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Mr Aaron Sumner
Headteacher
Hallfield Primary School
Hallfield Estate
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Dear Mr Sumner

Short inspection of Hallfield Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 March 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 October 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

With the support of an able senior leadership team, you provide a very clear sense of direction for the school. You have ensured that the areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. Since you were appointed as headteacher in September 2015, you have developed a common curriculum structure that underpins the teaching and learning in your school. This structure ensures a clear progression of knowledge and skills, which pupils are expected to learn across subjects in all year groups. Phase leaders offer teachers timely support during planning sessions to ensure that pupils receive effective learning experiences. As a result, pupil outcomes in national examinations have been similar to, and, in some cases, above national average. You are aware, nonetheless, that disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 need to be stretched and challenged so that a higher proportion of them achieve the greater depth standard in reading and mathematics.

Staff are highly supportive of you. All those who responded to Ofsted's online survey say that they enjoy working at the school and are proud to do so. They feel that the school has a culture that encourages calm and orderly conduct, and that school leaders are aspirational for all pupils. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about your leadership and the quality of education provided by the school for their children. They appreciate that you are approachable. They are also very complimentary of the work of teachers. One parent commented: 'Teaching staff know the children very well and they individualise instruction to a child's appropriate level.'

The pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. They relate well to adults and to visitors, and talk enthusiastically about their work. They take good care of each other. They attend school regularly and arrive on time. They enjoy learning, concentrate well, are articulate and are rightly proud of their many achievements inside and outside the classroom.

Governors are well informed and provide strategic support to you and the school. They know the school well, drawing on a range of sources of information to reach an accurate view of it. They have a good mixture of skills, including in finance and education. Governors are ambitious and offer the right balance of support and challenge. They are confident in the strength of your leadership of the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders, including governors, have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. They ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. As a result, pupils feel safe in school and they know that they can share any concerns with their teachers. Pupils have a very clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe, at school, at home or online. Pupils talk confidently about different ways to be safe when accessing the internet. The curriculum strongly supports pupils' safety.

The site is secure and entry to the building is strictly controlled. You have appropriate systems for checking on the suitability of adults in the school to work with children. In cases where pupils and families require support from external agencies, leaders have been proactive and vigilant in their communications and record-keeping.

Inspection findings

- For the first line of enquiry, we agreed to look at pupils' achievement in reading, particularly with regard to pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. For the last two years, pupils' progress in reading at the end of key stage 2 was close to the national average. However, in both key stage 1 and key stage 2 a much lower proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieved at greater depth than was the case nationally for other pupils. You are aware of this and you have been working closely with other schools in the borough to address this.
- Visiting lessons and looking at books in key stage 2 show that you have reviewed your approach to the teaching of reading. There are now plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop the more sophisticated skills of inference and deduction. Teachers are effective at probing pupils' understanding of texts. As a result, current assessment information shows that a high proportion of pupils in key stage 2, including disadvantaged pupils, are working at greater depth in reading.
- In key stage 1, pupils show highly developed phonics knowledge, which they use to access a wide variety of reading materials. They receive plenty of opportunities to practise their reading. However, teachers do not encourage disadvantaged pupils to develop their reading comprehension skills further. As a consequence, still only a few of the disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 achieve the greater depth in reading.
- We also agreed to look at mathematics in key stage 1. Attainment in mathematics overall was strong in 2016 and 2017. However, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving greater depth in this subject was lower than the national average.

- Pupils use a variety of mathematical vocabulary accurately in their work, and they make good progress in developing their problem-solving skills. This is because of the plentiful opportunities that pupils have to apply mathematics across the curriculum. Most pupils use mathematical tools and equipment effectively, and these help them to develop a strong number sense. They are provided with activities to practise and consolidate their arithmetic skills. However, teachers are just starting to provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding across all strands of mathematics. Work in books show that the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are not challenged enough to achieve greater depth in mathematics through key stage 1.
- Finally, we considered the breadth of the curriculum and to what extent it provides opportunities to develop pupils' skills. Leaders have developed a curriculum that is broad and balanced. Teachers ensure that history, geography and other subjects are embedded into topic work, and this provides a curriculum that adds interest to learning.
- Pupils' achievement in the wider curriculum is strong. In science, pupils regularly undertake scientific investigations. They are encouraged to explore the world around them and to develop their scientific knowledge. You have established a partnership with a local secondary school, taking advantage of their facilities and expertise to enhance pupils' learning in science.
- The teaching of the arts across the school is strong. Work in books and in classes' collective portfolios shows that there is a clear progression of skills in the teaching of art. These skills are developed by pupils working on different materials, art forms and techniques. Pupils learn about classic and modern artists, from the ancient Greeks to Leonardo da Vinci. They also consider the works of modern artists like those of British landscape artist, David Hockney. The teaching of music is thorough. Pupils benefit from the expert teaching of a music specialist. One pupil said she likes her music lessons in school 'because it is another way of expressing my emotions'.
- Modern foreign language lessons are equally effective. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils produce lengthy, sophisticated paragraphs in Spanish.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 achieve the greater depth standard in reading
- in key stage 1, the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are stretched and challenged so they achieve at greater depth in mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Edison David
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this short inspection, I discussed the work of the school with you and with members of the senior leadership team. I also considered responses to Parent View, the pupil survey and the staff survey. I spoke to a number of pupils to discuss their experiences in lessons, the extent to which they feel safe, and also their views on learning and behaviour in general. I held discussions with the local authority's representative. I met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, who were able to provide additional information. I also considered documentation provided by the school and information posted on the school's website. I looked at the single central record and the analysis of pupils' attendance. Together with school leaders, I visited classes to observe learning and I looked at samples of pupils' work across all subjects. I listened to pupils read from across the ability range.