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Mr Glyn Ellis
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Ellis

Short inspection of Haslingden Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 November 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 February 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 have developed a culture of high aspirations for pupils, which is shared by staff and governors. These are reflected in the school's values of honesty, passion, self-belief, teamwork, determination and respect. These qualities have a positive impact on pupils' attitude to learning, their 'Diamond Power'.

Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection, and those who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, commented positively about the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) spoke highly of the help that their children receive from staff during activities based in the Bee Hive room. Parents particularly value the time you and your staff give to supporting pupils' social and emotional development and the well-being of the whole family. They appreciate the many opportunities you provide for their children. 'I couldn't have chosen a better school for my children; they love coming to school every day' typifies the many comments parents made.

Pupils are polite, well-mannered and care for each other. They enjoy the wide variety of clubs and activities on offer including instrumental lessons and sports clubs run by coaches. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously as members of the anti-bullying team and play leaders who organise games for the younger pupils at lunchtime. They talked enthusiastically about the residential trip to Wales because of the opportunity to challenge themselves and encourage others. Pupils

are proud of their school and have high aspirations for their future careers, for example as members of the emergency services, as artists and in animal rescue.

You and your staff have worked diligently to resolve the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Accurate evaluations allow you to quickly identify strengths and priorities for further improvement. Training for middle leaders enables them to support staff effectively. For example, teachers use assessment information accurately to identify the next steps in pupils' learning. Carefully designed learning activities challenge and support pupils effectively by building on their prior learning. Pupils know what they need do to improve their learning further, particularly in mathematics. Pupils who spoke to me said, 'We have a pit stop to assess if we've understood, then they give us challenges to really test our brains.' Teachers use questions effectively to encourage pupils to develop their ideas and expand on their explanations. Teaching assistants are deployed well to help pupils who are struggling to catch up quickly, particularly in phonics. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and staff appreciate the opportunities to work together in order to share their knowledge and expertise.

However, despite improvements in the way phonics is taught, some pupils struggle with fluency when they are reading. They do not always apply their phonic knowledge appropriately to improve the quality of their writing, particularly at a greater depth. Attendance is improving but there is still a high proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school. During the inspection, we discussed the next steps required to enable the school to improve further.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Appropriate checks are in place to ensure that all adults in school are suitable to work with children. This includes volunteers who help in school regularly. Training ensures that staff can identify any signs of neglect or abuse. Procedures are clearly understood by staff and governors. Leaders work effectively with other agencies to ensure that pupils are safe, and families receive the help and support that they need.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe including when they are online. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Pupils feel valued and listened to. They spoke confidently about having an adult in school they can talk with should they have concerns or worries. They value the guidance from the staff who are in the room set aside as a 'Place 2 Be'. Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take. They are confident that any rare incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and pupils are helped to make the right decision about how to behave.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we looked at several key lines of enquiry. First, we looked at attendance. You ensure that staff promptly follow up on any absences. You know your families extremely well and staff work to build trust and positive relationships, particularly with parents who speak English as an additional

language. You work closely with other professionals, outside agencies and charities to ensure that families receive the guidance and support that they need. Pupils understand the importance of attending school every day. As a result, attendance continues to improve and is in line with national figures and the number of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing. However, the persistent absence of a small proportion of pupils remains and this has a negative impact on overall attendance and hinders the progress that these pupils make.

- Next, we looked at how pupils with SEND are supported in school. A high proportion of pupils have SEND, including pupils who are supported by an education, health and care plan. Leaders gather information from different sources including parents, staff, other settings pupils attend and other professionals. They accurately identify the barriers to learning for pupils with SEND. Leaders ensure that training staff receive enables them to meet pupils' needs effectively. They provide opportunities for staff to share good practice and ideas with other colleagues, including colleagues from specialist provision. Pupils are supported effectively in whole-class sessions. Pupils also work in small groups or individually in a dedicated room called 'The Bee Hive'. Here, pupils receive the individualised help that they need from skilled staff. Pupils with SEND make good progress from their starting points, particularly in their reading.
- Leaders endeavour to ensure that pupils are emotionally prepared for learning. Leaders work effectively with several outside agencies and charities to provide pupils and their families with the social, emotional and pastoral support that they need. Parents who spoke to me commented positively about how much your staff have helped the whole family.
- I was also interested to see how phonics is taught. Leaders provide training for staff and check that phonics is taught effectively and systematically from Reception. Teachers' good subject knowledge has a positive impact on the good progress pupils make. The proportion of pupils who meet the phonics screening check in Year 1 is improving. Well-crafted activities ignite pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Teachers assess pupils' phonics knowledge and identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Staff provide the help that pupils need to catch up quickly.
- Pupils' work shows that although they use their phonetic knowledge in their own writing, for some pupils their presentation is weak, particularly in key stage 1. Some pupils struggle to read their own writing. This hinders their ability to improve their written work further, particularly when writing at greater depth.
- Teachers provide pupils with books to read that match their phonics skills. However, some pupils' over-reliance on decoding individual words has a negative impact on their fluency as readers. Teachers give parents advice on how they can help their children with their reading, for example written guidance in pupils' reading journals and through well-attended workshops.
- Finally, we discussed the actions you have taken to improve outcomes for children in Reception. Leaders work effectively with the number of early years providers children attend before they start school. Through a range of well-thought-out activities, staff quickly establish close relationships with children and their families. Parents commented positively about how quickly their children

settle into the well-established routines. Most children do not have the knowledge and skills typical for their age when they start school. Training for staff ensures that they use assessment information effectively to identify the next steps in children's learning. Teachers design well-crafted activities to ignite children's enthusiasm for learning. For example, a physical education session provided children with opportunities to develop confidence in their physical skills. Adults use questions effectively to encourage children to think about vocabulary to describe the direction of their movements. Children work together cooperatively by taking turns and helping each other. The positive relationships fostered in the early years contribute to the children's positive attitudes to learning and the good progress that they make. An increasing proportion of children are prepared well for Year 1.

- Staff identify children in the early years who are struggling and provide additional help, so they catch up with their peers. Children with SEND are supported well by skilled staff and are making good progress from their individual starting points.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- continue to build on the actions taken to improve attendance, particularly for pupils who are persistently absent
- build on the improvements in the teaching of phonics so that pupils improve their fluency as readers
- continue to improve pupils' presentation so that pupils are able to improve the quality of their writing, particularly at a higher standard in key stage 1.

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

Yours sincerely

Amanda Stringer
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, other members of the leadership team and staff. I also spoke with seven members of the governing body and had a conversation with representatives of the local authority. I visited classrooms with you, where I had the opportunity to speak with pupils and look at their work. I met with a group of pupils formally during the day and I spoke with several parents at the start of the school day. I took account of 42 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 156 responses to the pupil questionnaire. I also considered the 45 free-text comments and the 83 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for

parents. I scrutinised pupils' assessment information and a range of documentation, including the single central record.