staff and middle leaders. This was to ensure that they evaluate the quality of teaching and the impact it has on pupils' learning and progress. You and your leadership team have established effective monitoring systems and now analyse assessment information to improve the learning and progress of pupils. Leaders review and evaluate teaching regularly in all subjects so that outcomes are good.

Finally, the previous inspection reported that leaders needed to ensure that strong practice was shared. You have created many opportunities that allow teachers to learn from each other, review teaching and improve their skills. Leaders have developed a strong relationship with a local primary school, which enables teachers who teach the same year group to work and learn together. Through this effective partnership, teachers have had many opportunities to improve the curriculum and their teaching. As a result, most teachers have high expectations and use their good subject knowledge to plan interesting lessons.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding arrangements across the school, including in the early years, are fit for purpose. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Safeguarding policies are up to date and reflect the most recent changes to government legislation. All staff and governors understand their roles in keeping children safe. Systems established in the school alert leaders quickly to any concerns staff may have. You have also established effective relationships with external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe. Leaders have ensured that vetting procedures for the recruitment of staff and governors are thorough.

Pupils were all in agreement that they feel very safe at school and bullying does not happen. They are proud of their teachers and say that all staff would support them if they had any concerns. Pupils are highly positive about the warm and caring relationships that they have with staff and each other. As a result, pupils love coming to school and attendance is consistently good. There are many opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to learn about how to stay safe, especially when they are online. Parents share the view that the school has created a very caring ethos where children feel safe and happy.

## **Inspection findings**

- This inspection focused on a number of key lines of enquiry. The first of these looked at how effectively leaders are improving reading and writing in key stage 1. This was because, in 2017, achievement was below the national average. In previous years, achievement in key stage 1 was in line with the national average. There was instability in the teaching staff in key stage 1 in 2017 and this affected pupils' progress. The lessons we observed and the work in pupils' books identified a lack of challenge for some pupils in key stage 1. Teachers do not always use assessment to match learning activities to pupils' abilities. You are well aware of the improvements required and have acted swiftly to start to address this. Although you have secured support from learning consultants to improve teaching and learning, you agreed that this was an area that needed to improve further.
- The second key line of enquiry related to how leaders are using the funding for disadvantaged pupils to ensure that the most able within this group achieve at the highest standard. This was because the most able disadvantaged pupils have achieved below the national average at the highest standard for a number of years. Leaders use the funding effectively for the few disadvantaged pupils in the school to remove any barriers to learning. Information shows that pupils making slow progress are identified and targeted support is swiftly implemented. All staff are involved in regular reviews and discuss the progress that these pupils are making. As a result, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, make good progress across the school. Leaders are keen to continue this good practice. They are ambitious in their efforts to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve to the best of their abilities.
- Another key line of enquiry considered the progress that key stage 2 pupils make in writing. This was because progress in writing in previous years was below the national average. Leaders evaluate the teaching of writing across the school and have implemented targeted training to improve teachers' subject knowledge. There is now a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics, spelling, punctuation and grammar across the school. Pupils use their improved skills to good effect in their writing. This is evident in pupils' work and in the lessons we observed. As a result of these changes, achievement in writing in key stage 2 is beginning to improve. However, you acknowledge that progress is still not as rapid as you would like. We also agreed that pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length across the curriculum.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide pupils with more opportunities to write across a wider range of subjects
- recent improvements in the quality of teaching in key stage 1 bring greater challenge so that pupils make accelerated progress across the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Julie Kynaston  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, the business manager and a teacher. I spoke with members of the governing body and an officer from the local authority. I spoke with a group of pupils and other pupils around the school. Documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation document, the school's improvement plan, external audits, attendance information and safeguarding checks. I reviewed pupils' achievement records and your checks on the quality of teaching. I also visited lessons with you to speak with pupils and look at examples of their work. I observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and as they moved around the school. I examined child protection information and minutes of meetings of the governing body. I took account of responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 36 free-text responses. I also took account of 14 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and 73 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire. I completed a review of the school's website.