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Emma Appelby
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Dear Mrs Appelby

Short inspection of Horsenden Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 November 2018 with Rekha Bhakoo, 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 the school was judged to be good in October 2014.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement, which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

Since joining the school in September, you have identified a number of key areas for improvement. You have been well supported by two newly appointed deputy headteachers. Together, you have brought greater rigour to the school and raised expectations and ambitions for pupils' learning and development. The last few months have been a time of significant change for the school. During this time, you have ensured stability, and, at the same time, introduced a number of important changes to the school. You have also retained the values and warm ethos of the school. Pupils are proud of their school, and told inspectors that, 'Teachers give us lots of opportunities and make learning fun.' Pupils enjoy coming to school, and this is reflected in their regular attendance. The majority of parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, would recommend the school.

Since the previous inspection, standards at the end of key stage 2 have been broadly similar to the national average in reading and writing. Pupils at the end of Year 6 perform much better in mathematics, and results have been consistently above the national average. However, children in the early years, and pupils in key stage 1, do not do as well. For the last three years, the number of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception has been below the national average. This is also the case at the end of key stage 1, where Year 2 pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been below the national

average. This is in terms of the number of pupils attaining the expected standard and the higher standard. These gaps have remained constant, and there has been little reduction in the gap between the school's and national results at the end of the early years and key stage 1 for the last three years.

Disadvantaged pupils have made below-average progress in reading for the last three years. In addition, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard in key stage 1 and key stage 2 is below that of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. These gaps have not shown any sign of closing, and have, in fact, widened.

Leaders have not ensured that teaching meets the needs of pupils to ensure that they achieve the standards of which they are capable. This has particularly been the case in early years and key stage 1.

Governors have a range of experience and expertise that they bring to their role. They are proud of the school and want all pupils to do well. However, until recently governors have had an inaccurate view of how the school is performing. In the past they have not sufficiently challenged school leaders about the areas of weakness. For example, governors have not held school leaders to account for how effectively the pupil premium grant has been used to secure improvement for disadvantaged pupils. However, they are now aware of the key areas for improvement and are beginning to focus their time on these areas.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and staff ensure that pupils are safe at school. Pupils told inspectors that incidents of bullying are rare and behaviour is good across the school. Pupils spoke positively about the new behaviour systems. They feel that the 'Place2Be' has been a good addition to the school, and many pupils commented on the positive impact this has had on their mental health and well-being. Pupils said the school is a safe place to be and know whom they can talk to if they have any concerns. They demonstrate a good understanding of how to stay safe, which is supported by their learning through the curriculum. The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire agreed that their children are safe, happy and well looked after.

Leaders have introduced a new safeguarding policy and embedded a culture of vigilance at the school. Regular training and updates for staff underpin this. Staff are aware of the different risks to pupils' welfare and are confident of what to do if they have any concerns. A new electronic system has been introduced to record concerns about pupils, which has helped leaders monitor this aspect of the school's work more closely. Necessary actions are taken promptly and are followed up effectively. The school works well with a range of external agencies in order to keep children safe.

Detailed checks are carried out when recruiting staff, governors and volunteers. This is systematically recorded on the single central record, which is checked for

compliance regularly.

Inspection findings

- In order to establish whether the school continues to provide a good standard of education, we agreed three key lines of enquiry for the inspection.
- Firstly, we agreed to focus on how effective the work of the school has been in improving pupils' attainment and progress in reading. For the last three years, pupils' attainment in reading at the end of key stage 1 has been much lower than nationally. At the end of key stage 2, progress in reading has been weaker than in writing and mathematics for the last three years.
- You have identified reading as an area for improvement on your school development plan. Leaders are determined to improve pupils' outcomes in reading and have implemented a number of new initiatives across the school. The reading hub and 'reading hall of fame' have helped to enthuse pupils about reading. This is resulting in a stronger reading culture across the school.
- Pupils have opportunities to select reading books at the correct level for their reading ability. This has meant that pupils are adequately challenged and read a wider range of books.
- Pupils are now given more time to read independently in English lessons, although there is still variability across different classes. Leaders are aware of this and are working with staff to promote a consistent approach to the teaching of reading across the school.
- These changes are beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of pupils' reading. However, pupils could still achieve more, especially with regard to developing their inference and deduction skills. There has previously been an over-reliance on pupils learning these key skills during the final years of key stage 2.
- The second area of focus was to explore how well leaders are ensuring the development of early reading skills. In 2017, phonics screening check results were below national levels, but increased to above national levels in 2018. We agreed to check how phonics is taught across the school and to identify what support is in place for pupils who do not achieve the expected standard.
- Pupils receive a daily phonics lesson that is well matched to their ability and need. However, in some of these lessons, additional adults do not support pupils as effectively as they could. This is an area that school leaders have identified for improvement.
- In phonics sessions, pupils' letter formation is not always strong, and could be improved further.
- Overall, the teachers' delivery of phonics lessons is sound. As a result, younger pupils receive a solid foundation in early reading and phonics skills. However, some teachers do not model the use of phonics consistently in other lessons.
- Our final key line of enquiry focused on how effectively the work of the school is improving the reading skills of disadvantaged pupils. This was because, over the

last three years, the progress of disadvantaged pupils in reading has been much lower than their peers, in school and nationally.

- Leaders now monitor the provision for disadvantaged pupils much more closely. They work with teachers to ensure planning meets the needs of disadvantaged pupils, and additional support is targeted to improve outcomes in reading for these pupils.
- Leaders are in the process of introducing a passport for each disadvantaged child. This will enable leaders to keep a record of pupil premium funding, additional support and opportunities made available for this group of pupils.
- As these initiatives are at an early stage, there has not been time for these to be embedded, and there is no measure of the impact on disadvantaged pupils' attainment and progress in reading.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the approach to the teaching of reading is embedded across the school
- middle leaders hold team members to account, and take responsibility for their pupils' progress
- adults are deployed effectively to support pupils in lessons and in bespoke interventions
- there is a programme of continuing professional development linked to school priorities, such as provision for the most able pupils
- attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils improves in reading, writing and 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 Ealing. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Nicholas Cornell
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your leadership team to discuss the school's effectiveness. Together, we visited lessons to observe pupils' learning, speak to pupils and look at their work. I also looked at a range of pupils' work in books. We met with the designated leaders for safeguarding, English, reading and phonics, the chair and vice chair of governors, and spoke to a group of pupils about their school. I reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including the school

leaders' self-evaluation document, the school development plan, assessment information and safeguarding information.

I considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as parents' written comments. We spoke to parents at the end of the school day to gather their views about the school. I considered the 48 responses from the members of staff who completed Ofsted's staff survey.