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Mrs Helen Acton  
Headteacher  
Hatfield Woodhouse Primary School  
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South Yorkshire  
DN7 6NH

Dear Mrs Acton

### **Short inspection of Hatfield Woodhouse Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 5 February 2019, 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 2015.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school is a place where pupils and their families feel welcome and included. This is seen in your work to embrace the different communities represented within the whole-school community and to ensure that each community group understands how the others live and the choices they make. This means that there is a great sense of respect and tolerance from the pupils.

Pupils feel safe in school and their parents and carers are also pleased that their children are safe and happy, as identified from discussions with parents and their response to surveys. They all believe that the behaviour of pupils in the school is good, that bullying is very rare and any concerns or worries they bring to you are dealt with efficiently and effectively. Behaviour records also show that there are very few serious behaviour incidents. Where pupils have had some difficulty managing their feelings and behaviour, you have worked effectively to help them use strategies to keep calm and make positive choices. As a result, pupils' weaker behaviour rarely interrupts learning and this contributes to the strong progress pupils make.

At the last inspection, inspectors recommended three areas for improvement. First, they suggested that standards in reading, writing and mathematics improve by the end of key stage 2 and, secondly, they recommended that teaching quality be improved. They suggested these improvements be made by ensuring that teachers were well trained, so they fostered high expectations and provided work that

challenged pupils. They also recommended that teachers use their assessment information to plan activities which better suit pupils' needs. Reading, writing and mathematics standards have indeed improved since the last inspection, as has pupils' progress in these areas. This is because the teachers understand pupils' needs well and plan appropriately challenging and engaging activities for them. In addition, inspectors recommended that middle leaders' roles were further developed so that they could support the improvements needed in reading, writing and mathematics. Middle leaders understand their roles and the part they play in gauging the quality of provision. They use this information to plan training and to support teachers where needed. The regular checks on pupils' progress also ensure that where leaders identify underachievement, intervention and boosting sessions are used to help pupils improve.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The procedures and systems in place to keep pupils safe and well safeguarded are effective and fit for purpose. The school has worked hard to ensure that pupils, parents and staff should know what to do if they have a concern. There are signs and posters around school with information for pupils, parents and staff, as well as information on the school's website, so they know who to speak to about a concern. Staff are trained regularly and are updated on any changes made to government regulations. Governors also receive regular safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. Checks are made on all members of staff, governors and volunteers who work with pupils. These include checks to ensure staff's suitability to work with children and checks on their qualifications. These checks meet the legal requirements. Where there are issues around pupils' safety and safeguarding, the school keeps detailed records and you work closely with a wide range of external agencies, so that you can ask for their advice when necessary.

### **Inspection findings**

- During the inspection, I wanted to understand if leaders in the school were helping to increase the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected standard in reading and mathematics at key stage 1, and in writing and mathematics at key stage 2. Overall, pupils' attainment in the school is strong but, in recent years, too few have moved beyond the expected standard in these subject areas.
- Following some focused training, your teachers identified that they needed to raise their expectations and provide more challenging activities for some pupils. This has led to changes in teaching and the level of challenge has now increased. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching a greater depth of understanding in key stages 1 and 2 has increased significantly.
- Ahead of the inspection, I was impressed with the progress disadvantaged pupils have made in recent years, and I wanted to understand how you support these pupils and if this will continue. There is not a considerable number of disadvantaged pupils in the school but there is a very detailed plan to support them, with a wide range of strategies and ideas in place to ensure that they are well engaged in the curriculum. As well as closely monitoring these pupils'

academic needs and responding where there are signs of underachievement, you also closely consider these pupils' social and emotional health needs. These needs are always the priority and there are lots of ways in which you ensure that these pupils feel included and confident in their learning.

- There are also a number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), where the need specifically concerns their social and emotional health. Therefore, there is such a focus in the school on this aspect of pupils' needs and this is helping to ensure that all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, approach their learning positively. These pupils are very keen to do well, regardless of ability, and this contributes to the strong progress they all make.
- During the inspection, I wanted to make sure that pupils' attendance was improving. This has been lower than average historically. Attendance has improved this year, although it remains just below average. There are a number of pupils who are often absent because of personal circumstances. The school is working very closely with the parents of these pupils, in light of such circumstances, to ensure that the effect on the pupils' learning is minimised and they continue to make good progress.
- Pupils conduct themselves well at different times of the day. There are positive relationships between the different groups of pupils, including from the different communities represented in the school. However, during playtime, some pupils, mainly boys, are very dominant on the playground. This can take the form, for example, of these pupils running across the playground. The other pupils do, however, remain safe because they routinely stay out of the way of these pupils and play elsewhere. This does mean, though, that their needs are slightly marginalised at playtime.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides lots of opportunities to develop pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills. It also enhances their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and understanding of British values, as demonstrated through the pupils' positive attitudes to learning and strong relationships. At times, however, the teaching quality is not consistently strong across different subject areas, such as in French and geography. There is not always enough time spent on some subject areas, so pupils' learning can sometimes lack depth. Linked to this, while governors have a very good understanding of the school generally, their understanding of the quality of teaching in the broader curriculum is less strong.
- At times, teachers and other adults in the school can miss opportunities to push and challenge pupils in their oral communication. While some staff are particularly good at ensuring that pupils develop their speaking and listening skills, others are not as skilled. This means that pupils can sometimes give very brief answers and are not encouraged to use precise language, or to give reasons for their answers.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- governors understand where areas of the curriculum are weaker than others and that improvements are implemented, as needed
- during playtime, all groups of pupils have the chance to play games that interest them and that no single group of pupils is too dominant on the playground
- there is a consistent and effective approach to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills, by building on the best practice already apparent in some classes, so that teachers always give pupils the chance to give fulsome and reasoned answers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Doncaster. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Fiona McNally  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I visited all classes to observe teaching and its effect on learning. I also looked at a wide range of pupils' books from several year groups, across a variety of subjects. I met with you and with other senior and middle leaders. I also held a meeting with governors. I looked at the school's information about the safeguarding of pupils and examined behaviour, attendance and records of incidents of bullying. I also checked a range of other documentation, including your self-evaluation, your school development plan and your assessment information. I held formal discussions with some pupils from Years 1 to 6 and spoke informally to several pupils during breaktime. I considered parents' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View and their responses to the free-text questionnaire. I spoke to parents on the playground as they brought their children to school and met with parents who wanted to speak with me formally.