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Miss Claire Slade
The Hayes Primary School
Hayes Lane
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Dear Miss Slade

Short inspection of The Hayes Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 10 January 2018, 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 November 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. The period since that time has been a turbulent one, with three changes of headteacher. You have, in a relatively short period of time, accurately assessed the school's strengths and rightly prioritised areas needing improvement. You shared your evaluation with governors and developed plans to bring about improvements. These have rapidly made a positive impact by improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and outcomes. You established a new set of school values, characterised by the phrase 'To be the best you can be'. It is clear from my discussions with staff, parents and governors that these values have been influential in establishing a new direction for the school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive. They feel confident in your leadership and know that you are readily available.

The governing body has changed since the previous inspection and governors initiated a review of their effectiveness. This audit identified areas where further training and expertise was needed. The appointment of new governors has improved the collective knowledge they can draw on to fulfil their duties. They are fully committed to improving the school and work effectively with you.

It is a sign of your strong leadership that staff are well motivated to improve their practice. You and your leaders analysed the areas where pupils could do even better and this led to immediate changes. These can be seen, for example, in the improved outcomes of pupils in Year 6. However, you know that the progress of some pupils, in particular the most able, could be accelerated further and you have rightly identified this as an area for improvement.

You have introduced a new curriculum into the school with the aim of making learning more interesting and ensuring that key skills are taught across the curriculum. You are providing pupils with a diverse curriculum which broadens their minds and helps them to think critically about the world. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning and are well motivated to do their best. Leaders ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is promoted well.

Pupils work hard with positive attitudes. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. Pupils respect each other and collaborate well. They are kind and caring towards adults, visitors and each other. They take care with the presentation of their work and are proud of their progress. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and particularly cite the 'inspirational headteacher'; they are particularly appreciative that the values you teach at school are having a positive impact at home.

Safeguarding is effective.

You rightly place a high priority on keeping pupils safe and this is permeating across your school community and creating a culture where everyone puts pupils' safety first. Every pupil I spoke to and every parent who completed the Parent View questionnaire said that the pupils are safe in school. Pupils know whom to go to if they are worried and they are confident that adults will sort out their concerns. Pupils are aware of many of the risks they face, including 'stranger danger', road safety, e-safety and fire safety.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are suitably trained and understand their responsibilities. Leaders who have specific responsibility for safeguarding are alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. They regularly involve external agencies when necessary so that pupils and families receive support. Indeed, leaders are tenacious in their efforts to ensure that pupils receive the help they need from other agencies.

You provide parents and carers with useful information about their children's safety. For example, you led a workshop to help parents keep their children safe when using the internet.

Inspection findings

During the inspection, I met with you to agree the following lines of enquiry: how well leaders have increased the most able pupils' progress in reading and English grammar, punctuation and spelling, to enable pupils in key stage 2 to reach the higher standards; how successful leaders have been in improving most-able boys' reading by the end of key stage 1; and the effectiveness of phonics teaching.

- While the most able pupils achieved the expected standards in reading and English grammar, punctuation and spelling at the end of key stage 2 in 2017, few exceeded them. Particularly given the pupils' starting points, this represented disappointing progress from key stage 1 in reading, even when some mitigating factors were taken into account.

- You responded by quickly providing high-quality training for staff. Teachers are now better able to plan work to develop pupils' reading and writing skills at the higher standard. You also looked at what further improvements could be made. As a consequence, you identified the key stage 1 curriculum as an area for improvement, particularly offering more structure to the teaching of English, grammar, punctuation and spelling. This work continues.
- Currently, most-able pupils are making faster progress across key stage 2. Work in pupils' books and assessment information show that more pupils are working to a greater depth in both reading and English grammar, punctuation and spelling. However, pupils told me that, while they are challenged during guided reading lessons, they need more help to choose and read books with the same high level of demand for personal and home reading.
- In 2017, too few boys reached the higher standard in reading and writing at the end of key stage 1. The school has worked hard to accelerate the progress of boys by raising expectations and giving extra help. Additionally, fundamental changes have been made to the curriculum, which is now more interesting for boys, to encourage them to fulfil their potential.
- As a result of the school's work, there is now only a small gap between boys and girls in the current Year 1 and 2. There is also little difference between the achievement of most-able girls and boys.
- Finally, we looked at the effectiveness of the teaching of phonics. I noted the significant improvement since 2015 in the proportion of Year 1 pupils meeting the expected standard in the phonics screening check. We looked at the actions taken by the school to bring about this improvement.
- You introduced more structure to the teaching of phonics, trained staff to deliver high-quality lessons and checked progress regularly. The impact was an acceleration of pupils' progress and higher standards. In 2017, phonic outcomes were above national expectations.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are given extra help to choose and read a range of challenging books for personal and home reading.
- More structure is developed in the teaching of English grammar, punctuation and spelling across key stage 1.

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

Yours sincerely

Sir Robin Boshier
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you and discussed the school's self-evaluation information about pupils' progress and improvements since the last inspection. Together, we did a 'learning walk' through key stages 1 and 2. We observed teaching and learning in classrooms and looked at a range of pupils' work in books. I analysed reading records. I met with pupils to talk about their reading habits, their experience of school life and how safe they feel. I held meetings with governors, the local authority school improvement partner and the lead for safeguarding. I looked at a range of written evidence, including the school's self-evaluation form, the school improvement plan, the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding. I took account of the views of 209 parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, their written comments and the views of parents who spoke to me before the start of the school day and at the Year 6 coffee morning. I also took account of the views of 22 members of staff and also the views of pupils I met during the day.