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20 June 2018

Mrs Amanda Jones  
Headteacher  
Hill View Primary Academy  
Hill View Road  
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Bournemouth  
Dorset  
BH10 5BD

Dear Mrs Jones

### **Short inspection of Hill View Primary Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 7 June 2018 with Steve Wigley, Ofsted Inspector, 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 school was judged to be good in December 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school. As headteacher, you have managed recent changes in leadership with great skill and creativity. The current leadership team has a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas that require further improvement. Although this is a large school, leaders and governors know their pupils well. They plan provision carefully so that it meets pupils' individual needs.

You exhibit high expectations and expect others to do the same. You hold staff rigorously to account for the quality of their teaching, as well as for the progress their pupils make. Where teachers' performance has fallen short of that required, you have dealt with it decisively but with compassion and sensitivity. This has ensured that the quality of teaching and, consequently, pupils' outcomes remain good across the school.

You have put in place a curriculum which pupils find engaging and which motivates them to learn. Staff have carefully considered the development of pupils' skills across different subjects. Cross-curricular links add purpose to pupils' learning and enable them to apply their skills and understanding in different subjects. Additionally, leaders have ensured that the school's focus on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in the curriculum.

The work of the governing body focuses sharply on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, as well as pupils' outcomes. Governors are frequent visitors to the school and work in partnership with leaders and staff. As a result, they know the school well.

Governors check the validity of the information you present them with thorough first-hand knowledge. They are reflective and constantly seeking to develop their expertise in carrying out their role.

The majority of parents are positive about the school and supportive of its work. Many parents who spoke with inspectors or responded to Ofsted's online survey commented on the school's holistic approach. For example, one parent wrote, 'Our daughter has made fantastic progress and her confidence has flourished. The school really considers the whole child, not just the progress that they make but how they can develop as a person.' However, nearly a third of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the information they receive regarding their children's progress. Additionally, a number of parents were unhappy with the way in which the school responds to their concerns.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Pupils say they feel safe in school. This is a view shared by an overwhelming majority of parents who completed the online survey. Pupils have a good understanding of the risks they face to their safety, both inside and outside of school. They are able to talk about the information you provide for them and describe strategies they would use to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils know about the dangers associated with online technology. Older pupils can explain what they would do if they were approached by a stranger. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare. Should they occur, pupils are confident that there is someone they can talk to.

The designated safeguarding lead has ensured that all members of staff have received up-to-date training. Staff are aware of their responsibility to keep children safe and are vigilant for any signs of abuse. At the time of the inspection, there were a number of omissions in the school's record of the checks it makes on the suitability of staff to work with children. These were rectified before the end of the inspection. However, you recognised that the school's oversight of safeguarding policy and procedures has not been sufficiently robust.

Leaders have developed effective partnerships with outside agencies, for example the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. You have a detailed understanding of pupils' needs and work extensively with families to provide the appropriate level of support. Your work to support vulnerable pupils is recorded with clarity and rigour.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the start of the day, we agreed the main areas of focus for the inspection. Firstly, we considered the impact of leaders' actions to raise girls' achievement in mathematics. In 2017, girls did not achieve as well as they should by the end of key stage 2. Similarly, the proportion of girls attaining greater depth in mathematics at the end of key stage 1 was lower than that of boys.
- Leaders and governors have reacted swiftly and effectively to this information. The school's 'mathematics learning team' has been proactive in identifying the barriers to girls' progress. It has established coaching sessions focused on addressing girls' preferred learning styles and building self-esteem and confidence. In our conversations,

girls told me that they like mathematics. They feel that they receive just the right amount of support and challenge.

- Inspection evidence demonstrates that there is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls currently in the school. Teachers have high expectations for all pupils and, as a result, pupils across the school are making good progress. Some teachers, however, do not explain mathematical concepts with sufficient clarity or precision. Additionally, although teachers are providing pupils with opportunities to apply their understanding of concepts, there are gaps in some teachers' understanding of reasoning. Consequently, in their planning, they use a narrow range of reasoning approaches to deepen pupils' understanding. This is limiting the proportion of pupils, both boys and girls, who are being challenged to work at the higher standards.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standards in reading was lower than for pupils nationally with the same starting points. Therefore, our second line of enquiry was to evaluate the effectiveness of leaders' actions to raise the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standards in reading.
- In conjunction with the 'English learning team', you have recently developed the school's strategy for the teaching of reading. This new approach is having a positive effect on pupils' reading stamina and the development of higher-order reading skills. Teachers' planning is detailed and matched accurately to pupils' needs. Teachers have selected texts which are appropriate for pupils' ages and provide them high levels of challenge. Reading is linked to other subjects across the curriculum. For example, Year 6 pupils' study of the book 'Pig-Heart Boy' accompanies their science topic 'Have a Heart'. This cross-curricular approach is engaging pupils and adding purpose to their learning.
- Our next line of enquiry was to consider the progress of low prior-attaining pupils and pupils who have special education needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. This was because, in 2017, the proportion of these pupils who achieved the standards expected for their age was below that of other pupils nationally with the same starting point.
- Leaders, including the SEN and/or disabilities coordinator (SENDCo), have a detailed understanding of pupils' individual needs. In consultation with parents and pupils, the SENDCo regularly checks that the help pupils receive remains appropriate and meets their needs. Pupils who spoke with an inspector talked positively about their learning and how adults support them. Across the school, there is a collective understanding that the progress and attainment of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is everyone's responsibility. This is ensuring that pupils are making good progress towards their personal targets. Feedback from parents of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities identified that some would appreciate more detailed information about the progress their children are making.
- Finally, we considered how leaders and governors are using information about pupils' outcomes to ensure that all pupils make strong progress from their starting points. This was because published assessment data shows some variance in the progress made by different cohorts and groups of pupils, for example disadvantaged pupils, the most able pupils and girls.
- In the past, weaknesses in the school's tracking system has limited leaders' abilities to identify pupils at risk of falling behind. However, the refinements you made to school processes contributed to stronger outcomes for pupils in 2017. Following this, leaders recognised that they needed to be able to check the progress of key groups with greater

precision. This led to the adoption of a new online system in September 2017.

- The school's current system is providing you with the information you require. Information, based on teacher assessments, is collated regularly and moderated for accuracy across year groups and the school. Leaders are making good use of this data to identify where pupils are making less progress than is expected of them. This information is used to plan interventions, as well as to hold teachers to account for pupils' outcomes. You are now beginning to use information you have about pupils' prior attainment to set ambitious targets for teachers and pupils. We agreed that assessment practices are not yet fully embedded so they have a demonstrable impact on pupils' outcomes, especially at the higher standards.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the teaching of mathematics continues to improve through ensuring that teachers use mathematical vocabulary with precision and adopt a range of strategies to deepen pupils' understanding
- governors and leaders at all levels maintain a rigorous oversight of safeguarding and, in particular, statutory recruitment checks
- they regularly review procedures for communicating and sharing information with parents about their children's progress, and take consideration of parental feedback
- the school's current system for tracking pupils' progress is embedded throughout the school, and used to raise the proportions of pupils working at the higher standards.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer of the Reach South Academy Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bournemouth. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Dyer  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, we met with you, the deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers. We discussed the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress and improvements made since the school became an academy in October 2015. Together with senior leaders, we observed pupils in classrooms and spoke with them about their learning. We also analysed work in pupils' books from across the school.

We had discussions with members of staff and four governors, including the chair of governors. I also met with the regional director of the Reach South Academy Trust. We looked at a range of written evidence, including documents relating to safeguarding. We

spoke with parents at the end of the school day and took account of the views expressed by 79 parents who completed the online survey, as well as their written comments. We also considered the views of staff and pupils who returned their questionnaires.