

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Mrs Deborah Ainscoe  
Headteacher  
Old Hall Primary School  
Springside View  
Bury  
Lancashire  
BL8 4LU

Dear Mrs Ainscoe

### **Short inspection of Old Hall Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 6 June 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 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You lead a very harmonious and welcoming school where pupils are encouraged to thrive. Your vibrant and engaging school curriculum reflects the school's motto, 'aspirational, inspirational, motivational'. Pupils welcome the many enrichment activities that you provide to enhance their learning.

Since the last inspection, you have worked with skill and determination and the school has gone from strength to strength. You have accurately identified the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders have recently changed the system used to measure pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. We agreed that you should use this improved and detailed information to be more precise in how you measure the effectiveness of actions in your plans for school improvement.

Governors share leaders' high aspirations for pupils. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. This is because they visit the school and look at pupils' work on a regular basis. Governors have a wide range of professional skills and keep their knowledge up to date with training. They use their skills to provide the right level of challenge and support for school leaders. Governors are taking the appropriate steps to make sure that the school's website is up to date.

Your skilled and enthusiastic staff welcome the many opportunities you provide them to improve their teaching by working together and with other schools and

professionals. You and your staff train other teachers developing their English, computing and early years curriculum. Your enthusiasm and expertise in these areas are evident in the rich learning experiences that you provide for pupils. Leaders place a strong emphasis on developing staff and mentoring students. One student teacher commented about his very positive training experience, describing 'a real sense of family and friendship throughout the school'.

Pupils are proud to be members of the school community and behave extremely well in lessons and around school. They are polite and keen to do their very best. Pupils told me how inclusive the school is. This is because staff teach pupils to welcome everyone and treat all with respect. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about extra-curricular opportunities that teachers provide, including computer coding, dance, football and art. They take pride in the many leadership opportunities that you give them, such as 'Gadget Geeks', who help teachers and other pupils in computing lessons.

The vast majority of parents and carers share pupils' and teachers' positive views about the school. They are appreciative of hardworking staff for providing a wide range of extra-curricular clubs. Parents of children who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities were keen to praise staff for the support their children receive. Comments were typified by one parent who described a 'fully inclusive school where children's varied needs are fully supported and met'.

At the previous inspection in 2014, inspectors asked leaders to improve the progress made by pupils, including the most able, in mathematics. You have improved the teaching of mathematics and ensured that pupils make the progress that they should. Leaders and teachers carefully identify pupils' gaps in learning. This ensures that the work that pupils receive matches their abilities. Skilled staff in Reception make sure that children quickly develop their early skills in number. In key stage 1 and 2, teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills. Pupils are confident when carrying out written calculations. As a result of improvements that you have made this year, standards in mathematics have risen and pupils achieve well. Your checks on learning show that higher proportions of pupils are working at expected and higher standards across key stage 1 and key stage 2.

In response to the previous inspection, you have also improved how pupils learn to write and this is a strength of the school. Leaders are passionate about developing pupils' writing skills and have devised a carefully planned and vibrant English curriculum. Children in Reception get off to a flying start in developing their early writing and are well prepared for Year 1. They are able to write with concentration and at length, using the skills that they have learned. Throughout the school, you place a strong emphasis on using high-quality texts and novels to inspire pupils' writing. Through engaging activities, you enthuse pupils and develop their understanding of the texts that they are reading. For example, pupils in Year 6 talked with excitement about dressing as evacuees and going on a train journey as part of their study of 'Goodnight Mr Tom'. Staff carefully develop pupils' editing and drafting skills. Pupils are confident in using these skills to improve their work and

produce writing that is of a high standard. I found that pupils enjoy writing and take immense pride in the quality pieces of work that they produce. As a result of skilled teaching, standards in writing have risen to well above national averages by the end of key stage 2.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. You provide staff with regular training so that they understand the current guidance. You ensure that all necessary checks are made on the suitability of staff to work with children and you check on visitors to the school.

Leaders diligently follow up concerns and make sure that pupils are safe. You work well with a range of external agencies to support pupils' welfare, when necessary. Staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, including fire safety, bike safety and road safety. Pupil 'E Cadets' help teachers with regular lessons and assemblies about online safety.

Staff have developed a nurturing and caring approach which pupils value. As a result of such positive relationships, pupils are confident that they know who to speak to if they are worried. Pupils told me that bullying is very rare and that teachers quickly sort out any incidents.

### **Inspection findings**

- The inspection focused on a number of key lines of enquiry, the first of which was the provision made for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. I found that leaders provide effective teaching and support for this group of pupils. The Reception teacher works closely with parents and nurseries to ensure that children who have SEN and/or disabilities are receiving the right support from the moment they start school. Other staff continue this close partnership with parents and with other professionals to make sure that they meet pupils' varied needs. For example, staff accompany pupils to speech therapy appointments to ensure that support in school precisely matches pupils' needs. Staff have a range of skills, including sign language and speech therapy, which they use to support pupils' learning. Staff share their expertise to develop good practice across the school. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) checks these pupils' progress carefully to make sure that the support they receive is having the impact that it should.
- The second key line of enquiry was to check how leaders are using additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. You and your staff know these pupils well and carefully identify any barriers they have to learning. You use additional funding to enable disadvantaged pupils to receive effective support such as additional reading and extra tuition. Leaders also use funding to develop pupils' resilience and self-esteem by giving pupils opportunities such as taking part in residential trips. Teachers provide effective support for the most able disadvantaged pupils to make sure that they reach the higher standards in their

learning. For example, Year 6 pupils take part in 'maths magicians' and 'rocket writers' booster sessions to develop their skills. Evidence from books and your checks on learning show that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress in their learning. As a result of changes that you have made to how you measure pupils' progress, you now have more accurate information about the impact of how you spend this additional funding. We agreed that you should share this information with governors and publish a report annually on the school's website.

- During the inspection I found that pupils receive a very broad, balanced and engaging curriculum. Pupils told me that learning across the curriculum is interesting and fun. They relish the many trips and visits that enrich the school curriculum, such as a Year 4 trip to Skipton Castle as part of a history topic. During 'aspirations week', pupils design and make products to raise funds for a whole-school project. Pupils talked with enthusiasm about how much they enjoyed this opportunity to develop their creative skills and enterprise. Staff use the outdoor areas to enhance pupils' learning. During my inspection, Year 1 pupils were happily collecting natural materials from the school garden area which they were using to make carefully designed artwork. Pupils enjoy using the school's running track for a 'daily mile', fifteen minutes of running to promote their health and well-being.
- Your computing subject leader has planned an engaging computing curriculum which develops pupils' skills to a high standard. Pupils talked with enthusiasm about making animations, coding, programming and making videos. Pupils told me how proud they were to have won awards for their work in the inter-school computing competition.
- The school's website is informative and easy to navigate. It provides a useful source of information for parents. However, at the start of the inspection the website was not up to date in some areas. For example, there was no information published on the impact of funding for disadvantaged pupils last year. The school's equality policy was available in school but not published on the school's website. Information about governance was also not published. You are in the process of improving the website and are taking steps to ensure that this information is published.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they use more precise criteria by which to measure the effectiveness of actions in their plans for improvement, which focus firmly on pupils' progress and achievement
- they analyse and report on the impact of funding for disadvantaged pupils
- the school's website is compliant and is carefully monitored to ensure that it remains so.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools

commissioner and the director of children's services for Bury. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Stevens  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you, your assistant headteachers, middle leaders and teachers. I met with the school's SENCo. I also spoke to six governors, including the chair of the governing body. I met with a representative of the local authority. I met with nine pupils from key stage 2 and spoke informally with other pupils during lessons. I visited classes with you, where I observed teaching and learning, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils. I also heard pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.

I took account of 27 free-text responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire. I also met with parents before and after school. I also took account of seven responses to the online staff questionnaire. I looked at a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings and pupils' behaviour logs. I evaluated safeguarding procedures, including policies to keep pupils safe, staff training records, safeguarding checks and attendance information. I undertook a review of the school's website.