

8 March 2019

Miss Sue Hodges  
Headteacher  
Newnham Infant and Nursery School  
Newnham Avenue  
Ruislip  
HA4 9RW

Dear Miss Hodges

### **Short inspection of Newnham Infant and Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 27 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 the school was judged to be good in July 2015.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection.

You are a long-serving headteacher who works with a clear moral purpose. Together with your effective interim assistant headteachers, you have worked to ensure that consistently good provision and practice is in place to support pupils' learning. There has been a period of turbulence this academic year. However, you have taken effective action to secure standards by bringing in new teachers to strengthen the staff team. The school has good capacity to continue moving forward. You and your governors have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Your plans for improvement are based on clear evidence and are fit for purpose. The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate.

Working successfully with your leaders and governors, you have addressed the key priorities for improvement identified at the previous inspection. For example, you have ensured that pupils are provided with opportunities to respond to feedback to deepen and extend their knowledge and skills. Encouraged and supported through your leadership, teachers share their best practice across the school, with good effect. There is a high level of challenge in all lessons. As a result, pupils make consistently good progress, although you accept that there is still more to be done to ensure that even higher standards are reached.

The well-balanced curriculum is carefully matched to pupils' needs, so that they can readily develop new interests and skills. For example, provision for science, geography, history, art and music, physical education, sports, and school trips has

enabled them to become more confident and secure learners. The range of extra-curricular clubs is extensive and promotes pupils' interests well. Popular choices include: football, dance, gymnastics, archery, construction and skipping. Such activities are promote the pupils' interests and are very popular.

The pupils I spoke to said that they like their school. Many nationalities are represented. Pupils are happy to come and be with their friends. A girl from a Reception class explained that she enjoys coming to school and likes 'to play and read'. A newly arrived boy explained that he was helped to feel very welcome by his classmates. These are good examples of the typically thoughtful, generous and positive attitudes which pupils have. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They are friendly and polite, reflecting the school's core values and motto; 'We are all special.'

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. Staff manage pupils' well-being meticulously. Leaders work with outside agencies and liaise with them quickly in order to secure strong support for children and their families. Leaders manage concerns sensitively and effectively. There is a culture of vigilance, where children's welfare is actively promoted. Children are listened to and feel safe.

All staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of current safeguarding guidance and procedures. Pre-employment checks on adults working at the school meet all statutory requirements. Staff training is up to date and their safeguarding practice is effective. Governors carry out appropriate checks on safeguarding during the school year.

### **Inspection findings**

- Following the 2018 national assessments, you identified that, although performing strongly, pupils were not achieving as well in mathematics as in either reading or writing. It was agreed that the first line of enquiry in this inspection would examine the measures you have put in place to address this.
- The leadership has introduced a range of new materials and methods to support the teaching of mathematics which deepen and broaden pupils' skills and knowledge. Leaders have also supported teachers, for example, by modelling best practice and setting higher expectations.
- As a result of leadership action, teachers consistently ask skilful questions which encourage pupils to think deeply. Pupils also have very frequent opportunities to acquire and practise their mathematical vocabulary and solve problems. During the inspection this was seen in virtually every workbook on every page. In discussions in Year 2, for example, pupils were able to confidently explain how to identify key vocabulary in measuring and then how to solve challenges.
- Leaders' action to raise mathematics has also been effective in the early years foundation stage. Here, children demonstrate their enjoyment of exploring

counting and numbers. Adults create and take opportunities to teach children new number skills, or practise using them. Good evidence was seen in classes of children working in groups and pairs, engaging in high-quality discussions about numbers, shapes and counting.

- During our observations, you noted that there were further opportunities that could be explored for pupils to learn from one another, thus broadening, deepening and using their vocabulary.
- Standards at the school have been good for many years. In our initial discussions, and in your school improvement plan, you indicated that work was underway to upgrade the curriculum in order to improve standards. It was agreed that the second line of enquiry would examine the current quality of the curriculum and the effectiveness of measures to improve raise it.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum at Newnham Infants school is broad, balanced and engaging. Conversations with pupils revealed that they are interested and engaged with their learning. For example, in year 2, pupils explained that the 'Fire of London was very dangerous. Everything was made of wood, so it all burned down, every bit.' They continued, saying, 'When they built it back, they built it in stone, and stone doesn't burn.' Such responses were typical, reflecting effective teaching. Many similar examples were seen in pupils' books and displays. While strong, this inspection found that the curriculum established provides many opportunities that could be used even more fully. For example, studies of the life of the Victorian engineer Brunel could be linked through history, science, geography and design.
- Evidence was seen that curriculum provision across the school is effective for all groups as well as the most able. The result is that the great majority of pupils are where they should be or above at age five and are ready for Year 1. By the end of Year 2, the vast majority of pupils meet or exceed nationally expected standards, in science as well as reading, writing and mathematics.
- You have begun to review the curriculum, and made progress. You accept that there is more work to be done to forge even more connections between the subjects to enhance learning opportunities further.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the curriculum is strengthened so that pupils are helped to explore the connections between subjects and themes
- further opportunities are provided for pupils to learn from one another, thus broadening, deepening and using their vocabulary, especially in 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 Hillingdon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Martin Roberts  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

The inspector carried out the following activities during the inspection:

Meetings were held with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, and middle leaders.

Discussions were held with six governors, including the chair of governors, and a range of pupils; the inspector also had a discussion with a local authority education advisor.

Teaching and learning were observed in a range of lessons.

Pupils' progress was also evaluated by looking at pupils' workbooks and displays.

Several pupils read to the inspectors.

Recent information about pupil's progress was evaluated.

The views of staff were considered through 28 responses to the staff survey.

Parents' views were considered through 81 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and discussions with parents in the playground before school.