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Mrs Rutinderjit Mahil-Pooni
Headteacher
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Moorhouse Road
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Dear Mrs Mahil-Pooni

Short inspection of Kenmore Park Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 15 May 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 July 2014.

This school continues to be good.

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

Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in the school population, including the languages spoken by pupils. Additionally, there has been an increasing number of pupils moving into and out of the school during the academic year. Many of the new pupils arrive with little experience of school and have additional learning needs. You and your staff team work hard to settle them quickly so that they can make as much progress in their learning as possible. The proportion of boys in the school has also increased in recent years. You have altered aspects of the curriculum to encourage their engagement in learning. We saw this in action. On our visits to lessons, we saw boys focused on their learning and enjoying activities that captured their interests well.

One of the key strengths of the school is your work with parents and carers. For example, you run regular parent and pupil sessions on phonics and reading. Consequently, parents are well equipped to support their children's learning and development. They are full of praise for the efforts of your team. Your emphasis on professional development is appreciated by staff and has led to a sharper focus in their planning of learning opportunities for individual pupils. Additionally, it has led to greater leadership capacity across the school, resulting in several of your staff becoming effective senior leaders.

The previous inspection report identified the need for teachers to match pupils' abilities to their learning needs. This has been addressed effectively through your investment in a

programme focusing on learning behaviours. Staff are providing more individualised support for pupils, and in turn pupils are taking greater responsibility for their own learning.

You have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Your work with the local authority and the Harrow Schools' Teaching Alliance has led to a shared understanding of national assessment thresholds and improvements in the teaching of phonics. You have rightly identified the need to continue to embed the recent initiatives in reading. You and your leadership team acknowledge that the work that has been started to strengthen the identification of children's next steps in learning needs embedding throughout the early years.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Detailed, high-quality records show that you work closely with external agencies and your colleagues in the junior school to support the pupils in your care. You are unafraid to challenge decisions you disagree with to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. You make sure that all staff are trained regularly and understand the school's safeguarding systems. School records demonstrate that a range of staff have reported their concerns about pupils' welfare confidently and in line with the school's procedures.

Your governors work closely with you and your deputy headteacher to monitor safeguarding procedures across the school. Additionally, governors meet regularly with pupils to gain their views and understanding of safeguarding. This has led to a more systematic approach to teaching online safety, which pupils speak about knowledgeably. Pupils enjoy school, feel safe and can share their worries with a member of staff. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about their children's safety in school.

Inspection findings

- Initially, we agreed to look at the progress pupils make in reading from the end of the early years to the end of key stage 1. Last year, not enough pupils met the expected standards compared to pupils nationally, despite these pupils attaining above the national standards at the end of early years. We looked closely at the progress of middle attainers because this group did not make sufficient progress to meet the standard of similar pupils nationally. You explained that last year many of the pupils had joined key stage 1 with little or no pre-school experience. They had entered the school working well below the standard expected for their age, leading to a drop in the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard at the end of Year 2.
- You have worked closely with all staff and the local schools' alliance to improve the quality of phonics teaching. This work has been successful, leading to above national standards in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 in 2017. You and your literacy leader have also established more opportunities for pupils to develop their comprehension skills and to read regularly with staff. Regular reading lessons are carefully planned to provide tailored support for pupils, so they can apply their phonic knowledge to read unfamiliar words and develop good comprehension skills. Teaching assistants are skilful in their questioning and use resources effectively to develop

pupils' vocabulary and understanding of texts.

- The teaching of reading is consistent across all classrooms. The learning environment provides pupils with many useful aids, such as the display of key vocabulary and reading targets, to help them improve their reading. Pupils read with fluency and accuracy. They use their phonic knowledge and their 'reading toolkit' well to read unfamiliar or unknown words. They talked enthusiastically about the comprehension work they do and how it helps their reading. Pupils enjoy the reading time they have with their parents and adults in school. This links to your expectation of adults hearing each child read once a week, although you appreciate that these approaches need to be embedded and refined to meet pupils' individual needs.
- The success of your focus on reading is clear in your current assessment information and in my visits to classrooms. Most pupils currently in Years 1 and 2, who left the early years at the expected standard, are on track to meet the end-of-year expectation for their respective year groups. Your work has also ensured that the most able pupils are making sufficiently strong progress in reading. Similarly, the information demonstrates that pupils who joined the school in key stage 1 from low starting points are making good gains towards meeting the standard expected for their age.
- We also agreed to focus on the progress made by children with different starting points in the early years. This is because the proportion of children achieving a good level of development and the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics has fluctuated over time. In 2017, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was below the national average.
- Children enter the Reception Year with knowledge, understanding and skills that are typically below those for children of their age. Your detailed and accurate analysis of children's learning shows that children are currently making strong progress in all areas of learning. Most children in the Reception Year are well on track to meet the national figures for 2017.
- You and your recently appointed early years leader have already identified the need to further improve the early years provision as a school improvement priority. You have identified accurate development priorities, which focus on improving the quality of learning. You have made changes to the assessment and planning procedures, and these have led to a stronger focus on individual children's learning needs. Children's 'learning journeys' are increasingly related to their starting points and provide a greater focus on the progress that they make. You agree that this remains a work in progress. Your early years leader is working closely with staff to continually develop accurate assessment opportunities to inform their planning and meet children's learning needs.
- On my visits to the early years classrooms with your deputy headteacher, we saw children participating in a range of stimulating learning activities, both in the indoor and outdoor areas. For example, children were excitedly finding matching rhyming word cards under the canopy to support their reading skills. The new outdoor learning environment is being used well to provide learning opportunities across all areas of learning. You continue to refine the link between indoor and outdoor learning activities, for example in the provision of reading and writing opportunities. Children learn happily alongside one another, sharing resources and cooperating with each

other. There are well-established routines, which help to develop children's independence. Focused teaching activities promote children's reading, writing and mathematics skills well through effective questioning and use of resources. Adults engage enthusiastically with the children and encourage them to persevere in their learning. However, sometimes adults do not make the best use of opportunities to extend children's learning further. You agree that adults' identification of individual children's next steps in learning could be even better. Parents spoke of excellent communication between home and school and of how well the school develops their children's independence.

- Finally, we agreed to look at how school leaders are addressing pupils' absence, to ensure that pupils make as much progress in their learning as possible. The school's attendance figures have been below the national average for three years. In addition, the school's level of persistent absence in 2017 rose sharply and was above the national figure.
- Your unwavering focus on improving attendance rates is paying off. You act swiftly to work with parents when a pupil's attendance falls below your agreed threshold. You also work closely with the court attendance officer when attendance does not improve. Equally, your encouragement of good attendance is appreciated by pupils and parents, leading to the highest number of classes ever achieving 100% weekly attendance. As a result of your initiatives, the whole-school level of attendance is currently higher than in previous years and closer to the national figure. Additionally, the rate of persistent absence is also in line with national figures. You rightly appreciate that attendance needs to be a constant focus for the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they embed current reading initiatives to ensure that pupils in key stage 1 continue to make strong gains in their reading to meet and exceed the expected standards
- strategies to identify children's next steps in learning in the early years are fully embedded so that children make even better progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Ridding
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspection started with a discussion about the context of the school, your self-evaluation and what you and your deputy headteacher consider to be the current strengths of the school. We also agreed the areas we would look at. I went on learning walks with your deputy headteacher. We visited all classrooms and the outdoor learning environment. We looked at children's learning journals together. On visits to classrooms, I spoke to some children and staff. I also spoke to a group of pupils and listened to them read. I met with two leaders and two governors and spoke to the chair of the governing body on the telephone. I discussed safeguarding with the school finance and personnel officer and your deputy headteacher. I considered the responses from staff and children, and from parents and carers who responded to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey. I spoke briefly to a representative from the local authority. I scrutinised a range of documentation and information published on the school's website.