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Mr Matt De Freitas
Hawes Down Primary School
The Mead
West Wickham
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Dear Mr De Freitas

Short inspection of Hawes Down Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 February 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 your predecessor schools, Hawes Down Infants and Junior Schools, were judged to be good in January and July 2014 respectively.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has continued to provide a good quality of education in the new school since the last inspections.

You have overseen the recent amalgamation of Hawes Down Infants and Junior Schools in November 2017. You, together with your senior leaders and governors, have managed the merger well. Consequently you have identified areas of continuing priority, including ensuring that electronic information systems are fully functioning.

You have taken the most effective teaching and learning practices from the predecessor schools and implemented them across the new school. You have created a school environment where the sense of openness and commitment to improvement are central to the ethos of staff and pupils. You have received and taken on board detailed external advice, supported by your overarching multi-academy trust, Langley Park Academies.

Pupils told me that they are confident in their learning. Consequently, your pupils are able to give and take advice on improving their work. They also told me that the common reward system in key stages 1 and 2 helps them do their best. From my observations I found that pupils are punctual and support each other, and records suggest that they attend regularly.

Almost all parents are positive about the school. Some parents sought me out to tell me how safe and happy their children feel, and that when there were issues staff deal with them quickly and sensitively.

You have an excellent working knowledge of the local special educational needs offer and use this to give the best advice to pupils and parents on their future destinations. You have invested in provision for pupils with severe and complex communication needs. They attend your specialist setting, the Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP). In the ARP, pupils receive an individualised programme of study and enjoy lessons delivered by specially trained teachers within a safe learning environment.

Staff morale is high. Skilled teachers are supported by experienced subject leaders. You rightly prioritise the teaching of literacy and numeracy, but not at the expense of other subjects. The school's wide-ranging curriculum includes themed work which helps broaden pupils' learning. The Eco Committee has been engaged in an Eco Schools scheme and has recently received an award for its work.

The newly reconstituted governing body includes parents and members of the community from both predecessor schools. It concentrates on the needs of all pupils. Through support and challenge the governing body effectively holds leaders to account.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and are a priority focus for all members of staff. Pupils receive and understand age-appropriate information on staying safe, including the use of the internet, and pupils know how and when to seek help.

As designated safeguarding lead, you ensure that staff training is frequent and that you and your deputies keep up to date with current best practice. You have thorough safeguarding records that detail the suitability of all members of staff to work with children and the training that they receive. Regular meetings focus on pupils' welfare and needs, and track the interventions instigated by staff. The school's work with the local authority and other agencies is timely and supports pupils and parents.

Inspection findings

- At our initial meeting we discussed the progress and ambition of the school and the areas that you have identified for improvement and we agreed on key lines of enquiry for the inspection.
- The first line of enquiry focused on the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils. This was an area identified in both inspection reports from the predecessor schools.
- From the evidence I gathered within lessons and work scrutiny over time, I saw a consistent approach to teaching that has a positive effect on pupils' outcomes.

Pupils are happy in lessons, they have a strong sense of direction and embrace high teacher expectations. They have an excellent attitude towards their learning, are polite and well mannered.

- The school feedback and marking policy is used consistently across all year groups. Teachers quickly identify and share the gaps in pupils' learning. As a result, pupils take ownership of their work and make improvements. Pupils are passionate readers, confident in reading aloud and use their phonics knowledge well.
- You are tracking the progress and achievement of pupils. Accordingly you have identified underachievement in some groups of pupils. Appropriate intervention and support is in place and you recognise that this is a continuing priority.
- The second line of enquiry evaluated how the school had managed the transition from two schools to one. Prior to the inspection, the school website contained inconsistent information. You were quick to rectify this and the school now meets its statutory requirements. Although you have had technical difficulties on moving pupil data on to a central system, you have kept pupil information up to date.
- The newly formed senior leadership team consists of leaders from the predecessor schools. The management of the new school is strong and has the capacity to deal with all the effects of the merger. Communication with parents has been positive and members of the school community are aware of the issues regarding harmonisation.
- We agreed that the third line of enquiry would focus on leadership and management. The newly formed governing body knows the school well and governors have an appropriate range of skills. They have contributed to managing the recent significant change effectively.
- The leadership team of the school has a strong collective vision for the school, and leaders share this openly with all members of the school community.
- Pupils' attendance is consistently better than for all pupils nationally.
- Middle leaders are well trained and support staff effectively. They share the positive ethos of the school with pupils and staff alike.
- Leaders ensure that the information gathered on pupils' progress is accurate, checking it with other schools locally. They use this knowledge to ensure that pupils at the school are challenged and extended. There is consistency, in the new school, to hold staff to account on improving progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- specific underachievement in the progress of key stage 1 pupils is identified quickly and leaders take rapid action to improve pupils' progress
- electronic systems that are used to monitor and track children are fully embedded and harmonised within the new school.

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

Yours sincerely

Jason Hughes
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

The following activities took place during the inspection:

- meetings were held with senior leaders, a group of middle leaders and governors
- teaching was observed jointly across the school with you
- pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 were heard reading
- a range of school documents, including policies and safeguarding records, governors' minutes and the school website, were scrutinised
- a range of pupils' books were reviewed during lessons
- discussions were held with pupils
- teacher surveys were analysed
- the 155 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, were considered
- I also had conversations with parents in the playground.